

Q&A Column

Author: Mark Swartz, MBA, M.Ed.

Email Subject Line: “Cold Marketing” for Hidden Jobs

[workopolis.com EN home page](#)

Headline: Finding Hidden Jobs by Going In Cold

Summary:

I haven't had to look for work in more than 20 years. I'd like to have a better of idea of what's effective and what isn't. Back when I first started I mostly replied to ads in the classifieds and visited companies to drop off my resume. Can these approaches still work?

Shawn P., Mississauga, Ontario

[Landing Page copy](#)

Headline: Finding Hidden Jobs by Going In Cold

Dear Mark,

My job was eliminated a few weeks ago and I'm shaken up. My skills are fine but I haven't had to look for work in more than 20 years. I know things have changed and I'd like to have a better of idea of what's effective these days and what isn't. Back when I first started it was pretty easy for me. Mostly I replied to ads in the classified section of my newspaper and visited companies directly to drop off my resume. Can these approaches still work?

Dear Shawn,

The techniques you're describing can still be used, but as parts of a complete search for work. They fall into a category of job hunting called “Cold Marketing.” In essence, you are *going in cold* to an employer because they don't know who you are yet. There are several different tactics under this heading. You can use them in combination with “Warm Marketing,” which we'll cover in next week's column, to tap into the hidden job market.

The most common route under Cold Marketing is **mass mailing**. This is when you gather the names of companies and organizations that are reasonably close to where you live (and which may or may not be in your industry, if you happen to specialize in one), and then send as many of them as you can your resume, either by post or e-mail. Usually you address the message generically, as in “Dear Sir/Madame,” or “To Human Resources.” It's a low percentage strategy – whether you're mailing or phoning - but it does get your name out to a wide variety of employers.

A somewhat more efficient route is **targeted mailings**. You're still sending out your application to places where you don't know if they're hiring or not. Only you take the time to customize each letter. Things that can boost your chances? Getting the correct name, title and spelling of the hiring manager. Researching the employer beforehand and including a bit of what you know about them in your cover letter. Then following up within five business of sending your application with a polite phone call, asking if they've received it, and if you might come in to discuss opportunities.

You also mentioned the **resume drop off** path. This is actually not a bad way to go for jobs that pay under, say, \$50,000 per year, such as administrative assistants, accounting clerks, waitstaff, retail help and the like. Since there are many more positions in this pay range than at higher levels, and since the turnover is therefore that much higher, an employer may just keep you on file because something may crop up sooner than later.

Another popular step is to try and work with **recruiters**. Since they account for anywhere from 10% to 30% or more of available jobs (depending on your industry, level, location, etc.), you'll want to find a few good ones who will push for your success. Check out my article at <http://workopolis.com/servlet/Content/careerqa/20060208/cqa20060208?section=CareerQA> on this very subject.

Here's a few more avenues. **Uploading your resume** to a job bank such as Workopolis.com, the goal being to be on the radar screen when employers come searching for qualified candidates. Or using a **resume blaster** to get your application in front of hundreds or more recruiters at a time. Even putting up **your own website** to advertise your resume, which I strongly advise against – mainly for privacy reasons – unless you're in a field like web design or graphic arts (even then I suggest you leave your name and phone numbers off).

Making your way through the hidden job market takes time and effort. By using the modes described above you pretty much cover the Cold Marketing road. Mesh it with Warm Marketing and you have a winning game plan!



Mark Swartz, MBA, M.Ed., is a [speaker](#), [career coach](#) and [author](#). He can be reached via his website, www.careeractivist.com. The above article may contain material not included in the edited version.

© Mark Swartz, 2003, 2007. All Rights Reserved. No part of this article may be reproduced, republished or redistributed without the prior written consent of the copyright holder. See [Reprint Policy](#) on www.careeractivist.com for details. Not-For-Profits exempted and may use the article in part or in full without contacting me - but please do, and kindly credit me as shown in the [Reprint Policy](#).