

Jobs from Employers and Employer Websites

By *Harrison Barnes*

When [looking for a job](#), as with anything you do, you get rewards only when you put work into it. Researching employer websites is not the easiest type of work to do. It requires more effort than simply going to a [job site](#), as you may be accustomed to doing. Nevertheless, this is very important, and these are methods you can use to track down jobs pretty much anywhere. It will be worth your while to search employers' websites for jobs.

The small investment that you take right now in learning about this can really end up changing the course of your career. Because so few people follow the process and understand this process, if you follow these guidelines you will set yourself apart. What it comes down to is research.

I once knew an attorney who never lost a case. He was known for researching every single detail in his case files, and that's what gave him the advantage. That really is the same thing with your [job search](#). The more research you're doing, the more likely you are going to win when it comes to [finding a job](#).

I am a huge proponent of [looking for jobs online](#) on employer websites. Anybody can do this. Whether you're sixteen years old and looking for your first job or forty-five and a sophisticated attorney, you can benefit from this process. The rewards are extreme.

When you look at jobs on employer websites, you are probably seeing [unadvertised jobs](#). They're not going to all be unadvertised, but a significant portion will be unadvertised. That means you're not going to see these jobs on a major job site or in the newspaper. The job is coming direct from the employer, which is [direct employment](#). That gives you a major, major advantage. If you're applying for jobs that aren't advertised, as I mentioned earlier, there are going to be fewer applications and fewer people knowing about them. Your goal in your [job search](#) is to maximize your self-interest. You want to apply for jobs that aren't getting a lot of applications. That's going to make a major difference for you.

Another thing about employer websites that's so exciting is the variety of employers with websites. In terms of the employer websites that my companies monitor for jobs, we're looking at between 50,000 and 100,000; there are 50,000 really good ones and an additional 50,000 that are not as good.

If you were to look at all of the employer websites available, you would be looking at well over a million sites. The reason is that today, virtually every company that has employees has a website, and a good portion of those list job opportunities. Because there are so many websites out there, when you start really drilling down into those numbers, you're going to see an incredible variety of opportunities.

Another benefit of [applying to a job](#) through an employer website is that there's no middleman. Your application goes directly to the employer, whereas when you apply to jobs through a recruiter, that recruiter acts as a filter for the résumés before they ever reach the employer. The recruiter will only send the résumés he or she thinks that employer wants to see--and that may or may not include yours.

Job sites also act as middlemen. The résumés sometimes go into a box that employers have to log in to if they want to look at the list of applicants. It doesn't always reach the employer directly. When you're applying to jobs on employer website, there are no middlemen like that.

It's also important to remember that posting on a job site can cost an employer up to \$500. That's a hurdle that gets in the way of the job being distributed, and anything that gets in the way of a job being distributed ultimately is going to harm your chances of getting that job.

If there's no middleman, that means that you're more likely to find out about that job, more likely to be hired because there's no fee, the employer is more likely to see your résumé--and all of that works in your favor.

When you go to an employer site, you are really exposing yourself to a much greater variety of jobs because there are more jobs out there on employer sites than anywhere else, much, much more. The drawback, of course, is that these jobs are scattered across a huge number of sites, which means it's very, very important that you understand the methods I describe for researching these jobs.

When you apply to a job on an employer site, the employer is more likely to think you're interested in that company specifically than if you're coming through any other resource. That's because you have taken the time to go to the employer's website, log in to find the career section of the website, and then apply. That shows a lot more interest than simply clicking on a posting you happened to come across on a job site.

They're going to look at you a little bit more favorably, especially the smaller employers because they're not receiving a lot of applications. They believe that if you tracked them down, whatever the industry is, you must have a real desire to work there, and that is a positive thing.

The call for applications on employer websites is not always obvious. If you go to the website of an engineering firm, for example, they might not say, "We're looking for a mechanical engineer with 30 years' experience." They may say, "We always have an interest in seeing qualified engineering candidates with the following backgrounds." These are general statements of interest requesting applications for jobs that aren't advertised. When you apply to those jobs, you can tell them, "I understand you're always interested," and that sort of thing. Again, this shows you are interested in working for that particular company, and employers appreciate that kind of consideration.

[A] Big vs. Small Employers

You really should know the market that you're in. Most of my career, I've been involved in the legal industry. If you take an area like Los Angeles County, for example, a huge area, there are literally thousands of law firms. When most people think of

looking for a job, they typically think of certain big firms or ones that everyone has heard of.

