



# Contacting employers directly

## Prepare in advance

- Research employers you want to work for. Know what they do and what you can offer them.
- Work out the best way to contact employers. Is it best to call, email or visit them? Smaller employers, particularly for retail and hospitality jobs, often prefer personal approaches such as walk-ins.
- Have copies of your résumé and cover letter ready to hand out or email as needed. Tailor these to the specific job or employer.
- Think about and practise what you are going to say.

## Pick the right time to make contact

- Avoid peak times. At certain times of the day some businesses may be too busy to give you their attention. For example, early morning and meal times are the usual peak times for cafés and restaurants.
- Don't make contact when you are in a rush yourself. It's possible the employer may want to do an on-the-spot interview so choose a time when you can give them as much time as they need.

## Find the right person to talk to about vacancies

- Be polite to everyone in the business.
- Ask if you can speak to the person who deals with recruitment. If they're not available, ask for their name and contact details and when they might be available to talk to you.
- Alternatively you can provide your résumé and cover letter and ask when might be a good time to follow-up with them.



## Be ready to impress

- First impressions are very important. Dress appropriately.
- When talking to an employer portray a positive attitude, smile and be polite.
- Make sure you stand up straight and aren't slouching or leaning on reception counters or tables.
- Speak clearly. You might be nervous so try not to talk too fast.
- Don't put too much emphasis on whether they have current vacancies, just focus on making a good first impression.

## Gauge their interest

- If possible, when talking with the employer, look for an opportunity to briefly explain what you can offer them. For example, you might have specific skills that would suit the business.
- How did the employer respond to your approach? This will help you decide whether or not to follow-up with the employer.

## Follow-up

- Even if the employer doesn't have any current vacancies, if you think you would be a good fit for their business, make a note to follow them up in a week or two. You might end up at the top of their list when they are next recruiting.
- If they haven't had a chance to read your résumé, tell them that's no problem – you know they are busy and remind them your résumé shows why you are a good fit for their business.
- If they say they're not interested or you're not suitable for their workplace, take the time to ask for some feedback on why they think you are not suitable and then thank them for their time and consideration.

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