

A FOCUSED APPROACH TO JOB SEARCH STRATEGY

The following discussion is adapted from one of the best books on the subject of job search, *New Rules for the Job Search Game-Why Today's Managers Hire-And Why They Don't* by Jackie Larson and Cheri Comstock. It's not targeted at the MBA, but the general approach is one that these two recruiting consultants have found to be most effective.

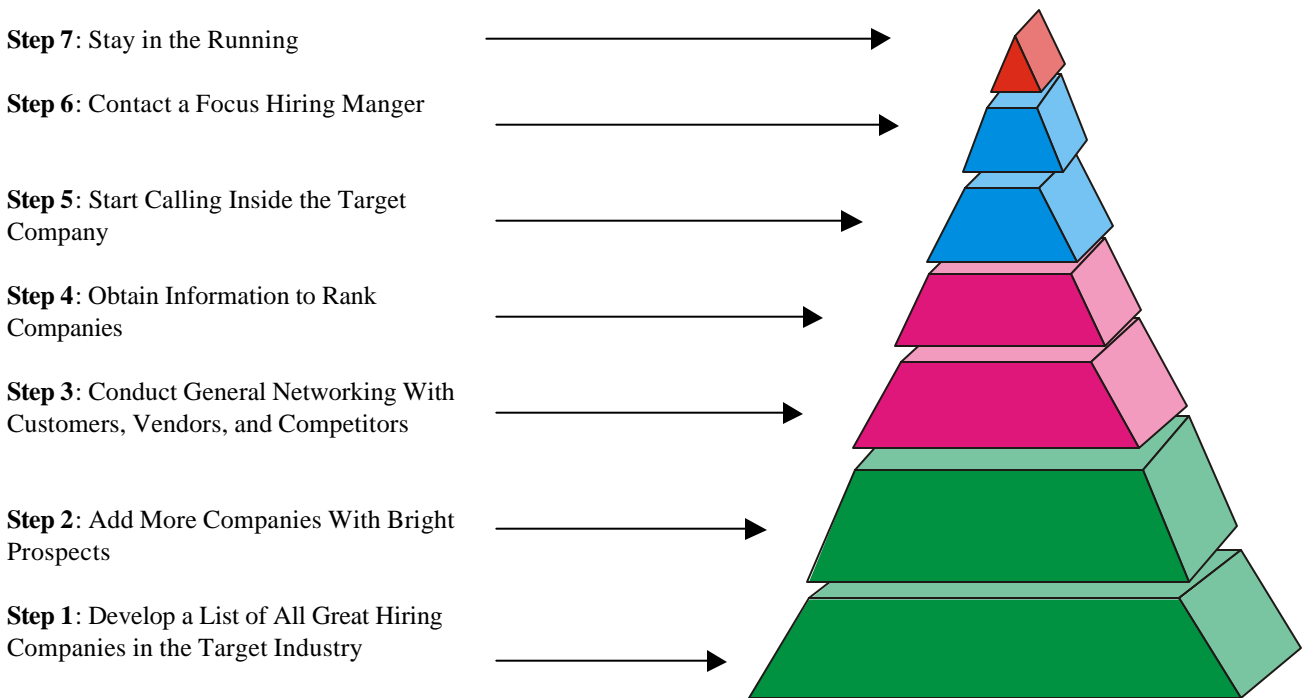
The Focus Method: A Revolutionary Seven-Step Strategy to Find the Best Hiring Companies

The following outlines the process of finding the great and growing companies to target. Don't be intimidated by this method's apparent complexity.

The Focus Method is a summary of the different ways that those who have obtained great jobs went about their search. These are tried, tested and many-times-validated methods that managers in high growth companies and successful job hunters found successful.

Seven Steps of the Focus Method

The key rules for a successful job hunt are to be looking where the other job hunters don't, to focus on the small, fast-growing hiring company, and to work a few (three or four) at a time. Focus on the information that people who buy stock look at—don't look where all the other job hunters look.