A lot of times, however, there are smaller firms that pay more or just as much and that are off the radar for most job searchers. It may be seven or eight people in that operation, but people can do very, very well there.

If you know what's going on in your industry and in the job market, you will find many, many more options for jobs regardless of what city you're in.

If you're in a small city with three law firms, that's okay. Then obviously, you can't investigate the market very much but if you're in a decent sized geographic area, there are going to be a lot of employers that are going to match whatever it is you're seeking to do.

They may not always be catalogued by industry. Architects are hired by construction companies, for example, not just architectural firms. Attorneys are hired by corporations, not just law firms. Although it helps to begin your search by focusing on your industry, you can't confine yourself to that industry. You must be creative.

There are a few drawbacks. You may need to be a little bit cautious about jobs on employer sites because they may not be updated as much. Think of over a million job sites out there with employer jobs on them. That's a million different people who have the responsibility of taking the job down when the job is filled or putting it up when it's new, so errors do occur more frequently than on job sites.

Whereas a job site will say, "This job will automatically expire in 60 or 90 days," once they put it up, an employer website won't do that. It comes down to an individual who is in charge of that. Don't be disappointed if you apply to a job and you get back the response that the job has been filled, even though you found it on their website.

I would call my philosophy aggressive because your job search is about marketing.

Even if no jobs are posted, you can send an e-mail query and find out if a position simply hasn't been listed yet. Here's an example:

Subject: My Interest in Working for Groupon

Dear Ms. Jones,

I am a sales manager with eleven years of experience working for Quaker Oats in Chicago. I am in charge of managing a staff of 120 sales people responsible for retail distribution in an eleven state area encompassing the Western United States.

I have attached my resume.

I was just checking to see if you might have any openings.

I'm very interested in your company, specifically because of your recent growth and my belief that I can contribute to your further growth. I have experience expanding into new markets and I believe I would be a real asset to your team as you too expand.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Jeff Jones

You want to offer specific reasons for applying to that company. Pull from the material on their website or what you may have learned about the company through other sources. Reputation, company mission, and plans for the future all make good reason for being interested in one company over another.

I highly recommend sending your applications to employers that are expressing general sense of interest. A statement of interest is not a job. It is a request to apply if you fit general qualifications. Many people don't. You look at lots and lots of employers out there.

Many employers have these statements of interest but people don't really respond to them. Statements of interest are very common for professionals, professional firms which would be things like law, health care – nurses are always in demand of course – architecture, and things along those lines.

Because the career pages of employer websites aren't always up to date, it's important for you to make general inquiries even if jobs aren't listed.

Your job search is in some respects a numbers game. One of the benefits of searching for jobs on employer websites is it really helps you to take advantage of that numbers game because you will get more opportunities to apply in various places because of the fact that there are so many places out there with jobs.

As people who work in direct-mail marketing know, you get better results if you mail out 100 letters compared to if you sent out 10. If you sent out 100 letters, you wouldn't get as good of a result as if you sent out 10,000.

To some extent, it's the same game with your job search. Finding employers and applying to positions is a numbers game. The more places you apply, the greater your chances of gaining an interview and getting hired.

This is also a marketing game. You're marketing yourself. You're the product. You are what you're selling. When you're doing that, it's very, very important that you're getting yourself out to as many potential employers as possible in order to increase your odds of getting hired. I highly recommend general inquiry applications to employers even if they don't have jobs posted. That one thing alone could change your career.

It's more than worth the investment of time that you're spending listening to this job search information because when you apply to people, even if they don't have openings, you make their job easier for them because a lot of people maybe ask, "Do you have this person?" They'll bring that person over to whoever is asking.

The administrative team will bring your application to whoever is hiring. Your résumé will be filed away. It's a very, very smart thing to get a lot of applications out there, especially with employers where you have few privacy concerns. It's just a smart job search method and something you should be doing.

I've been criticized for saying this is a good idea but I've seen it work so many times that it's something that I highly, highly recommend that you do. Those are the main things that I wanted to talk to you about. Understanding that unadvertised jobs receive fewer applications is very, very important.

Another thing I want to make clear is it's not a question of pride. A lot of people are so invested in themselves and their personal identity that they don't want to be rejected from an employer. Who cares? It really doesn't matter. Just because someone out there is selling a product and not everybody is buying it doesn't give the seller a reason to feel bad. As long as

someone buys it, the person selling the product or the company selling the product can do well. In this case, you are that product.

