

The Job Search Hail Mary

by Daniel P.

Part 1: Things You Need to Know

You've heard it a million times. *It's not what you know*; rather, *it's who you know* which will be the determining factor for you to land a job. As much as I hate to admit this, it's 100% true. All the family, friends, college professors.....the list goes on.....all of them said it, and all of them were right! There used to be a time where I believed if I had a great resume, tons of experience, a college degree, and a nice suit I would be able to score a touch-down and land a job, right? Wrong...dead wrong! After spending countless months scouring the Internet for job openings, sending out tons of resumes and cover letters, and never hearing back from hundreds of companies, I decided it was time for a change. I had to figure out a way to "develop connections" and discover ways to reach "insiders."

At this point, you're probably rolling your eyes and already writing this article off thinking, "I don't know anybody, and I'm not willing to appear at a company's door step with a tray of cookies for them to notice me." Well hold your horses right there cowboy, you will not be showing up to anyone's door step with a tray of freshly baked chocolate chips (unless of course, you would like to stop at mine, which in that case...let me get a glass of milk and I'm ready to dunk). Follow me as the following paragraphs progress, and I will show you a step-by-step procedure that will get your resume to the right people at the companies you're targeting. This method will take effort and time, but is that too much to ask in a day-and-age where millions of Americans are out of work? In 2011, we face a tough job market. Opportunities are far-and-few and the competition is aggressive. Desperate times call for desperate measures. If this were a game of football, as your coach, I would tell you it's time to throw the "Job Search Hail Mary." Now go deep, and let me explain the play.

Part 2: The Job Search Hail Mary

The procedure I've created is the "Job Search Hail Mary" (JSHM). This is an aggressive method to reach people personally with your resume and ask them to consider your credentials for employment opportunities. There are a couple of different variations of the JSHM that can be utilized, and I'll show you them all. But no matter what you, as a quarterback, decide to throw the ball with, the core concept remains the same----- the pursuit of personally reaching someone and developing connections at the companies you are targeting for employment opportunities.

First, I will address companies currently hiring. You're registered with all the popular job search websites (Monster, Career Builder, Experience, etc.) and you spend most of your day applying to tons of postings. In addition to searching these websites, you also visit specific company's websites browsing career links for available positions. Now these job search tactics are good for one thing and one thing only-----finding out about openings. I hate to burst your bubble, but the benefits of Internet job sites stops right here with simply finding out about openings. For the most part, applying for positions on these websites can be very frustrating.

I know it is because I've done it! I would spend about two hours per job opening to craft a tailored cover letter, attach my resume, and then press the submit button. Initially, electronically submitting sounds like a great idea. From the comfort of your home, in your pajamas, with a bowl of cookie dough ice cream on your lap you've got access to tons of jobs and all you have to do is click. But, you need to know that you, and thousands of other cookie dough lovers, are doing the exact same thing. These companies are bombarded with thousands of resumes and cover letters. Even if they wanted to read your credentials, the amount of resumes in their inbox is insurmountable. Employers are overwhelmed. As a result, most employers turn to personal referrals to fill open positions. A company's recruiter might open the first 10 resumes received in his email inbox, but the chances of your submission occupying the first 10 slots of 2,000 received, is slim to none. But make no mistake; Internet job websites do serve their purpose. They give us access to tons of jobs and that's exactly what we want! Having the knowledge of the openings is half the battle, and it's what we do with this knowledge that requires the JSHM.

Part 3 - Job Search Hail Mary: Scenario 1

Unleashed Sports Entertainment Inc. is hiring for a mid-level Sales Manager in their NYC office

- You see this posting on their career website, and you immediately apply.
- You know applying online is fruitless, so you begin to put the JSHM into motion.

The company's career website divulged some vital information that will be crucial in executing your plan. It told you that Unleashed Sports Entertainment Inc. is looking for a **SALES REP** in their **NYC OFFICE**. The *title of the job* and the *office location* are absolutely critical in your **Hail Mary Play**. This is where things get fun with JIGSAW and LINKED-IN.

