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Your Executive Ascent – Personally Delivered.  
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**HIDDEN JOB MARKET SECRETS**  
**Cold Calling Your Way into the Executive Suite**  
**By Debra Feldman, the JobWhiz™**  
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Rarely is anyone eager to initiate a cold call, especially to sell yourself rather than representing a professional service or product offering. Combine the usual discomforts of making an unsolicited contact with the high anxiety associated with job hunting and together they create a pretty stressful experience. So why would anyone put himself or herself through the agony of making cold calls to prospective employers when clicking on the Web and licking envelopes are the alternatives? The obvious answer! Cold calling really works!

Cold calling produces leads that result in job offers because personal connections are established very early in the process. Cold calling jump starts a successful search by establishing a relationship between you, the candidate, and a real live employer representative- you don't have to wait for the employer to call back in response to your resume or inquiry, you skip right to the first and critically necessary step -- speaking directly with a hiring manager, critical face time from the beginning, means a faster campaign.

Cold calling is among the top, proven job search techniques, especially for accessing the hidden job market. Were you aware that over 80% of executive placements are made through networking, personal introductions and referrals? If you don't use cold calling then you may be missing out on unadvertised jobs. Cold calling is more effective than just sending or emailing a resume because it allows you to create a personal relationship and have a specific contact person for follow up. You also obtain real time feedback on your candidate status and expand your network to include representatives at companies on your target employer list. Even when there is not a good fit immediately, it's a way for you to get your name short-listed for the next suitable opening. Then there's an added bonus sweetening your candidacy for employers: your unsolicited inquiry means no expensive recruitment fees. This may provide you with a competitive advantage over other applicants.

To minimize nerves and maximize potential for more positive results, follow these tips streamlining your approach and make your cold calls more effective and easy to execute.

1. Maximize your potential for success: choose a target company that your research shows can benefit from your skills and knowledge. The closer you fit the profile of an ideal candidate, the easier it will be to sell yourself. Match your background to the industry, your interests to their apparent strategy and your talents where you identify a challenge you can address without any learning curve. *Target the right company.*
2. Initiate contact with a company representative who is appropriate, usually not the President, CEO or COO. This means finding someone in a functional or operational role that will quickly assess your capabilities and recognize your value to their organization. *Target the right contact.*
3. HR is more likely to screen you out than to add headcount. While you may cold call HR to boost your status in response to an advertised position by establishing a personal connection, HR is not the right place to learn about *unadvertised* jobs in the hidden job market. To get the early leads and be an insider, you want to get in touch and begin to



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- cultivate a lasting relationship with a hiring manager who will help you and propose your name. *Target the right relationship.*
4. Timing is critical. If you sense that the person answering the phone is distracted or not cooperating, it's okay to graciously end the call, politely arranging to call back at another more convenient time or making a note to yourself that you need to try again after you figure out how not to interrupt this person again (ie, ask their assistant for an appointment.) *Target the right circumstances.*
  5. Don't be discouraged if the cold call doesn't get results the first time. Think of cold calling activities as an investment to establish new relationships with individuals affiliated with your target employers. Rome wasn't built in a day; it takes patience to find the right person with whom you have something in common both professionally and personally. *Target the right timing.*
  6. Everyone is busy and it is often a challenge to reach someone and have a conversation. If you don't get through on the first couple of attempts, call early or late in the day, send an email requesting a callback or telephone appointment, get an assistant to help or find another insider to arrange the call. Get to the contact's direct extension. *Target a direct contact.*
  7. Be prepared to say something relevant or provide some information of value based on your company research. Have some business small talk ready to share as a warm-up rather than charging ahead with your request to solicit job-hunting help. Try to make this a two-way, mutually gratifying exchange. *Target the right goals.*
  8. Cold calling is a very effective way of expanding your business contacts database with an additional benefit of connecting you to people who might have a job lead now or in the future to share with you. This is not all about instant results, scheduling an immediate job interview or getting your resume read; it's about making connections that eventually may help you find a new opportunity. *Target the right network.*
  9. Remember that you are the one asking for help and should be polite and respectful of the other person. At the same time, approaching cold calling activities as an exchange among equals, not as a subordinate is important. You are not asking for a job; you are proposing to make a measurable contribution for your mutual success. *Target the right career management strategy.*

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Debra Feldman is the JobWhiz™, a nationally-recognized expert who designs and personally implements swift, strategic, and customized senior level executive job search campaigns, banishing barriers that prevent immediate success. Her gift for cold calling - executed with high energy and savvy panache - connects candidates directly to decision makers, not HR. Network Purposefully™ with the JobWhiz, and compress your job search into mere weeks, using groundbreaking techniques profiled in Forbes magazine.

In addition to writing columns and conducting workshops for the AICPA, IEEE, Financial Executives International (FEI), Marketing Executives Networking Group (MENG), Financial Executives Networking Group (FENG), Technology Executives Networking Group (TENG), and Harvard Business School alumni, Debra is endorsed by NetShare, BlueSteps and ConstructionExecutive. The career officers at several top tier colleges and universities also recommend her. Contact Debra now at [www.JobWhiz.com](http://www.JobWhiz.com) to expedite your executive ascent!