

Insider Secrets – Making the Most of the Job Network

Millions of dollars of your tax money goes to provide job search help to the unemployed via the Job Network. However many people do not get the help they need from the Job Network.

This Insider Secrets report is written by a former Job Network Manager! So you get the inside advice on how to maximise the help you get from the Job Network. After all... it's your tax dollars! But first some...

Background Information

In 1998 the Federal Government introduced major employment reforms by privatising employment services which had traditionally been delivered by the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) and the Department of Social Security.

The result of this privatisation is the Job Network, a national network of private, community and government organisations specialising in providing unemployed people, particularly disadvantaged and long-term unemployed people, access to the right job through Job Search Support and Intensive Support services. Who is eligible?

Most people are eligible to access Job Network services as long as they are not:

- working in paid employment for more than 15 hours per week
- a full-time student (unless you are only looking for apprenticeships or traineeships);
- an overseas visitor on a working holiday visa; or
- prohibited by law from working in Australia.

If you are not eligible for a Centrelink allowance you may still be able to get Job Search Support services from the Job Network member of your choice.

Job Network Insider Tips

Here's how to access and make the most of Job Network:

Centrelink- the Gateway to Job Network. Contact Centrelink to register for employment assistance and/or make a claim for income support. If Centrelink determines that you're ready for work you will be given an appointment with a Job Network member within the next two working days – this process is called RapidConnect.

Choosing your Job Network Member. When choosing your Job Network member it is wise to investigate their Star Rating, this is a measure of how successful they have been in securing employment for job seekers. It's also designed to measure how each Job Network member is performing compared to other providers in your area. You can obtain this information by looking at the JobSearch Kiosks at Centrelink, visiting www.jobsearch.gov.au or by calling them directly. The Star Ratings are out of 5 with 5 being the top score.

Can you change your Job Network member? Once you choose your Job Network member you are meant to stay with them until you find work. You can only change to another Job Network member if the working relationship has broken down completely (and there would need to be evidence of this). If you are unhappy with your Job Network member you should call 13 62 68 and ask about being transferred.

Once registered as a job seeker with your Job Network member, you will have access to Job Search Support Services. A Job Network card with your Job Seeker ID number will be issued to you in person or via mail.

Your Job Seeker ID number, this is used to identify you as being eligible for Job Network services. You will be asked to quote your Job Seeker ID when applying for advertised positions on the Australian Jobsearch Website www.jobsearch.gov.au.

Dress smart whenever you visit your provider! This will give your Job Network provider confidence that you are a serious job seeker and *they will be willing to send you off to the best interviews*. It is important that you impress the staff of your Job Network agency as they are the ones who shortlist applicants on behalf of employers. You will be less likely to get referred to good jobs (or any jobs) if you turn up with a casual approach to your clothing and grooming. Treat your meetings with them as you would a meeting with an employer.

Keep all your scheduled appointments and be punctual. Many job seekers are chronic ‘re-schedulers’, don’t be one of these. Your reliability will be recognised and more opportunities will come your way. Many job seekers don’t realise their reliability is being assessed by attendance to appointments with their Job Network member. If you are constantly changing appointment times or turning up late it can only be assumed you would do the same in a work situation – which means employment consultants will be reluctant to send you to interviews. Remember the employment consultant wants to maintain a good reputation for sending good potential staff to employers, otherwise employers will not deal with that Job Network office.

In addition, if you do not attend an appointment or job interview and don’t have a reasonable excuse, your Job Network provider is required to notify Centrelink. This could result in a temporary withdrawal of your income support.

Take your resume portfolio with you. Always have your resume and other documents such as references and certificates with you when meeting with your provider just in case you are rushed off to a job interview. Your resume should be in a good quality presentation folder – not a crumpled piece of paper in your bag!

Be specific about what type of job you want. Too many job seekers make the mistake of saying ‘Oh, I’ll do anything’. This is not at all helpful to your provider or yourself. Your provider needs to place you into one or two categories and there is no category called “anything”. You must identify specific job roles you are capable of doing right now.

Take advantage of the job search facilities. Your Job Network member is required to provide self service facilities to help you look for employment. Facilities include Australian JobSearch touch-screen kiosks, telephones, faxes and photocopying. You may need to ask where these facilities are if it is not immediately obvious.

Now for the BIGGEST SECRET of all – The Job Seeker Account. This is a *pool of funds* your Job Network member can access to purchase appropriate employment related services and products. This means you could ask your Job Network Member **to pay for your ACMA program fees**, plus:

- ✓ Training
- ✓ Licences
- ✓ Interview clothes
- ✓ Work clothes
- ✓ And even driving lessons and some child care.

Ask your Job Network member what they can do for you. As a general guide – your Job Network member will be more willing to access funds from the Job Seeker Account for you the longer you have been unemployed. Normally 3 months unemployment is the minimum.

Remember that this can be a way to start on the ACMA program and have your Job Network provider pay our fees...ask and be pushy it works!

NOTE: ACMA consistently assists people to quickly obtain career related positions rather than the “any job will do” approach of the Job Network Provider system.