Jigsaw is the world's largest online directory for business professional contact information. You have to sign up and pay a small fee per month, but in exchange, you'll have access to office phone numbers and business emails for millions of people. Jigsaw is only part of the equation as it works hand-in-hand with Linked-In and social networking websites to form dedicated vehicles facilitating networking among business professionals.

Step A:

Sign into Jigsaw and type **Unleashed Sports Entertainment Inc.**

- A ton of employees will appear because this company is world-wide and employs people across the globe. Since you can't contact all of these employees, we need to narrow your search.
- You're not concerned with people in the UK or Los Angeles, so narrow your search by choosing to sort-by-city; you'll see all of the NYC contacts compiled into a list grouped under the NYC headline.

Step A-2:

Sign into Linked-In and type, **Unleashed Sports Entertainment Inc.**

- A ton of employees will appear, but along the left hand side of the website will be a menu of checked off boxes for locations.
- Since you know the position is in the NYC office, only select the “Greater NYC Area” box.

*At this point, you are basically looking at two websites listing the employees who work at Unleashed Sports Entertainment Inc. in their New York City office location.

Step B:

Identify three reporting structures.

- Since the position is in Sales, let’s reach a Sales Professional. I recommend a director level because Senior Vice Presidents are too busy to respond to job inquiries. Therefore, our first target employee will be the **Director of Sales, Kristin Timberlake**.
- Select one human resources individual because human resources is responsible for qualifying candidates, so the **Director of Human Resources, Tommy Spears**, should be your next target.
- The last target you choose is a recruiter. Large firms often have their employment search outsourced through third party of recruiters. Therefore, the **Sales and Marketing Recruiter, Britney Aguilera**, is our final target

*Contact information listed in Jigsaw may not be current. To ensure you are targeting the right individual, double check their title and department with Linked-In. Linked-In tends to be current because the profiles are created by the actual users themselves, not by a third party company like Jigsaw. If you see a contact on Linked-In you like, and they’re on Jigsaw, you’ve got a match!

Step C:

Select your first targeted contact..... **Kristin Timberlake**

- You see her job status is current at Unleashed Sports Entertainment Inc., and according to both websites, she’s currently the Director of Sales.
- * If she is the Director of Sales on Linked-In, but listed under a different title on Jigsaw, it doesn’t matter. You’re not concerned with Jigsaw’s job title reliability. Linked-In will provide you with a current job title. However, you will use Jigsaw for her email address.
- Linked-In has her in the role you want, Director of Sales. Now trace her name on Jigsaw.
- Click **Kristin Timberlake**
- Purchase her contact information

*Kristin Timberlake:

Phone: (212)-234-5678,

Email: ktimberlake@unleashed.com

Step D:

Become an under-cover email investigator.

- Don't focus on Kristin's phone number. Generally, business people don't have the time to talk to everyone searching for a job. However, her e-mail is super important to you for two reasons:

First, you now have a direct way to reach an individual's email inbox and you're not going to have your resume reside in a pile of 1,000 on the Company's career website.

Second, purchasing Kristin's email, you have accessed the official email format for her company. THIS IS CRUCIAL. You don't have to spend any more money on purchasing Tommy or Britney's contact information because you now know that all employee emails are the same format:

FirstLetterofFirstNameFollowedByEntireLastName@unleashed.com

- With this information, you know that the Director of HR, Tommy Spears' email is tspears@unleashed.com and the Sales and Marketing Recruiter's email is baguilera@unleashed.com

Step E:

Writing emails to the three contacts.

- Customize each email. DO NOT USE A GENERIC MESSAGE AND JUST CHANGE THE PERSON'S NAME. These people work together. If they discover that they were all receiving the same email message, your genuine interest in their Company might be brought into question.

The email is very important. There are a couple of things we need to briefly emphasize.