THE FOCUS METHOD

1. Develop a list of all great hiring companies
 - a. Decide which broad industry to target based on your prior background, interest, and experience.
 - b. Go to the College of Business Library or the Boulder Public Library and find these five magazines:
 - Business Week's *100 Best Small Companies*
 - Fortune's *100 Fastest Growing Companies*
 - Forbe's *200 Best Small Companies*
 - Inc.'s *100 Fastest Growing Public Companies*
 - Inc.'s *500 List of Most Rapidly Growing Private Companies*

If you are interested in an international job, the larger companies have international offices. You can check the *Directory of American Firms Operating in Foreign Countries*, which is available in the College of Business Library.
 - c. Review each of these issues and write down the names of any companies in your targeted industry, along with any information about them.
 - d. Find the companies' corporate headquarters and phone numbers if not listed in the magazines. (You might have to call information [(area code) 555-1212] to find some of the numbers). The Boulder Public Library carries the *Directory of Corporate Affiliates* which lists many of these headquarters.
 - e. Call the headquarters and see whether there is a location in your preferred geographic area. If there is, ask them to mail an investor-relations package or an annual report, at the minimum. If the company isn't publicly traded, ask for a public relations (PR) packet or a recruitment/employment package.

2. Add to your list companies whose "stock is recommended purchase" by the experts. These are usually companies who...
 - ...are hiring many new employees (greater than 20 percent per year).
 - ...are consistently increasing sales/revenue and profits (greater than 20 percent per year).
 - ...have a new, innovative product that is the best or close second in its market niche.
 - a. Ask any librarian for local business periodicals, review the business section in the local newspapers and add any possibilities to your list. The Boulder Public Library has a complete listing of all Boulder County businesses upstairs in the reference section, including many annual reports and clippings of all past news articles. *The Boulder County Business Report*, a monthly business journal, also has past issues on line at <http://www.bcbr.com>, as does the *Denver Business Journal* at <http://www.amcity.com/denver>.

- b. If you're not choosy about location, review last year's issues of *the Investor's Business Daily* of the *Wall Street Journal Transcript* and add any company in your focused industry whose prospects look bright.
- c. Get annual reports sent from some of the small company, aggressive growth and industry specific mutual funds. Look for your industry segment in the annual report and add those companies to your list. The Business Library has a number of computer databases including:
 - ABI-INFORM: Indexes articles in scholarly business journals. Covers 1986-present.
 - Compact Disclosure: Amalgam of 10-K and annual reports for U.S. public companies. Includes management and lengthy financial information. Monthly updates. Latest year only, but four years of data.
 - Hoovers Company and Industry Database: Overviews of more than 1,500 public, private, emerging, and international companies and almost 200 industries. Information on history, competitors, product, brand name, operations, and some financial data. Good starting place.
 - INFOTRAC General Business File: Profiles over 150,000 public and private U.S. companies, indexes trade and business magazines, and provides full text investment reports by various investment analysts on major public companies and industries. Short abstracts. Keyed to BUSINESS COLLECTION. Monthly updates.
 - Lexis/Nexis: Full-text (except Wall Street Journal) of newspapers, newswires, magazine articles, federal and state court cases, company annual and 10-K reports, and legislative matters.
 - National Trade Data Bank: Trade promotion and international economic data from federal agencies. Best place for international and country market information. Search by country or product.
 - Standard and Poor's Stock Reports: Profiles U.S. public companies, including such data as dividends, beta, ratios, earnings, sales and stock price performance. Includes industry outlooks and news headlines. Located on standalone workstation outside Buck Electronic Room.
 - Accounting and Tax on Disc: Comprehensive indexing and abstracts of articles from 200 prominent accounting, taxation and financial management journals. Selected relevant articles from 400 other business journals. *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times* and recent dissertations also indexed. Latest five years.
 - Banking Library: Covers banking laws and regulations. Includes United States code, FDIC and Federal Reserve publications, agency notices, and General Accounting Office publications.

- INFOTRAC Academic Index: Indexes and some abstracts of over 400 scholarly and popular magazines in the social sciences, humanities, general sciences, and current events. Includes indexing for the last six months of New York Times. Latest four years INFOTRAC Predicasts Indexes: Indexes trade, regional, and international magazines. Emphasis is on SIC codes and statistics relating to those codes. Short full text.

The Business Library has a great inventory of company literature and so does the CU Career Services Library.

