

# This Is How You Get on a Headhunter's Radar (and Find Awesome Jobs)



So you've made the decision that it's time for a new job and have started to reach out to friends about possible openings. It's nearly inevitable that you'll soon be asked, "Have you reached out to recruiters?"

Ironically, although the question seems straightforward, it's a tough one to answer. I'll admit, before entering the career services industry I couldn't tell you the difference between a recruiter, a headhunter, and a career coach.

Simply put: A [career coach](#) provides advice on anything and everything related to your career, an in-house [recruiter](#) acquires talent for their organization, and an agency recruiter, which is also known as a [headhunter](#), helps a multitude of companies find talent. So, when someone asks if you're working with recruiters plural, it's safe to say they're referring to headhunters.

Working with a headhunter comes with a number of potential benefits. Most importantly, it provides a clear path to a hiring manager's inbox. In addition, this person can give insight into what the company's looking for, tips for a successful interview, and even advice on salary negotiation (though [career coaches](#) can do this, too). Most receive commission, so the more money they get you, the more they'll receive in turn.

Oftentimes, headhunters will find you. You may receive an email or call on your cell or at work—seemingly from out of absolutely nowhere. In reality though, they've tracked you down in a highly intentional manner and see you as a possible fit for an opportunity.

While most recruiting agencies pay to subscribe to sites providing company org charts, emails and phone numbers, there are some ways to increase your visibility to up your chances of being contacted.

# 1. Get Yourself There

First, is your resume up-to-date? If not, here's how to [do it fast](#). If yes, share it with your network in order to increase your chances of receiving a referral.

How about your [social media](#)? Is it shiny and SFW? Have you thought about building a [personal website](#)? If you haven't yet, spent time building one out.

In addition to getting your social media platforms in great shape, you'll want to design a [LinkedIn profile](#) with [keywords](#) that's attention-grabbing while maximizing your experiences and accomplishments.

Not sure if you've checked off all those LinkedIn boxes? This worksheet will help.

# 2. Figure Out Which Headhunter Agency Is Right for You

Good first steps in finding agency names include: Asking friends who they've worked with in the past, your career coach (if you have one) for recommendations, HR professionals in your network for a referral (they often partner with agencies), or search for 'recruiters' or 'recruiting agencies' via LinkedIn or Google.

Check out agency sites online to find the necessary information on whether they're able to help you. Recruiting agencies aren't one-size-fits-all, so start by researching the industries in which the agency specializes.

Then take a look at their geographic reach. Some are nationwide while others are regional or even local. Lastly, be sure to look into the levels at which they typically place candidates (i.e., temp, full-time, entry-level, director level).

# 3. Get Your Name and Goals Front and Center

Once you've found the agency that fits your industry, location, and level, be brave and reach out. Since recruiters are extremely active on LinkedIn their profiles should be well-developed, that means you should take the time to research who you're dealing with.

You can either send a LinkedIn message or email (you can usually find an email address on the agency's site). Or, another option to know about is that many agencies have an area for job seekers to upload a resume for consideration. This step gets you into the company's candidate management system for future opportunities without you having to do much work.

In addition, you can also reach out via phone. Although most industries discourage unsolicited calls, "pounding the phones" happens to be a recruiting industry standard, and calls in this scenario are accepted and even encouraged. Regardless of your approach, you want to be sure you're able to highlight past experiences and accomplishments and specify what you're looking for next.

# 4. Follow-up Like It's Your Job

Set a reminder on your calendar to check in with the headhunter regularly. Whether you're being considered for a position, and the process seems to be dragging, or if you're waiting for the next opportunity to come along that may fit your profile, don't be afraid to reach out and politely ask for an update.

A recruiter may be dealing with hundreds of candidates spread out across a number of roles that they're looking to fill, and your goal is to make sure you don't get lost in the mix. One trick I like to suggest is to be generous yourself.

If they're having trouble filling certain positions outside your area of interest or skill set, suggest people in your network they might reach out to. This will make you a mutually beneficial asset and increase the likelihood that your name is thought of when a position that fits your qualifications comes about.

As you get comfortable adding headhunters to your job-search approach, remember not to take anything personally. And also understand that this is just one part of your strategy—don't make it the only thing you do and expect everything to fall in place just like that. Rather, think of it as a valuable tool that'll get you even closer to landing your dream job.

Source: *The Muse*