

Effective Strategies

The best job search techniques for internationals in Shanghai

He or she who gets hired is not necessarily the one who can do that job best; but the one who knows the most about how to get hired.

Richard Lathrop, *Who's Hiring Who?*

There is no 'wrong way' to look for a job or no 'right way' to find a job, there are only degrees of likelihood of certain job search strategies leading or not leading to a good job. We will study here the best ways to search for a job in Shanghai...and the worst.

Jessica's Story

Jessica, a dynamic executive, had a great profile and she knew how to present it. She was very active in her job search, checked internet job boards, answered a print ad that fitted her profile perfectly, and sent well targeted mail to selected companies. She still did not get any interviews during the first two months.

But at the same time, she was networking a lot, and this is how she learned about a company from her own country that was in the process of recruiting a Chinese employee with a profile close to hers. She contacted them directly and after meeting together, the hiring manager decided to change the job description in order to hire her.

From recruiting a Chinese employee, they changed to recruiting a foreign manager with three great projects to start and two people to manage. Why? Because when meeting her, the hiring manager was convinced that she would be a real asset to the company and that she could lead the company well beyond what they had first targeted for the position.

50% of international job seekers choose to create their own company or to work independently

According to our survey, this is the most common way to start work in Shanghai for internationals: about 50% of job seekers who successfully secure a job create their own company or start to work independently. These entrepreneurs often already have some capital, or a spouse working in Shanghai who can offer financial security during the launching phase. This guide provides details about these opportunities in Chapter 14 ➔.

The best traditional channels

*Only 30% of all jobs available are advertised.
The remaining 70% are filled more discretely
by way of choosing from direct applicants,
networking, or accepting referrals.*

Oliver Draper, Expert Guide Shanghai

The job seekers in our survey found work through the following channels:

The best traditional channels

- 54% Networking
- 21% Direct Contact
- 9% Internet Job Boards
- 8% Chambers of Commerce
- 8% Others

So for international job seekers in Shanghai, the unpublished job market – the jobs that are not officially created and that can be reached mainly through networking and direct contact - is predominant, as it represents **75% (54%+21%)** of the jobs secured.

In the chapters focusing on each strategy, we will break down these statistics, in order to point out exactly which kind of networking and which kind of direct contact work best.