- d. Call the financial newsletters or some of those listed in *Hulbert Guide to Financial Newsletters*, located in the Business Library. Ask to be sent a sample, and add their recommended stock buys in your industry to your list.
 - e. Call any stockbrokers in your area and ask for their recommended “Buy Stocks” in your industry.
3. Conduct your general networking.
 - a. Add any customers, suppliers, vendors, or competitors of the companies you’re interested in that might be doing well. Add them to your list and call their headquarters for an investor or public relations package.
 - b. Call the Chamber of Commerce and economic development groups in the towns of your interest. Ask for the industrial recruiter who is responsible for talking to new companies, and request help. Are there any fast growing companies in the area?
 - c. Determine whether your target industry has an annual trade show. If so, this is your best source of contacts. Make plans to attend. Ask for a copy of the attending companies and try to match any with others you find through different sources. These are great opportunities to review the products. Talk with other competitors and collect business cards and introduce yourself only to ask questions and learn more. You are still only researching and evaluating. Successful job hunters do not spend their time chasing down jobs where their competition is intense or where the company is not great and growing.
 - d. Use the Alumni Career Network Database at Career Services and the Business Career Center to view alumni and their employers and phone numbers. Call any in your industry for advice.
 4. Obtain enough information (number of employees, sales, and profits for the last three years) for each company to rank them A, B or C.
 - a. Many job hunters start with the companies in their geographic areas. They call them and ask for a packet, and if they can’t get one, they go back to the library and ask for help in finding more information about the company. (The library will have any published articles and annual reports, but it takes a lot longer to compile than making one phone call and having all the information sent directly). You need enough information to determine whether each company can be ranked as A, B or C. Is it as big as you’d like? Are its sales, revenues, and net income increasing? Does it have a unique product? Is it in a location you would like?
 - b. Complete a list of:
 - A’s—companies you want to pursue further

- B's—companies you might want to pursue further later or if your A's are exhausted
 - C's—companies to drop or eliminate
- c. Work on your A's in alphabetical groups of three or four at a time unless they rank themselves for you in another way, such as location or fit with your background. The College of Business Library has volumes of Standard & Poors directories which include company profiles, or you can call Standard & Poors at 800-642-2858 and pay \$9.95 for each company profile. Additionally, use the electronic resources listed previously and find articles written in the last three years, copy them, and bring them home to read.
5. Start using the telephone.
- a. Call the receptionist or secretary and ask for the name of the person to whom you would report.
 - b. Talk to that person's secretary.
 - c. Talk to a peer.
 - d. Talk to a customer.
 - e. Talk to a sales representative.
 - f. Talk to a dealer or distributor to see whether you can evaluate the product personally. If it appears that any of your first four A-target companies will probably not be hiring someone like you in the next year, put it on the bottom of the list and look at the next one on your list. Don't forget to keep in periodic contact with peers in the company in case hiring needs change.
6. Contact a hiring manager at a focus company.
- a. Put together a customized resume for a specific job you might be qualified for at each of your first A's, with a similar cover letter. Fax it to the person you would work directly for—the hiring manager. Follow up by mailing a copy on professional paper.
 - b. Call and inform the hiring manager that you are following up on your fax. Leave a voice mail message once a week for three weeks, and resend your fax each week.
 - c. If you can't get the hiring manager in person and your calls after three well-spaced messages aren't returned, ask the assistant or secretary for help. Try to schedule a time for a telephone conversation. Most hiring managers are just busy, it's not that they are uninterested.
 - d. Proceed with a phone conversation. Ask for a next step. Uncover any concerns the hiring manager might have. If there isn't a possibility of a position now, ask whether there might be one in the next year.
 - e. If you can't turn around a concern, ask for suggestions of other people you can talk to—people in a competitor's company, or perhaps relevant customers.
 - f. Get your foot in the door. Even if there is not a position available, meet with the hiring manager anyway. Get advice on your resume and job search. Also, leave a copy of your resume for future reference.

7. How to stay in the running.

- a. Whether or not there is a next step, leave a voice mail message the next day thanking the manager for any given insight, advice, etc. Offer another compliment and express your interest, excitement, and enthusiasm in moving forward (if you didn't get a definite rejection).
- b. Keep checking back until you receive a definite yes or no. Ask how often you should check (they might be interviewing many candidates). If you're not being scheduled for a second interview, your chances at this point are extremely small.
- c. Fax a copy of a recent article you found in the library (a "just-thinking-of-you" fax), or send a book or small, less than \$10 gift on a subject in which the hiring manager is personally interested.
- d. **STAY IN TOUCH.** Call and check about once a month. If you haven't had any success after several months, drop them from your list.

