

Personal connection still important in hunt for job

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I've heard the complaints. You send out hundreds of resumes

through job boards and other resources. None turn into an interview. If you question job seekers who recently landed work, I think you'll find many of them went beyond the resume and made some type of personal connection.

Yes, we start 2012 again emphasizing the importance of networking, and finding a way to make a face-to-face impact on the person you're trying to impress.

Numbers highlighted by the N.C. Career Resource Network show 80 percent of available jobs are never advertised. While some companies require a job be posted internally, it may not go beyond that.

"Many times, the job is filled internally. Other times, the hiring manager may network with colleagues to identify potential candidates outside of the organization," said Nathan Adams, a local professional resume writer and owner of First Impressions Resume

Center.

To add to that, more than 50 percent of employees find their new jobs through networking. Yes, reaching out to your list of acquaintances, even former colleagues, is a crucial part of a search.

More than 28 percent of new hires landed their job through a referral from someone who already worked at the company. Adams said, "Employers often turn to their most trusted employees for leads when it comes time to fill a position." It makes sense. Employers are more likely to trust a candidate they've heard a little about than someone who is just a name in a stack of resumes.

Possibly the boldest approach: Twenty-four percent of workers landed a new job by direct contact with an employer. But Adams warned about the preparation needed.

"You can't just pick up the phone and call an employer or waltz right into their offices and ask for a job. You need to conduct sufficient research on the company before you do any of this," he said. Focus on the company's mission, values, leadership and recent developments. And realize this isn't a possibility at ev-

ery company. From my experience, some smaller firms may respond better than large ones.

Finally, only 2.8 percent found their jobs through Internet sites. Other methods that ranked lower on the list included classified ads, employment offices and school placement offices or career centers.

"Don't totally ignore these avenues. Use your time wisely and spread your efforts across all these alternatives discussed and you'll be sure to have a more successful job search," said Adams.

If you'd like Adams' advice on your job search or resume help, check out www.firstimpression-scount.com. You can also tap into the resources of the N.C. Career Resource Network at www.ncsoicc.org.

I'm looking forward to 2012, and I hope you are, too. If you have questions or column ideas you'd like me to explore, please email me at bsisk@wncn.com

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