

## Part 2: Applying for a Job in Germany

### 18 New Strategies for the Job Hunt



The following are absolute "musts" if you want to take advantage of all available opportunities for finding employment:

- Read through the job postings in German newspapers and magazines
- Surf the German employment web sites on the Internet
- Contact a personnel-consultant
- Keep on the look-out for job fairs and visit them
- Visit industry fairs
- Go to the German employment agency

- Send "blind" applications
- Post your resume on Internet recruiting sites
- Seek employers via the Internet, look for any job offerings or job postings and application possibilities
- Seek out industry-specific publications and web sites for employment ads or postings
- Join professional organizations to build a network (see Chapter 29)
- Tell your friends and professional acquaintances that you are looking for employment
- Work for temporary employment agencies to become known by and to get to know different businesses

### **Job postings in German newspapers and magazines**

When you start your job search, your first priority should be to comb through the job postings in the Saturday edition of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* newspaper ([www.faz.de](http://www.faz.de)) and the *Süddeutschen Zeitung* ([www.sueddeutsche.de](http://www.sueddeutsche.de)). These two German newspapers contain the most attractive job listings that can be found Germany-wide. If you are focusing your job search on a specific geographic area, or if you are looking for small or medium-sized employers, you should concentrate your attention on the job listings in the Saturday editions of local-area newspapers. Additionally, industry specific magazines and journals are also an important job information source. Take a look at [www.wuv.de](http://www.wuv.de) for jobs in the advertising industry and [www.computerwoche.de](http://www.computerwoche.de) or [www.heisejobs.de](http://www.heisejobs.de) for jobs in the IT industry.

### **Job searches on the Internet**

Looking for jobs posted on the Internet and then sending an application per e-mail or over an online form is a standard strategy in every comprehensive job search. After a consolidation phase of around 100 job search machines used in Germany during the years 2000-01, the following managed to survive (listed in order of popularity):

- [www.jobpilot.de](http://www.jobpilot.de)
- [www.jobscout24.de](http://www.jobscout24.de)

- [www.stepstone.de](http://www.stepstone.de)
- [www.monster.de](http://www.monster.de)
- [www.stellenanzeigen.de](http://www.stellenanzeigen.de)
- [www.top-jobs.de](http://www.top-jobs.de)
- [www.jobsintown.de](http://www.jobsintown.de)
- [www.jobs.de](http://www.jobs.de)
- [www.jobuniverse.de](http://www.jobuniverse.de)
- [www.worldwidejobs.de](http://www.worldwidejobs.de)

A current version of this list, as well as a list of the job search machines in Switzerland and Austria can be found under this book's website at [www.business-knigge.com](http://www.business-knigge.com). Many other job offers can also be found on the Internet sites of business magazines such as [www.wirtschaftswoche.de](http://www.wirtschaftswoche.de), [www.capital.de](http://www.capital.de), [www.jungekarriere.de](http://www.jungekarriere.de), [www.handelsblatt.com](http://www.handelsblatt.com) und [www.ftd.de](http://www.ftd.de), and major newspapers like [www.faz.de](http://www.faz.de), [www.zeit.de](http://www.zeit.de) und [www.sueddeutsche.de](http://www.sueddeutsche.de). You may notice that job postings for the IT industry and other specialized industries tend to dominate the offers listed on the web, while jobs in marketing, sales, and distribution tend to take the back burner. This may be an indication that personnel for the latter can be found more locally, and that recruitment for these positions is carried out on shorter notice.

Take advantage of the opportunity that most Internet job sites offer and post your profile and resume online. This feature, as well as a job mail service, is standard for many job search websites and is often free of charge.