Investigating employer sites has another benefit that isn't specifically tied to tracking down jobs. When you read these websites, you can learn a lot about employers. You can get a good sense of that employer based on how information is updated, how well it's written, and what information is offered. You can also learn a lot about the market this way. You will learn who the company works for or what kind of customers they appeal to. This can lead you to more and more employers. Following that trail is a very, very effective way to track down jobs.

[B] Resources with Employer Contact Information

Finally, the biggest point I want to make to you is your chances of getting an interview are much better when you use an employer site. Typically, it's going to be easier with smaller employers and harder with larger. If you take a big company, typically everybody will have heard of them or for a large regional employer but there are a lot of smaller employers.

Those smaller employers are going to be much easier. An example would be where I'm from, Detroit, there are a couple of very large auto companies there. If someone is [looking for a job](#) in the auto industry, it would make sense that you would look at the websites of those giant employers to see what jobs they have available.

However, remember that there are thousands of suppliers that supply the auto companies. Just because there's that big company there doesn't mean that's the only employer. There are thousands of suppliers. The idea is you learn about the big company and then think about who is working for that big company. That can also provide you with lots of leads.

The issue is how to locate employers, and the best way to locate jobs from employer websites. There are so many resources out there, it is insane. Here are just a few:

Hound.com. This site monitors the career pages of a substantial number of employers throughout the world for jobs. This is an excellent site that has won several awards for its depth.

Granted.com. This site has been in development for more than a year and offers thousands of jobs from employer websites, newspapers, and many other sources. It is completely free to job seekers, and features custom job alerts, the ability to upload your résumé and directly apply to certain employers, and an intuitive design that makes it easy to find the job you're looking for.

Jigsaw. This is an online company directory. It is easy to use and recommended.

DMOZ. An Internet directory. I like DMOZ a lot because they have a screening process that makes it difficult for an employer to get in there but once they are in there, you're pretty much assured it's a very good employer. You can search by industry and all sorts of things. Google at this point in time is related to DMOZ. Google gets its directory information from DMOZ. That's something to keep in mind.

Wikipedia. Wikipedia always has a lot of lists about top employers in different industries. One example might be if you were, hypothetically, a carpet installer in Illinois. There are probably a bunch of carpet associations for carpet installers or carpet workers. They will list members of that and member companies. The member companies would be a good source for you to find jobs.

Manta. Manta is a good online source.

Business.com. Business.com is a paid directory, meaning that people have to pay to be part of that directory, but not Wikipedia or DMOZ.

Magic Yellow. Another really good source is called Magic Yellow which is the modern day yellow pages online. You can search by industry and they have website links. It's very, very good.

Yahoo.

Dun and Bradstreet. This is a great database.

Standard and Poors.

Other resources include Thomas Register, Mergent Industry Review, Hoovers (part of Dunn & Bradstreet). As you can see, there's a huge variety of sources that you can use to research companies.

My overarching recommendation to you, however, is to go through each of these resources and find out which one suits you the best. Get comfortable and start using it to its fullest potential.

[C] Building and Using Employer Lists

Something that a lot of people do not understand that is very important is the way to research who those employers are. I'm suggesting that you systematically investigate and develop a list of who is going to hire you.

A couple of years ago, I had an experience where my wife and I received a flier in the mail for a house that was for sale in our neighborhood. We went to the house at the appointed time. There were probably over a hundred people there.

I'm thinking all these people showed up to this open house like we did but when the real estate agent sent out those fliers to everybody in the neighborhood, they didn't say, "Let me just send out the fliers to the people that I'm confident and know with 100 percent certainty are buying a house right now." They approached all of them.

When you're systematically investigating and developing a list of who is going to hire you, what you're doing is no different than the real estate agent. You're developing your future list of prospects when you find employers.

To develop your list, use a service like Melissa Data, Info USA, Jigsaw, Hoovers, or all sorts of other sources. Most of these will offer you a free trial or something along those lines and you can get a lot of your data that way.

You develop your list. Then you'll have a bunch of names as the result. You will have companies plus names with the list you've developed. Once you have that list, it could be a large or small number. It could be twenty people depending on how broad you are or it could be more than one hundred people, or a thousand, or even five thousand.

Services out there that have done this in the past typically will develop very, very large lists for people. There are lots of services out there that consult with people and develop lists. Typically, when these places develop a list, they're creating a list of at least one or two thousand.

