

## CAREER ADVICE FOR ASPIRING HEALTH RESEARCHERS

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### Summer Job Search (1): Tapping into the Hidden Job Market

It's the beginning of a new year and a perfect time to start your summer job search. Surprising as it may seem, it is *not too early*. If you wait until the student employment centres open in the summer, many of the most interesting jobs will already be filled. Why? Because only one in five jobs is ever advertised. The rest are filled through employers' networks of co-workers, colleagues, professional associates, friends and acquaintances. This is called the "**hidden job market**."

But how do you find out about these jobs? Through strategic networking.

"**Networking** is not about schmoozing our way to the top, but about establishing connections with people with whom we share interests."<sup>1</sup> You are connected to many people through your family, friends, school, work and community. Each has their own network. By tapping into the knowledge of the people in your immediate network, you are tapping into the collective knowledge of this web of networks.

But how? By speaking up! Let people know you're looking for a summer job and would appreciate any assistance they can give. The more specific you are about what skills, knowledge and experience you have to offer employers, the easier it will be for the members of your network to recognize opportunities that may be suitable. Develop a well-phrased introduction to your background and the kind of work you're seeking (no more than 30-seconds) that you can use in any conversation.

People will naturally *want to help*. And if they can't, they'll try to think of someone in their own network who may be able to offer assistance, advice or a referral. You'll be amazed by what you will learn and what hidden jobs you'll uncover!

Why not make a resolution for 2008 to develop a career development skill that will help you in your life *now* and throughout your career? Begin *today* and apply the art of networking to your summer job search.

**Our topic next month will be on:** Summer job search (2): Developing a professional resume

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<sup>1</sup> Rankin, Patricia and Joyce McCarl Nielsen. "Networking" [In] *Success Strategies for Women in Science: A Portable Mentor*. N.Y.: Elsevier, 2006, p.109.