

STUDENT LIFE

The hidden job market

By Cynthia Wright (KRT)

The hidden job market: It sounds pretty ominous, even scary. What is it and how does a job seeker find it?

The hidden job market isn't a cache of job openings stashed in an underground mine or in a treasure chest somewhere in the Pacific Ocean. If you are willing to take the initiative, be creative and think "out of the box," your chances of finding a job are dramatically increased. Research and studies show that 75 percent of jobs are never advertised. So how does a job seeker find a job? The first thing to do is build a network. How? Before the Internet and Monster.com and other online search engines, people actually talked to each other. They met at church, the supermarket, sporting events, social events, and even in their neighborhoods. The Internet is great, but statistically, sitting home and surfing the Web will not get you a job.

The second thing to do is to approach companies directly. In other words, you must go to work to find work. Finding a job in itself is a full-time job!

The sad fact is that there is only an eight percent chance that you will find a job through an advertisement in the newspaper. Even sadder, the chance of finding a job using the popular employment Web sites is less than one-half of one percent.

Does this mean you should ignore these resources completely? No. If your chances of finding a job through ads in the newspaper are eight percent, then use eight percent of your time looking at the papers. Use about one percent of your time surfing the Web. Use the rest of the time in activities that will statistically increase your chances of finding a job.

A successful networking campaign can be close to 90 percent effective and can be done by any job seeker at any skill and educational level. It involves developing and utilizing business and personal relationships to help you reach your goal of finding a job. When networking, you do not have to ask directly for a job, as this could put the other person on the spot. Instead, seek advice, knowledge and ways to expand your contact universe. Your contacts may introduce you to other contacts, and those contacts to others, etc. That's what building a network is all about. Talk with everyone you know, even if they don't seem to be in your field.

For example, I know a guy who is a software engineer. He had just been laid off from Lucent and was looking for a job. He spoke to all of his contacts, expanded his network and had a few good leads. His wife, who is a teacher, invited him to a picnic with other teachers. My friend complained, but finally decided

to go. At the picnic, he met the spouse of his wife's co-worker who happened to work at a start-up telecommunications company. My friend is now happily employed. Don't rule out any function because you feel there are no potential contacts. Always carry cards or resumes that include your contact information including name, telephone number and e-mail address.

Find out when social, business, Chamber of Commerce and trade association meetings are held and attend. Talk and mingle with people you know and those you don't know. Many times, there will be a greeter at the door who can introduce you to other people.

People are usually more than willing to help. Find others who are job hunting and swap stories. Attend networking groups.

There are specific things to do when doing your networking and job-search campaign. While looking for jobs in the newspaper, online or elsewhere, monitor companies and industry hiring. There is a good possibility that they might be hiring others with your skill set.

Here's an example: I was searching for a recruiting position on a Web site I use often. On the site, I saw a company that was looking for a trainer, not a recruiter. I e-mailed the contact a cover letter and a resume. I got a call the next day, saying the company was looking for a recruiter, which was not advertised at all! I went for the interview and got the job. Chances are, since the job was not advertised, I was not competing with all of the other recruiters out there who are looking for work!

Your skills may be desired by industries that you never even considered. I checked out Tufts University's Web site recently and found 122 jobs, many of which were staff openings rather than academic positions. Hospitals and health-care facilities are hiring big time.

To a great extent, this is a numbers game. The more resumes you send out to carefully networked contacts, the greater your chances are of finding a job. If properly conducted, your networking campaign should yield at least two interesting job possibilities per 100 for most professions.

Get out there and get networking. Good luck!

RECRUITER'S INSIDER TIPS:

- Attend networking groups.
- Your skills may be desired by industries that you never even considered. Check out universities, hospitals and federal jobs.
- Send out your resume. The more resumes you send out to carefully networked contacts, the greater your chances are of finding a job.

Stars fill the screen in 'Def Jam: Fight for NY'

Review by Nick Hammond
staff writer

Fighting games have a habit of doing very little with their sequels. Usually a couple of new arenas are added, one or two new fighters are thrown in for good measure, and a few costumes are slipped onto beloved characters to make them seem new or different. Not so with Def Jam: Fight for NY, sequel to last year's Vendetta.

Electronic Arts has added a huge cast of characters, arenas, and an awesome story mode along with turning Def Jam from a strict wrestler into a true brawler. If you liked the first, you'll love Fight for NY.