1. Introduce yourself indicating how you know them and the purpose of your email.
2. Quickly sell your credentials in one paragraph.
3. Mention your contact information.

Sample Email:

Dear Ms. Timberlake:
A colleague of mine suggested I contact you directly regarding my online application for the Sales Rep position at Unleashed Sports Entertainment, Inc.

Currently, I am working in mobile software sales for Pineapple Technology. My core responsibilities include: supporting the new business, creating and pitching attractive proposals, developing leads, planning and allocating client budgets, and successfully closing deals resulting in Pineapple platforms across various mobile devices.

My undergraduate work was completed at National University, class of 2010. I continue to pursue enrichment courses in the evening to further enhance my skill level.

Unleashed Sports Entertainment has long been a respected brand in the world of organized and competitive fighting. My strong communication, sales, and management skills are the basis for me to contribute to your organization.

I am taking the opportunity to attach my resume detailing my academic and professional experience for your review. I look forward to hearing from you to discuss my experience and the position at Unleashed Sports Entertainment.

Sincerely,
Daniel

Swagger

Part 4: Email Aftermath

You won't always get a response from all three contacts you chose to email, but I can almost safely say that statistically one will respond. In fact, there is a good chance more than one person will respond, and in that case, you've scored a major touch-down. Kristin Timberlake may have responded to you as follows:

Dear Mr. Swagger:

Thank you for reaching out to me with your kind note. I have reviewed your resume and will forward your credentials to our hiring manager. If they are interested, they will contact you directly to arrange for an interview. Good luck in your job search endeavors.

-Kristin Timberlake

*Perfect, you're in. Kristin read the email and was impressed with your approach to personally contact her, and she's flattered you decided to call upon her for help. Some people enjoy helping others and feel a sense of accomplishment in doing so. Here's our response:

Ms. Timberlake:

I appreciate your time reviewing my credentials. Thank you for forwarding my materials to the hiring manager. Your willingness to assist me in my job search is appreciated.

-Daniel Swagger

Part 5: Turning a Positive or a Negative into a Contact

You now have an established dialogue with Kristin Timberlake. Either two things will happen. You're either going to receive a call for an interview, or you're not going to hear anything at all. Let's turn either a positive (the potential interview) or a negative (not getting the interview) into a viable contact.

Scenario 1: The Interview

You get the call from the Hiring Coordinator, Larry Dogali, and you find yourself sitting in Unleashed Sports Entertainment's office in NYC. To quote the A-Team, "I love it when a plan comes together." You threw the JSHM and the play panned out exactly as you hoped. You landed the interview! Now I'm not going to tell you how to handle the interview, that's an entirely different article, but I will tell you how the JSHM continues based upon the outcome of your interview.

Outcome 1: You Land the Job

- Great! Enjoy making money, fostering your career, and making contacts at your office.
- Use Facebook, Linked-In, and Twitter to continue to acquire and maintain contacts. You never know where people will land and when you can leverage that contact to change and obtain a higher position.

Outcome 2: You Don't Land the Job

This is the true test of the JSHM. You already have a good relationship with Kristin Timberlake, and now you've met, sat, and spoken with, Larry Dogali, the Hiring Coordinator. Larry is a great contact to have. All too often candidates go out on interviews, don't land the job, and forget about the individuals they have met along the way. **THIS IS THE BIGGEST MISTAKE YOU CAN MAKE!** Even though you didn't land this specific job, you **JUST MADE A PERSONAL CONTACT** in Larry Dogali, the Hiring Coordinator-----the **PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR FILLING JOBS!** Larry Dogali may play an important role in your future success.

Remember, even if you were not selected for the job at Unleashed, it is not a determining factor for your future success in business. If Unleashed Sports Entertainment is really the dream job you were hoping to have, you can't stop now! You just went from knowing no one at Unleashed to now having two solid contacts in Kristin and Larry.

