When the job market is tight, you need to use different strategies to find the opportunity for you. Conventional wisdom tells us that between 75 – 85% of the jobs out there are not advertised. However, most students spend their time applying for the positions they see in the classifieds and on the mega-job websites like Monster. Instead of mass-mailing resumes, try to tap into that “hidden job market” that includes the jobs that aren’t advertised widely.

According to a recent NACE survey, some of the most effective ways that companies said they recruited college graduates include:
- Hiring through their internship and co-op programs
- Referrals from current employees
- Sourcing through college career services offices
- Responses to postings on their own company website
- Sourcing through job fairs
- Sourcing through professional societies/associations
- Sourcing through internet sites and online resume databases
- Sourcing through search firms

*Use these tips to add to your current job-searching strategies:*

*Mega-sites like Monster.com; Flipdog.com; Hotjobs.com; CareerBuilder.com:*

*The situation:*
Mega-sites like these are useful when you have a specific geographic region you’re applying to. However, Human Resources directors are often inundated with resumes they receive from these sites, and some recruiters have said that as many as 99% don’t match what they want. Also, it costs lots of money for companies to advertise on these sites, and many will choose to advertise elsewhere.

*The strategy:*
Instead of clicking “send” to transmit your resume through the mega-site, just note the company name and find their website. Then apply directly to their site. HR representatives are much more likely to pay attention. We do recommend posting your resume on mega-sites – it certainly won’t hurt – just don’t use this as your primary job search method.

*Websites which are specific to your field and/or geographic region:*

*The situation:*
Most companies who don’t want to pay the huge dollars to advertise on Monster-type sites will pay smaller amounts to post jobs to their own industry websites, or to their local sites. For example, if you want to work in visual arts you might be better off using www.artdeadlines.com. Ask at the CDC for more ideas.
The strategy: At the CDC, we have a database of several hundred websites organized by career field. Ask us for a printout of the ones you're interested in. Or, do a Google search on "marketing jobs" (for example), and see what comes up. Always check the online classifieds of the city's newspaper. Many have a resume database you can post to, as well as a “push” feature to email you jobs that match your criteria.

Third party recruiters/Employment Agencies:
The situation:
Depending on your industry of choice, many companies are turning to these search firms to find employees. In a tight job market it makes sense to register with the LOCAL employment agencies in your area. Often temporary positions turn permanent.
The strategy:
Find out which search firms are local to your cities of choice by using the phone book, Internet yellow pages, or some other search method – or ask at the CDC for assistance. Contact the search firms, describe your degree and experience, and ask if they are able to place people with your skills and qualifications. If you can, stop in and register.

Department of Labor:
The situation:
Many businesses and organizations do not want to post job openings to national websites – they may want to recruit local candidates. Instead, they choose their local DOLs.
The strategy:
If you're in town, visit the DOL and register with them – or go to www.dol.gov for more information on the local businesses. If you're conducting an out-of-town job search, go to America's Job Bank, which is the web equivalent at www.careeronestop.org/jobsearch/findjobs/state-job-banks.aspx. Use the zip code search for the cities you’re interested in. You’ll find postings you won’t see elsewhere.

Consider federal employment:
The situation:
Within the next few years, over one-third of the federal workforce will be eligible for retirement. Federal jobs provide a decent salary, excellent benefits, job security…and they’re hiring.
The strategy:
Visit www.usajobs.gov and see what’s available. The website is a bit cumbersome, but well worth your time and patience. As you register, you’ll need to know that most students are eligible for “competitive” positions (so you’ll answer “no” to the first few series of questions). Also, most students are eligible for jobs at the GS-5 or GS-7 levels (higher for masters or doctorate degrees.) There is quite a bit of lag time between the time that you apply and the time that you receive responses, but they’re working on that.

Saxon Career Volunteer Network/Alfred University Alumni:
The situation:
A few hundred alumni have volunteered to be career mentors, and/or pass your resumes along to hiring managers for internship, co-op and permanent positions. In a tight job market, having the Alfred connection can open doors that would otherwise remain closed.
The strategy:
Ask at the CDC for a list of Saxon Career Volunteers in your career area/geographic area. Then pick up our “Networking and Information Interviewing” handout for ideas of how to contact them. ALSO – when you graduate, be sure to register with the AU alumni office, for complete access to their online database of the thousands of AU alumni.
CDC Employer Contact database:
The situation:
The CDC maintains an extensive database of thousands of company contacts organized by state and industry. The database includes companies that have recruited at Alfred, posted a position with us, or have been identified as quality contacts.
The strategy:
Ask a counselor at the CDC for a list of contacts in your industry/geographic area. Identify the ones you’re interested in, and structure a cover letter and resume to mail or email them. Or, check their company websites and apply for positions online.

Use professional organizations:
The situation:
Much of the hidden job market comes as a result of knowing people in the field. Many industries list postings with their professional organizations only, and don’t bother with general newspapers or websites.
The strategy:
First, find out from faculty or the CDC which professional organizations match your target industry. Many societies/organizations have student membership fees that are quite reasonable, and it may be well worth your while to join. Professional organizations offer services like mentoring, career networking, career fairs, professional development seminars, and job banks limited to members, local city chapters, and much more. AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts), for example, offers a designer directory, membership list, monthly publication, advice to students on resume writing – AND it’s completely free to students. Once you’re a member, volunteer for committee work – it’s the best way to get your name and skills out there to potential employers.