BUSINESS LIBRARY/CAREER DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

JOB SEARCH, INTERVIEWING SKILLS, RESUME WRITING

ALTERNATIVE CAREERS IN SECRET OPERATIONS	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
AMERICA’S 50 FASTEST GROWING JOBS	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
BUSINESS ETIQUETTE (VIDEO)	Rm. 206
CYBERSPACE RESUME KIT, GUIDE TO INTERNET JOB	
SEARCHING 1998-99	Rm. 206
DYNAMIC SALARY NEGOTIATIONS	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
HOW TO WORK A ROOM	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
INTERVIEW POWER	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
INTERVIEW PREP FLASH CARDS	Rm. 206
JOB HUNTING FOR DUMMIES	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
JOB SEEKER’S GUIDE TO SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE COMPANIES	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
JOBS AND CAREERS WITH NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
KAPLAN: REALITY 101	Rm. 206
RESUME WRITING: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE, 4 th Edition.....	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
SALARY NEGOTIATIONS (VIDEO)	Rm. 206
SHOW ME THE MONEY	Rm. 206
STAYING IN DEMAND.....	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
THE CAREER SOURCE ENCYCLOPEDIA (5 Vols.)	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
THE NEW RULES OF THE JOB SEARCH GAME.....	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
WHAT EMPLOYERS REALLY WANT	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
YOU CAN’T PLAY THE GAME IF YOU DON’T KNOW THE RULES.....	Rm. 346 (Reserve)

CAREER PLANNING

CAREER X-ROADS	Rm. 206
EXEC. JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES: GUIDE FOR CAREER	
TRANSFORM., 1994.....	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
THE MBA’S GUIDE TO SELF-ASSESSMENT AND CAREER	
DEVELOPMENT.....	Rm. 346 (HD38.C53)
WHAT COLOR IS YOUR PARACHUTE? 1997	Rm. 346 (Buck Room)

INTERNSHIPS

Internships 1999 (Peterson’s)	Rm. 206
Yale Daily News Guide to Internships	Rm. 206

SPECIALTY FIELDS

ASSOCIATION FOR INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT & RESEARCH.....	Rm. 206
CAREERS IN LOGISTICS	Rm. 206
COLORADO GUIDE TO FINANCING SOURCES	Rm. 206
HARVARD CAREER GUIDE: FINANCE.....	Rm. 206
HARVARD CAREER GUIDE: MANAGEMENT CONSULTING.....	Rm. 206
HOW TO GET THE ADVERTISING INTERNSHIP YOU WANT.....	Rm. 206
INVESTMENT BANKING	Rm. 206
MANAGEMENT CONSULTING (CD-ROM).....	Rm. 206
VENTURE CAPITAL LISTINGS	Rm. 206
50 COOLEST JOBS IN SPORTS	Rm. 206

COLORADO EMPLOYERS

BOULDER, COLORADO (Various Handouts).....	Rm. 206
BOULDER, COUNTY BUSINESS REPORT: BOOK OF LISTS, 1997.....	Rm. 206
BOULDER, COUNTY R&D MANUFACTURERS, 1997	Rm. 206
COLORADO ADVANTAGE 97’	Rm. 206
COLORADO BUSINESS DIRECTORY: DENVER METRO CHAMBER.....	Rm. 346 (HF 3161.C6)

MBA CAREER MANAGEMENT GUIDEBOOK.....Research Strategy and Resources
 COLORADO BUSINESS ECONOMIC OUTLOOK 97', 98'.....Rm. 206

COLORADO INTERNATIONAL TRADE DIRECTORY, 1997.....Rm. 206
 DENVER JOB BANK 98'Rm. 206
 DENVER METRO ASSOCIATIONS DIRECTORY, 1996.....Rm. 206
 DIRECTORY OF COLORADO MANUFACTURERS 96-97'Rm. 206
 ECONOMIC FORECAST: DENVER METRO CHAMBER.....Rm. 346 (HC107.C7U54)
 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY BOULDER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 96'.....Rm. 206
 METRO DENVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANIES, 96'Rm. 206
 THE 96-97' NORTHERN FRONT RANGE R&D MANUFACTURERS.....Rm. 206
 VENTURE CAPITAL IN THE ROCKIES, 14thRm. 206

