

Unadvertised Positions

A study reported in the *Harvard Business Review* found that almost **80 percent of jobs are not advertised** in the classifieds. That figure may be even higher. Such as event planner. Even among the types of employers that usually do advertise for event planners, smaller companies may not have websites, and are unlikely to spend hundreds of dollars to post jobs at a site such as Monster.com. So how do these employers find employees?

Networking

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Many employers find employees through **word of mouth**. When a small business owner needs a new employee, they will typically ask friends, business associates, and current employees if they know anyone who might be suitable for the job.

Many hiring managers pass resumes around. If you can network with and impress Employer A – who may not have an opening at any given time – they may be willing to pass your resumé along to a company they know that is hiring. If you wish to get a job, you must **get on as many radar screens as possible**.

When you are ready to get hired as an event planner, it is no time to be shy. Tell all your friends, family and former business associates that you are looking for work. If you belong to volunteer organizations, be sure to mention to the group that you are now available for paying jobs. Here are tips from two successful event planners about effective ways to network for a job:

“Always show up where the people in power congregate. The more posh an atmosphere, the more likely there will be people who are in a position to hire. Get into the habit of haunting places such as country clubs, four-star hotels, great spas, exclusive salons, restaurants and bars and golf courses. It might cost you some money, but it can be worth making the right contact.”



— Lynn Simpson, independent event planner

“Don’t be shy! Talk, talk, and talk about your desire to work as an event planner. And ALWAYS give out and get business cards from people you meet. When people give you their cards, be sure to follow up with a phone call or e-mail within a day or two. You don’t have to ask for a job. Just remind them how you met and that you enjoyed talking with them — then, repeat your desire to break into the event planning business.”

— Sherri Brennan, Account Director, Sheraton Harbor Island, San Diego

You can also use the advice in that part of the guide to help you meet and connect with people who can hire you – or recommend you to someone who can hire you – for a full-time or part-time event planning position.

Direct Contact

Even if you don’t know anyone connected to a particular company, it may **still be possible** to get a job there by contacting the company directly. It happens rarely, but sometimes a manager will have just decided that they need a new person, when they happen to receive a phone call or resumé from someone who looks like they might be

an ideal candidate for the job. Many employers would rather find someone this way than invest all the time and effort in advertising the job, screening résumés, and interviewing numerous candidates.

you can also try to schedule information interviews with professionals in the business and ask them for advice. Since someone is giving you precious time – and time is money in any business – don’t push them to hire you, but rather keep in mind you’re on a fact-finding mission. If the person you’re networking with makes it clear that they have no openings at present, don’t push it, because if they have a further opening and you impress them, you may get the call.



Other ideas can include making contact by telephone, email, or mail. If you decide to make **“cold”** contact with employers (as opposed to the **“warm”** contacts you already have and know), it’s a good idea to focus on specific types of employers. This allows you to target your job search most effectively since it takes time to track down company owners’ names, tailor your resumé, and prepare personalized cover letters explaining why you want to work with **that**

particular company.

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