### **Contacting a personnel-consultant**

Personnel consultants and professional search firms or "head hunters" are probably most helpful for those looking for top management and professional positions. If you are looking for a job with an annual income over €100.000, it is definitely worth contacting a professional search firm. The biggest search firms in Germany include Kienbaum Executive Consultants, Heidrick & Stuggles, Mülder & Partner, and Ray & Berndtson Unternehmensberatung Management Consultancy. The best way to find contact persons and addresses for these and similar companies is to look in the major German newspapers and in *Handelsblatt* (Merchant Page) [www.handelsblatt.de](http://www.handelsblatt.de). The consulting

firms' current job advertisements will also give you an idea of their target clientele and their business sector orientation.

Professional search firms charge related fees for their services. These fees may be paid by the employer or the employee. Be sure to clarify the fee structure and services offered.

### **Visiting job fairs**

College and university graduates and those beginning a career should take advantage of job fairs to make first contacts and to get a feel for their dream company. Industry-oriented fairs, like the Hanover Fair ([www.messe.de](http://www.messe.de)) are also interesting because they have become platforms for making contacts with job applicants. A few of the more popular, industry-specific fairs are:

- [www.academics.de](http://www.academics.de) (science)
- [www.access.de](http://www.access.de) (IT professionals)
- [www.come-to-cebit.de](http://www.come-to-cebit.de) or [www.cebit.career-online.de](http://www.cebit.career-online.de) (... look under CeBIT JOBMARKET)
- [www.iqb.de](http://www.iqb.de) (law professionals)
- [www.career.de](http://www.career.de) (mechanical and electrical engineers and physicists)
- [www.medizininfo.de](http://www.medizininfo.de) and [www.jobcenter-medizin.de](http://www.jobcenter-medizin.de) (medical professionals)
- [www.bioberufe.de](http://www.bioberufe.de) (biology and related areas)
- [www.consulting-days.de](http://www.consulting-days.de) und
- [www.absolventenkongress.de](http://www.absolventenkongress.de) (graduates and career starters)
- [www.connecticum.de](http://www.connecticum.de) (international job fair)
- [www.jobfair24.de](http://www.jobfair24.de) (virtual job fair)

When it comes to job fairs, the most important thing to remember is to be well prepared to make a good first impression. This goes for your own self-portrayal (What do I want? – What do I have to offer? – How do others perceive me?) and for the information that you bring with you (resumes and/or business cards).

## **The German Employment Office**

It is suggested that you personally go to the employment agency as soon as you start your job hunt. Not only do they have many job offers, but they can also provide you with application tips and information on government-sponsored job placements. This is also the place where foreigners can get information on the conditions that must be met to work in Germany, and how to go about getting a German work permit.

## **Sending "blind" job applications**

You will often hear German job applicants claiming to have sent 50 or even 100 applications without having any success in finding a job. At the same time, many companies receive stacks of applicant mail when they have no concrete need for new employees. For this reason, many people who send "blind" or speculative applications, or who apply to a company on their own initiative will end up with a standard letter of refusal in their mailboxes. However, for individuals who have a special skill to offer or for those applicants who wish to gauge their employability, a blind application makes a lot of sense. There are two approaches that can be taken:

- **A conventional written job application:** If you choose this approach, it is important that your cover letter points out that you have specific and marketable skills to offer.
- **Applying via e-mail and your homepage:** This is the best option both for you and the personnel department. It is important that you write a short and concise e-mail as a substitute for a cover letter and that you then attach your resume. Or, instead of sending your resume, you can list all of your personal data, objectives, references and diplomas on your homepage, and include your homepage link in your e-mail.

Finally, if you really want to tune-up your application skills, the best recommendation that we can make is to take part in an application seminar.

In fact, if you would like to couple it with a language course in Germany, you can find more information at: [www.learn-german.com](http://www.learn-german.com).

If you still have questions about applying for a job, consider taking a look at the German web-site [www.wer-weiss-was.de](http://www.wer-weiss-was.de) where you can search for advice and get expert answers to common career-oriented questions.

This article is an excerpt from Mind Your Manners – Tips for Business Professionals Visiting Germany by Gretchen Schaupp and Joachim Graff, (DATAKONTEXT, ISBN: 978-3-89577-361-7).

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