



POLYTECHNIQUE
MONTREAL

UNIVERSITÉ
D'INGÉNIERIE

Career Counselling Service

SPONTANEOUS APPLICATIONS

Sending spontaneous applications can be an effective way to find a job or internship.

This checklist covers three key points:

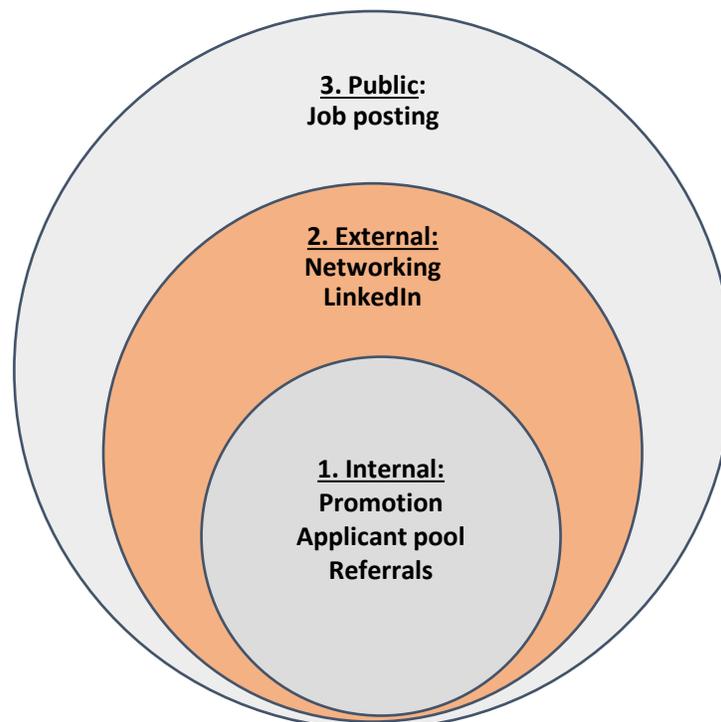
1. Finding job opportunities in the hidden market
2. Addressing spontaneous applications to managers
3. Offering your services rather than expressing your needs

1. Finding jobs in the hidden market

Did you know that most employment or internship opportunities are never posted? It's not because employers don't want to receive applications, it's just a matter of practicality. To save time and effort, many employers look for potential candidates in their immediate circle or broader professional network. That's what is known as the hidden market.

If employers aren't able to fill positions this way, they'll put a job posting on their website or a specialized job site. A lot of internship opportunities or jobs for recent graduates get filled quickly, before they're posted publicly. That's why most of the job postings you see call for several years of experience.

***Diagram:** The hiring manager starts by looking for potential candidates within their organization. Next, they'll turn to their external network. If they still haven't found the right person, they will post the job opening. (Some large companies always post jobs publicly as part of their recruiting procedures.)*



2. Addressing spontaneous applications to managers

The hiring manager is the person who needs to fill a position on their team. They may need someone to work on a new project, fill a vacancy or take on a new role. Before sending a spontaneous application, you should determine what department you'd like to work in, then contact the department manager. If you can't find the manager's name and email address, then send your application to the human resources department (or another engineer within the company).

To get information about job or internship opportunities, you need to find out who manages the teams working in your field and contact them directly. To do so, consider two complementary strategies: networking and searching the internet or other sources.

Contact your personal contacts— colleagues, friends, neighbours, etc.—and ask them what they know about the companies on your radar. Your fellow interns or internship supervisor may also be good sources of information. Ask them questions! And add them to your LinkedIn connections. This will make it easier for you to contact them in the future, when you're not working together anymore.

When looking for information online, business directories like the [ICRIQ](#) can be very helpful. It's also worthwhile to scan job postings, even if they're for jobs that don't quite match your skills and experience. You might find useful information about the companies that are hiring. A list of [career sites](#) is available on our website.

You also have to determine the best way to contact managers or recruiters, depending on the type of position you're looking for, as well as the company type and size. Whether you choose LinkedIn, email, a networking event or a simple phone call, remember that first impressions are important. Calling a manager directly is akin to jumping right into an interview. You'll need to have your resume and cover letter ready in case they ask for it. And don't forget to follow up!

3. Offering your services rather than expressing your needs

Spontaneous applications are very similar to applications submitted for a specific job posting. Your resume and cover letter should be specific and adjusted to the employer's needs. Recruiters are quick to spot generic applications, which are much less effective than tailored ones.

When sending an unsolicited application, you should offer your services to a manager. To do so, you first need to know what they're looking for. Don't call saying you need an internship. Instead, let them know what skills you have and why you're interested in working for their organization.

Rest assured that spontaneous applications aren't bothersome to employers. If the company doesn't have a position available but is interested in what you have to offer, they'll keep your resume on file as part of their HR management practices.