Leveraging your contact with Larry:

- After the interview, you emailed Larry thanking him for his time and reiterating your interest in the position.
- After two weeks without any notification from Larry, email him again to follow-up on your status as a candidate.
- Larry sends you an email that the Company has filled the position with a more qualified candidate.
 - o How you handle this rejection is **ABSOLUTELY CRUCIAL** in your long-term relationship with Larry. We suggest the following email:

Dear Mr. Dogali:

I am disappointed that I was not selected for the position of Sales Rep at Unleashed Sports Entertainment. Your Company is a leader in the entertainment industry and an organization that would complement my career goals. Please retain my resume on file. If a position becomes available that closely matches my skill set, I would appreciate your consideration. I thank you in advance for your time and attention.

Regards,
Daniel Swagger

That's it. Now you've left the door open for future conversations and emails regarding more openings. Don't fool yourself, Unleashed will have positions that you might be better suited for in the future. What better contact to have than Larry Dogali? Monitor their website and if a

position becomes available, the following email could be sent to Larry:

Larry:

I hope all is going well with you since our meeting in your office on September 30, 2010. I wanted to reach out to you regarding your Company's advertised position in marketing. My current skill set closely matches the position requirements. I have taken the opportunity to attach my resume. I look forward to hearing from you.

-Daniel Swagger

And from this point the process starts all over again. Whether you get the interview or not, it doesn't matter. This is the art of the Job Search Hail Mary--developing contacts and relationships with people on the inside. Look at how many contacts you have developed at Unleashed Sports Entertainment? These contacts would not have existed if you persisted in limited your applications to only online application submissions.

Part 6 - Job Search Hail Mary: Scenario 2

This is an alternative to my Jigsaw/Linked-In method, and can serve as a good substitute. In the event that Jigsaw/Linked-In isn't returning the results you hoped for, here's another JSHM option.

Companies usually list their executives on their website. There's almost always a link that's called "Our Team," "The Front Office," "Board of Directors," "Company Profiles," or however they refer to it, the key here is a listing of names that can be leveraged by you. This sometimes makes it easier to go through Jigsaw/Linked-In because we know the information is up-to-date if it's coming from the company's website.

A list of individual names and accompanying positions is important to us. Here is how we can utilize that information:

- Go to UnleashedSportsEntertainmentInc.com
- Click the link for "Executive Profiles."
- Choose three contacts to target from that list.
- Click the link that says "Advertise with Us" usually located at the bottom of the website.

"Advertise with Us" will be a critical step in your JSHM. Most companies will freely give away contact information if it means they will make money, and advertising is usually a prime source of generating-revenue in many cases. Get excited if you see the following:

To advertise with Unleashed Sports Entertainment Inc, contact Brock Batista in our marketing department by email at bbatista@unleashed.com

- And there it is again..... the official email format that can now be utilized for the list of targets you just chose from their “Executive Profiles” link.
- Begin the Job Search Hail Mary emails.

Part 6 - Job Search Hail Mary: Scenario 3

If there's a company you want to work for, but they're not currently hiring, you can still build relationships and contacts with them for future positions. Take what I've explained to you in JSHM Scenarios 1 & 2, and instead of asking for a job interview, ask for employment consideration should a position become available that matches your credentials. The process is still the same to uncover emails and reach individuals, but in this scenario, the emphasis is on networking and building relationships. There's no harm in introducing yourself and making a connection even in the absence of available positions.

JSHM Networking Steps:

- Extend the introduction.
- Engage in email conversation.
- Follow through.

Part 7 – Conclusion

The Job Search Hail Mary is exactly what you need to crack-the-code and land your foot in the door. I was in your shoes. I was hoping for success, and out of necessity came invention. I'm happy my personal struggles brought me to a point where I could be able to create this process share it with you. The JSHM does work, and as living proof, I've successfully used this method to land interviews with multiple companies. I now have healthy relationships with many contacts in high positions in dream firms. I'm always researching, always networking, and always connecting. This is the art of developing relationships, networking, and building contacts. This is the Job Search Hail Mary.