When you target these employers, you need to understand that one of the things you're doing is targeting them based on the geographies you want to work in plus your interest based on where you want to work.

I want you to remember you can work wherever you want. I'm from Detroit. I decided I wanted to work in Southern California. That was after having worked in New York. I liked Southern California better but now I like New York a lot too.

There are different places you can work. You need to make sure that in whatever search you're doing, that you're extremely open and making sure that you're really looking at every potential geographic place that you can.

The more places that you're looking at, the better off you're going to be. You really need to understand that the more opportunity you have, the more places you can look at. In a lot of cases, people want to stay close to home due to parents and other things along those lines. That certainly is okay and a good thing.

At the same time, you need to understand that the more places that you're looking, the better off you're going to be because different geographic areas have more employers than others. It's very common for people to move to New York because there are so many employers packed in a little scene in the city. You're going to work where you want to.

You're going to have companies' names on the list. You're going to have them sorted geographically which is important based on where you want to work and by type of employer. The next thing you need to do is fill in the holes with your list.

Find the company's web address, search that website, and get the contact information for where to send your resume or application. That might mean an e-mail address or a street address. There might also be an online form.

[Investigate the company](#), not to discount places that you may be applying but to give yourself information.

An example would be your list produces a company called ACME Power Tools in Lake Forest, Illinois. I'm just giving you a hypothetical. I don't know that there would be a power tool company in Lake Forest. It's a very nice suburb of Chicago.

With that information, you go to Google. This may be all you get. Remember you're going to have a list of potentially a thousand employers. You enter ACME Power Tools and the city into Google. It gives you the address, which you'll have, and it will also give you the website.

Once you're on the website look for a tab called Contact, Careers, Employment, or Work Here. You will likely see a **list of job openings**. That's also where you'll find the information you need for submitting resumes. Be sure you are sending your application to the right person if there is more than one.

It can be very helpful to build a spreadsheet where you can list all of potential employers with contact information. Include the web address, names of contacts, appropriate e-mail addresses, and any phone numbers available. I also recommend listing the type of application form, for example, an online form, an e-mailed resume, or something sent via US mail.

How you structure this is up to you. I recommend using Excel. Some people are more comfortable using a Word document. Now it's time to get to work. What does that mean? It means apply to jobs. If you've found a job opening that fits your skills, follow the employer's instructions and apply. If there's no job opening, realize the company is one that is in your industry and you may have a good fit for. Apply anyway to the contact person listed on the website.

If there's no contact person for your specific department, meaning they don't say in any information anywhere how to apply, apply to any of the people listed. There may be jobs on the site that don't match what you're looking for. Say you're an attorney applying to ACME Tools for an attorney job. There's no attorney [job listed](#) but there's a contact person. It's always good to apply to that contact person.

Another trick that has been known to work is to apply to the CEO or owner. The reason this works is that, if a company is large enough, the CEO or owner is unlikely to be reviewing your résumé when it comes in. That might sound like a bad thing, but it can work for you. Here's how:

If your résumé is directed toward the CEO's office, typically someone else, an assistant of some kind, is going to open his or her mail. When the assistant opens the CEO's mail, that mail is going to be sent directly to the correct person through the CEO's office. Once the correct person gets it and see that it's coming through the CEO, he or she is more likely to take action. So if no one else is listed for receiving applications, go ahead and send it to the CEO.

Here's something else to consider: when you email a résumé to a company or apply through its system, someone may review it or someone may not. In some office somewhere, people are sitting there receiving these emails. They are not necessarily excited to keep opening them. They may be getting dozens, even hundreds, of [resumes](#). They're completely overwhelmed with various applications for these jobs.

Because of that, you really need to make sure that when you're applying to jobs through these employers that you get your application seen. Email may get it seen but it may not. But also consider sending a letter. In some offices, a letter is more likely to get seen. It's not always easy to find a mailing address for employers, but when you can, it's a good idea to send a letter.

Faxes also get noticed. A fax is typically printed. Often it goes into a little bin that circulates throughout the company until it is delivered to the person's desk. This is one more way to get noticed.

Using all these methods in combination get you seen. Is that overkill? I don't think so. I think you look like you're enthusiastic about the job. People love enthusiasm.

I recommend more rather than less. You might opt not be comfortable using all of these methods, but certainly continue two ways if not three.