

How to Find Work in a Tough Market

A 3 Part Series

Pam Johnson, M.Ed



Helping the Employer Find You

Hiring the wrong person can cost a company a great deal of money and time, and cause the hiring manager tremendous headache and embarrassment. Employers are therefore understandably cautious when it comes to hiring. Many have been burned by a poor selection and hired the candidate who *appeared* most qualified, but *proved* to be lacking in some essential skill or quality required to do a good job. Most employers have at one time or other hired “the wrong person” and greatly regretted the error.

Job seekers tend to think that all employers have special training or expertise in hiring. This is often not the case. In some companies, usually larger one, directors and supervisors have attended seminars on hiring and staff selection but, for the most part, employers are experts in their business, not in human resources practices. In small- and medium-sized-companies (where jobs are most plentiful in the current labour market), the person in charge is usually extremely busy and therefore not able to take time from day-to-day business to concern themselves with recruitment activities. Nevertheless, it is extremely important to them to have skilled employees who will help them achieve their purpose of running a successful company.

If the employer is not able to take the time to line up potential future staff, but is at the same time in need of good people, how can you help them? How valuable would your help be? Salespeople say that a prospect will buy something if they can see its value to them. Similarly, an employer will be interested in you if your value is clear to them. So the question you need to ask yourself is, “What’s in it for them?” “What value is there to the employer to meet me and get to know me?”

Your best strategy is to communicate clearly and directly your understanding of their goals and how you can help them achieve these. Do this in a formal pre-arranged business or “research” meeting and you will be surprised how well you are able to pique employers’ interest in you.

The 3rd article, **Positioning Yourself for the Next Position**, describes a method for arranging such a meeting, as well as suggestions regarding the content of your discussion with employers.