

Tips for getting your foot in the door

Applying for advertised positions is an effective means of snagging your ideal job – but it isn't the only way to get your foot in the door.

Sometimes giving a prospective employer a taste of your talents can be all you need to bypass the standard application process and fast track your dream career.

Intern and work experience

Work experience can be particularly useful for graduates and those looking to make a career transition into a new field. Companies place high value on candidates who can hit the ground running, which makes real-world experience invaluable.

A short unpaid stint learning the ropes and putting your existing knowledge and skills into practice can illustrate your determination to break into a new industry, or your genuine interest in a particular company.

Many large employers offer internships, and even if the work experience available doesn't directly match your dream role, this opportunity can be a great way to get your foot in the door and showcase your potential.

Seek volunteer work

Volunteering can be a great way to show prospective employers you're a well-rounded candidate, with the added benefit of allowing you to do something positive for the community or a non-profit group. It can also be a great way to hone your talents in a work environment and introduce yourself to your ideal employer, while artfully sidestepping the recruitment process.

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Getting a little volunteer experience under your belt is easier than you think. For example, if you'd like to gain some rewarding, hands-on experience while studying vet nursing, [volunteering with the team at Australia Zoo](#) will further demonstrate your passion for the industry. If you're in marketing and would like to make the transition into event management, volunteering your skills and helping [Cancer Council Australia](#) make an upcoming event a success could be the perfect segue.

Tap into your network

There's a reason word of mouth advertising works so well – and the same can be said for landing a job via your existing networks. Get the word out to the people who know you, like you, and trust you, including past employers, colleagues, connections on online professional networks, and let them know you're in the market for a new career opportunity.

To help you get started, make sure all of your online profiles are up to date, mention your interest in new opportunities, and make a list of contacts to reconnect with. If you want to put your IT skills to good use at a large company like [Telstra](#) and you have a contact within their team, ask them to alert you to internally advertised positions, or to pass your resume on to the hiring manager.

Show you're serious

Ramp up your resume and stand out from the crowd. There are tons of guerrilla job hunting success stories online, including examples of candidates who have won dream roles by sending CEOs their resumes inside travel coffee mugs. Dare to be different – just be sure to appeal to the business you are targeting by getting a good feel for their company culture.

Use social platforms such as YouTube to your advantage. If you want to appeal to the sensibilities of a company such as [Wotif](#), posting a series of video blogs detailing your favourite travel apps will showcase your interests and personality. It might also be the point of difference needed to secure a position with their communications team.

Don't forget part time and contract roles. You might have your eye on a fashion buyer position at [Myer](#), but the opportunity to impress in a part-time merchandising role could be a fantastic foot in the door to move up the ranks.

Being your authentic self, building professional relationships and making genuine connections with career gatekeepers can prove invaluable in securing a fantastic position or transitioning into a [new career](#).