

Find out which companies are hiring and ask for referrals from your personal network for contacts in these places.

BE SELECTIVE

If you intend to approach search consultants, do so selectively. While using more consultants might maximize your opportunities, flooding the market with your CV and name creates the perception that you are desperate.

This may cause potential employers to shun away.

GET REFERRALS

Search consultants have limited time and they cannot possibly interview everyone.

If you have a personal referral, you stand a better chance of getting an appointment. Making that personal contact increases your chances of getting placed.

YOUR CV

It is crucial. The contents of your CV and how well - or badly - it is written often determine if you get that interview or not.

Treat your CV as if it was a business plan or sales proposal. If you are asking someone to invest thousands of dollars in you each year, give them a good reason to hire you.

Ask yourself: When you were hiring, what did you look for in a CV? Prepare your own with that in mind.

TIPS TO BOOST YOUR CV

- Not everyone knows your company, said Ms Cheng. "Include a brief description of its core business, revenue, staff strength and worldwide presence. Describe your division if you are working for a large MNC. Employers also look for the right cultural fit, so give a brief description of the corporate culture."
- Show that you planned and were in control of your career by explaining each career move you made in the past. Don't give just the year for each term of employment and explain any gaps.
- Most people who have been with an organisation for many years make the mistake of stating only their last designation. What will actually impress more are the promotions in-between.
- Attach reference letters. However, some employers are skeptical about these, as they believe that no one ever writes a bad reference letter. An alternative is to list the names and contact numbers of well-respected people in the community who are prepared to be your referees. But make sure you have their permission, or this may backfire.

- List your achievements in your last job. Ms Cheng said: "People often describe their responsibilities, but smart employers are more interested in the contributions the person made."

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