



10 ways to crack Michigan's 'hidden job market'

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For the 600,000 Michigan workers [seeking employment](#), finding a job can seem like panning for gold. The search is laborious and it can feel altogether fruitless.

That's why human resources executives from a few of the Ann Arbor region's top employers gathered Monday night to offer advice for jobseekers in a panel dubbed "**How to Get Hired in 2010.**"

The panel - coalesced by U.S. Rep. **John Dingell**, D-Michigan - attracted a capacity crowd of about 250 jobseekers at Eastern Michigan University.

"Finding a job is a full-time job," said **Walter Kraft**, EMU's vice president for communications. "It is far more than making a phone call and sending out a resume."

Here's AnnArbor.com's list, culled from 90 minutes of advice from the HR executives, of the **top 10 tips for landing a job in 2010.**

1. Network and tap any potential contacts you might have, even if you haven't talked with them in years. Some job openings aren't even posted online because employers fear being overwhelmed with interest. "There's a hidden job market out there," said **J. Paul Conway**, senior vice president of human resources for the [Oakwood Health System](#).

2. On your resume, use targeted keywords and certain phrases about your skill set

that will improve the chances that specialized resume-searching software will encounter your resume.

Many HR executives have to wade through [thousands of job applications](#). As a result, some recruiters are using specialized software to crawl giant resume databases, creating lists of job candidates who submitted resumes that include specific keywords or phrases detailing their skills.

For tips on the types of words and phrases to include, “Look at the online job description that’s given,” said **Kim Bankston**, HR director for [General Electric’s Advanced Manufacturing and Software Technology Center](#) in Van Buren Township.

3. Alter your resume and cover letter based on the specific positions you’re seeking.

“Make sure your resume is reflecting all your skill-sets and is tailored for the jobs you’re seeking,” Bankston said.

4. Conduct an exhaustive analysis of your skills and don’t underestimate their relevance. “There are jobs out there, but you’ve got to do a skills inventory,” Bankston said.

5. Attend networking events, connect with employment contacts online and leverage your alma mater’s career services office. “A lot of jobs filter through career services offices,” said **Toni Knechtges**, an EMU lecturer and representative for the [Society for Human Resource Management](#).

6. Create and rehearse a short speech that spells out your background, qualifications and vision. “Learn what we call an elevator speech - that is, two to three minutes, very crisp, detailed (description of) what I’ve done in my life,” Knechtges said. “Make sure it’s practiced.”

7. Pick the right references. “I often ask people - what is this reference going to say about you?” said **Jan Mulcrone**, director of human resources for the [University of](#)

Michigan Health System. “Don’t use a reference and not be sure what they’re going to say.”

8. Consider internships and more education. “Surprisingly, there are jobs available,” Dingell said. “And surprisingly it is sometimes hard to get people into those jobs.”

9. Anticipate interview questions. One example: Provide an “example of a time you had to solve a problem,” Mulcrone said. “You have to be able to think on your feet.”

10. Dress professionally, record a professional voicemail message and don’t get creative or funny with your e-mail address. “Think about how are you going to present yourself,” Malcrone said. “Put your best foot forward.”

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