



working for everyone

www.workingforeveryone.com

How-to Guide | **Working with employment agencies and recruiters**

Use this guide to help you:

- Understand different types of employment agencies
- Find recruiters that employ people in your field
- Build relationships with recruiters
- Be realistic about the recruitment process

Step 1 | **Understand different types of employment agencies**

While some organisations still hire directly, about 15%¹ of jobs are outsourced to employment agencies because of the time and work involved. These employment agencies fall broadly into two categories:

- 1. Commercial recruitment firms**
- 2. Public employment services organisations**

Commercial recruitment firms

- These are private organisations that help organisations fill permanent, temporary or contract roles for a fee.
- The fee paid by employers to recruitment firms is based on a percentage of the salary or hourly rate of the position they fill.
- Some organisations have 'preferred supplier' agreements and only use a select group of recruitment agencies. Other organisations use a variety of agencies depending on their need.
- Staff of commercial recruitment firms are often allocated sales and financial targets. This means they must conduct a certain number of

¹ www.employment.gov.au/employment-research-and-statistics

job seeker interviews, meetings with employers and other business development activities.

- Job seekers placed in permanent roles by commercial recruitment firms become an employee of the employer, while job seekers placed in temporary or short-term contract roles become an employee of the recruitment agency (which manages the timesheet and payroll process).

Public employment services organisations

- These are both private and not-for-profit organisations that are contracted by the government to help job seekers to find work.
- Working with public employment services organisations may be compulsory (for instance if you are unemployed and receive Newstart Allowance).
- The current employment services system is called *jobactive* and is funded by the Department of Employment. Agencies that work in this system are paid a fee to help job seekers, and an extra fee when a job seeker secures sustainable employment.
- *jobactive* providers are able to offer wage subsidies and other government support to employers, depending on current government policies and programs.
- *jobactive* providers are measured by a Star Rating system that compares the performance of different providers in achieving sustained employment outcomes for job seekers.

Organisations that focus on lower to semi-skilled contract roles within the industrial sector are called **labour hire firms**.

Step 2 | Find recruiters who employ people in your field

When looking at job roles listed by recruiters, take note of the contact name and number. Staff are usually allocated to different industries or to different working arrangements, such as permanent or temporary positions.

The **Recruitment and Consulting Services Association (RCSA)** is the peak body for the employment industry in both Australia and New Zealand. Their member directory, on their website, lets you search for recruitment agencies by location and industry (www.rcsa.com.au).

You can also search for other recruitment or employment agencies online, and many recruiters are also listed on social media sites such as [LinkedIn](#).

Step 3 | **Build relationships with recruiters**

Contact the recruitment firm and ask for the name of the person who looks after your industry or field. Tell them who you are, what you are looking for and the type of experience and skills you have.

Sample scripts:

'Hi, my name is John. I'm calling about the aged care role you advertised on Monday. I have two years experience in home and community care. Do you have a few moments to answer my queries about this position?'

'Hi, my name is John, I have 10 years experience as a labourer in the construction industry and am looking to register with you for temporary or contract positions. Do you have a moment to talk?'

When introducing yourself, be prepared to answer their questions about your work preferences (location, role, salary) and to talk briefly to your resume. Ask what the market is currently like in your industry or field, and which types of employers they work with. If they don't seem to be a good fit, ask them to suggest another recruitment firm you can contact.

Recruiters will often be interested in information you can give them about your industry, past employers or past colleagues, so be sure to ask if there is anything more you can share with them to help your application for work.

If the recruiter doesn't have time to talk, ask them to name a suitable day and time. Keep in mind that sometimes they can't provide information about the companies they are recruiting for due to confidentiality.

Step 4 | **Be realistic about the recruitment process**

It's important to maintain realistic expectations when working with recruitment firms. If you don't hear back from a recruiter or you learn your application was unsuccessful, try following up with a phone call. Don't be discouraged if it takes a few tries to get in touch with them.

Suggested script:

'I recently applied for the Customer Service role with Albeco Tours. Thank you for taking the time to send me an email to let me know I wasn't successful. I was hoping you may be able to help me by providing feedback as to where I missed the mark.'

If you are asked to meet with a recruiter, ask them how long the meeting will be and what to expect. You may have to fill out some paperwork and also provide your passport, tax file number and bank details. Depending on the employers they work with, you may also be required to take computer, literacy or skill assessments.

Recruiters can provide invaluable information about companies and your industry. Build relationships with a number of recruiters and don't forget they are just one of many ways to search for jobs.

Find related guides on our resources page
www.workingforeveryone.com/resources

Produced November 2017