With more than 70 fighters, 30 licensed songs, 20 arenas, and 10 game modes, there's really little else you could ask for from Fight for NY.

The fighter list is pretty impressive, considering more than 40 of those fighters are celebrities. Most are hip-hop stars, including Snoop Dogg, and a few are just media darlings (Carmen Electra,

you are so hot). Better yet, all of these fine video game characters are voiced by their real-life counterparts. That really is Flava Flav talking smack after beating you down, and Xzibit himself will pimp your ride with his foot and tell you all about it.

The story mode is Def Jam's greatest strength. This is probably the best story ever seen in a fighting game. That's not too hard, since most fighting games feature very bizarre and almost incomprehensible storylines. It all starts with you rescuing D-Mob from the police. Your created character joins D-Mob's crew and you wind up in the middle of a turf war. D-Mob rules the streets by pitting his followers in Fight Club-style matches against other chumps. He's battling for territory with Crow, who is played by Snoop Dogg.

The 20 unique arenas each have a different personality. The subway, for example, is pretty open with no spectators, but has train tracks at the back of the arena. Get your timing right and you can knock your opponent onto the

tracks just as a train passes. Go to the Foundation and you'll find yourself fighting in a basement, surrounded by enthusiastic spectators who push, grab, and offer weapons throughout the fight.

There are a few problems with Fight for NY. It doesn't seem to matter what weight and height you pick as every created character seems to have the same relative build. Another downfall is that you cannot play through story mode as one of the fighters from the game, not even after beating the story. Why not let me play through as Ice-T? That would have boosted the longevity just a bit.

"Def Jam: Fight for NY" is a better game than the original, without a doubt. The mixture of fighting and wrestling is a good move by EA. If you like playing fighting games alone, Def Jam offers a robust and impressive story mode that ends up being much better than any of the multiplayer modes. In the end, Fight for NY is a great game that could very well become a true classic.

Ask ASCII, your questions answered

By Logan Stack
staff writer

Dear ASCII: *

I seem to be getting more pop-ups than when I first bought my computer, why is this, and is there anything I can do?

- Frustrated

Dear Frustrated,

This is a very common problem. The most likely cause is something called Adware. Adware programs send you advertisements you wouldn't otherwise get. They are crafted by programmers lured to the dark side by promises of wealth. These programs usually sneak onto your computer without your knowledge. They can come packaged with programs like Kazaa. Often they use flaws in Internet Explorer to install themselves when you do no more than visit Web site. Some try to trick you into installing them by using pop-ups which look like Windows messages.

Because Adware increasingly uses the same tricks as viruses, removing

it can often be a pain. There are several different programs which you can use to make removal easy. These are designed to be used by anyone, so even the computer illiterate can cleanse their computers. The most well known is called Ad-Aware by Lavasoft (www.lavasoftusa.com/software/adaware/), I use it in combination with Spy-bot Search and Destroy (www.safer-networking.org/en). What Ad-Aware doesn't catch Spy-bot usually will. If this is the first time you've scanned your computer, you may find hundreds of programs which have installed themselves without your knowledge.

Once you've purged all the Adware from your computer, the next thing to do to prevent pop-ups is download a new browser. The latest version of Internet Explorer allows you to block unwanted pop-ups, but there are other web browsers such as Opera (opera.com) and Mozilla (mozilla.org) which are more secure than Internet Explorer and therefore don't allow Adware to install itself. Opera costs money to use, but you can download a free trial version

which pays for itself with a small text advertisement at the top of your page.

Mozilla is free (free as in no cost, and as in free speech, but that's another column). Both allow you to turn off pop-ups and have a built-in Google search bar, and both are made by people who care more about preventing your computer from inadvertently discovering the horrors of the Internet than the people who crafted Internet Explorer in the fiery depths of Redmond.

To be true to "truth-in-column-writing," I must tell you that I made up this week's question. I needed something to start the column. I chose it because I've heard a lot of people complaining about pop-ups. Now I'm looking for questions from real users, so if you've got a concern, send it to lws118@psu.edu with "Ask ASCII" in the subject line. I can only answer the ones in the column though, so only the funniest or most wildly applicable will get responses. Sorry, but I'm a student too, and must attend class, study and party in addition to helping confounded computer users.

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