Consider applying your skills to a nonprofit organization:
The situation:
Nonprofit community organizations, human services agencies, volunteer centers and museums - though not in the for-profit business - still need people with a huge variety of skills. They are often community oriented and locally based and advertise available positions accordingly.
The strategy:
Our #1 recommendation is to check www.idealst.com a website of Action Without Borders. At any time you’ll find thousands of jobs and internships working for companies that are trying to do well. You can also search for a list of organizations in the cities you’re interested in, and apply directly to them. If Idealist doesn’t turn anything up, a CDC counselor can assist you in finding lists of nonprofit and community organizations for the cities you’re interested in.

Use the resources of other universities:
The situation:
Many universities offer “reciprocal services” to graduates of other colleges. You will often be able to search their job listings or use their career libraries, but you will need permission to do so.
The strategy:
Contact the Director of the CDC and request a letter of reciprocity to the colleges and universities in your geographic area. The Director will contact the Career Services director of those universities and ask them to allow you permission to use their services. In most cases, the universities will respond directly to you with the services that they will extend to you.

Chambers of Commerce:
The situation:
Most communities have a Chamber that includes all businesses from the tiny nonprofits to the largest businesses in the city. They may have web and print directories that will help you locate organizations to which you may want to apply.
The strategy:
Start with www.chamber-of-commerce.com for a city search. Each Chamber’s website will look
different, some much more high-tech than others. In any case, you can usually use it to find
links to businesses’ addresses and contact people. You can also sign up to receive visitor
information that could be a gold mine for you.

Business Journals and Book of Lists:
The situation:
Most cities publish weekly or monthly business newspapers and journals, and a yearly “Book of
Lists” that includes the top businesses and organizations in just about every category – hospitals,
nonprofits, advertising agencies, etc.
The strategy:
Start by going to www.abyznewslinks.com for a list of all the local and state news journals of the
cities you’re interested in. Look for the business journals and click them. You can use this to
research companies that are expanding into new markets or adding employees, or just to find out
more about a company that you’re interested in.

Networking:
The situation:
In the annual outcome survey, Alfred University graduates indicated that the most effective way
of finding a job was to network and develop personal contacts.
The strategy:
First, tell everyone you know that you’re looking for a job, and what kind. The “friend of a friend”
strategy pays off much more often than the mass-mailing strategy. Second, ask at the CDC for a
list of potential networking contacts and begin to conduct information interviews. For example, if
you want to be a glass artist in Rochester, the best way to begin is by sitting down with current
artists and asking for their advice. We can assist you in finding contacts, structuring your letter,
phone call or email, or developing a list of information interview questions. Yes, this method is
time intensive – but it works.

Attend trade shows and expositions:
The situation:
As it says in Cool Careers for Dummies, “trade shows and expos are the equivalent of career
shopping malls.” Hundreds of booths offer opportunities for you to network and get ideas you
never would have thought of.
The strategy:
Identify a couple of interest areas of yours...sports, comics, skiing, gardening, independent films,
or whatever. Research and find trade shows and expos related to that interest area in or near
your geographic area, or plan a trip around one of them (we can help with this if you aren’t sure
where to begin.) Get your resumes ready. Once you’re there, walk around and check out the
booths. You can collect business cards, ask about employment, ask the booth owners how they
got their start and what they’d recommend to a person wanting to get into that career, and even
hand out resumes. Remember, the counselors at the CDC are here to help you explore career
options, structure a job-search strategy, and deal with the details of the process (interviewing,
salary negotiation, etc.)

CareerShift Job Search Aggregator and Company/Contact Database:
The situation:
The job/internship search just became a little easier. CareerShift crawls through the Internet
aggregating anything that looks like a job or internship posting. Both have access to millions of
jobs. CareerShift has the added advantage of providing an extensive database of employer
contact and company information.
The strategy:
Directions for setting up a profile and starting the job search can be found at http://alfred.edu/cdc/services/job_search.cfm. It is always best to use the advanced search features and to set up search agents that filter out unwanted searches. It is also recommended to play around with the key words to ensure that you find the optimal number of job postings.

Social Networking:
Join LinkedIn – www.linkedin.com
The situation:
Social networking is growing exponentially and if you are not on board, you will be left behind. LinkedIn has over 150 million users, over a half million groups and thousands of jobs. Recruiters and employers frequently use LinkedIn to identify potential employees and business partners.
The strategy:
There is no charge for a basic account. Begin building your professional network and get recommendations. Complete your profile and begin looking for potential contacts using the ‘advanced people search.’ Connecting via LinkedIn is not as easy as Facebook, but you can use the information provided on a LinkedIn profile to contact individuals at their place of employment or Facebook. You should also take the time to join the Alfred University Career Development Center group and connect with over 1500 alumni and HR professionals. You can search for jobs and join other LinkedIn professional groups and organizations to participate in the discussions and view the jobs posted specifically for those groups.

Twitter – www.twitter.com
The situation:
Recruiters and employers actively use Twitter looking for young, tech savvy employees. Finding and following these individuals or companies can give access to real time employment opportunities.
The strategy:
Search Twitter using terms such as ‘marketing employment’ or ‘green jobs’ to identify potential employers/recruiters. You will find a mix of individuals and recruiters posting tweets. In addition to following specific recruiters (e.g. SimplyHire), you will also want to take a look at the individuals that resulted from your search to see what recruiters they are following. If it appears that the Tweeter is passing along valuable information, follow that profile and set up a RSS feed of tweets directly to your email account. It is to your advantage to participate in the discussions allowing you to highlight your skills, knowledge and interest.

Additional Resources:
In the below websites you may find top employers that will be hiring thousands of full-time employees and interns:
- www.collegegrad.com/topemployers
- www.Indeed.com
- www.Craigslist.com
- Handshake (www.alfred.edu/cdc)
- www.google.com
- https://www.usajobs.gov/StudentsAndGrads
- www.simplyhired.com