NATIONAL EMPLOYER DIRECTORIES

ALMANAC OF AMERICAN EMPLOYERS.....Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
 BUSINESS RANKINGS ANNUAL.....Rm. 346 (HG 4050.B88)
 COMPANY VAULT REPORTS 98'Rm. 206
 CONSULTANTS AND CONSULTING ORG. DIRECTORY.....Rm. 346 (HD69.C6 C65)
 CORPORATE FINANCE SOURCE BOOK; GUIDE TO MAJOR CAPITAL (HG4057.A1565)
 DIRECTORY OF EXECUTIVE RECRUITERS, 98'Rm. 206
 DIRECTORY OF MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTSRm. 346 (HG65.F56)
 HOOVERS TOP 2500 EMPLOYERS.....Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
 INVESTMENT BANKING.....Rm. 346 (HG4359.W5)
 JOB HUNTER'S YELLOW PAGESRm. 346 (Buck Room)
 JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS AND LIBERAL ARTS
 GRADUATES, 93'Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
 MBA TRAK DIRECTORY OF EMPLOYERS, 96'Rm. 206
 MINORITY BUSINESS DIRECTORY, CU BOULDERRm. 206
 OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK DIRECTORY.....Rm. 346 (Circ Reference)
 PETERSON'S JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN BUSINESSRm. 346 (Buck Room)
 PLUNKETT'S INFO TECH INDUSTRY ALMANAC.....Rm. 346 (Buck Room)
 SAN FRANCISCO JOB BANK, 98'Rm. 206
 SMALL BUSINESS PROFILESRm. 346 (Bus Holdings)
 THE 100 BEST COMPANIES TO WORK FOR IN AMERICA.....Rm. 346 (HC107.C7U54)
 THE AMERICAN ALMANAC OF JOBS AND SALARIES.....(HD8038.U5W74)
 THE BEST COMPANIES FOR MINORITIES(HD8081.ADG73)
 THE CAREER GUIDE: DUN'S EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
 ENCYCLOPEDIA.....Rm. 346 (Buck Room)

INTERNATIONAL EMPLOYER DIRECTORIES

ALMANAC OF INTERNATIONAL JOBS & CAREERS (HF5549.5.E45K72)
 AMERICAN JOBS ABROADRm. 346 (Buck Room)
 DIRECTORY OF AMERICAN FIRMS OPERATING IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.....Rm. 346 (HG4538.A1D5)
 DIRECTORY OF FOREIGN FIRMS OPERATING IN THE USRm. 346 (HG4057.A155)
 GREENBOOK: INTL DIRECTORY OF MKTG RESEARCH
 COMPANIES & SRVCSRm. 346 (HF5415I56)
 INTERNATIONAL CASEBOOK, 97' (CHINA/HONG KONG)Rm. 206
 INTERNATIONAL CASEBOOK, 97' (SINGAPORE/MALAYSIA).....Rm. 206
 INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORY OF COMPANY HISTORIES (16 Vols).....Rm. 346 (HD2721 I56)
 NIKKEI PLACEMENT GUIDE INTERNSHIPRm. 206
 THE ERNST & YOUNG RESOURCE GUIDE TO GLOBAL MARKETSRm. 346 (HF1379.V36)
 THE MBA CAREER GUIDE, INTERNATIONAL, FALL 94', 96', SPR 97'Rm. 206

PERIODICALS

ASIAN WALL STREET JOURNAL.....	Rm. 346
ASPIRE NEWSLETTER.....	Rm. 206
BOULDER COUNTY BUSINESS REPORT (monthly).....	Rm. 206
BUSINESS WEEK: THE 100 BEST SMALL CORPORATIONS.....	Rm. 206
CAREERS & THE MBA.....	Rm. 206
DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL (weekly).....	Rm. 206
FORBE'S.....	Rm. 346
FORTUNE.....	Rm. 346
HOW TO CHOOSE A CAREER AND GRADUATE SCHOOL.....	Rm. 206
INC.....	Rm. 346
MBA ADVISOR.....	Rm. 206
MBA TRAK (MONTHLY).....	Rm. 206
PLANNING JOB CHOICES 98'.....	Rm. 206
SALES & MARKETING MANAGEMENT.....	Rm. 206
THE MBA NEWSLETTER.....	Rm. 206
WALL STREET JOURNAL.....	Rm. 346

INTERNET RESOURCES FOR THE MBA

The Business Career Center web site contains a host of information and links to other valuable resources. Check out the following headings on the Student Information page of our web site at <http://bus.colorado.edu/career>.

Career Development Web sites - (networking, resume writing, etc.)

General Job Search Web Sites/Resume Posting

Specific Career Related Posting - (Finance, Management Consulting, Technical, Training and Development, Tourism and Sports, and Venture Capital)

MBA Web Sites - (Specific recruiting and resource information for MBA students)

Web Sites by Geography - (International, United States)

Company Research Web Sites - (Company Research, Boulder/Denver Research Sites, Top 50 Boulder County Companies)

Salary and Cost of Living Information

Web sites for Minority Populations - (ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability)

INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES

On Campus

- **Career Services** (in Willard Hall, 492-6541) can provide a lot of information. There is an extensive library and many advisors to help you. Don't miss their web page at: <http://www.colorado.edu/careerservices/>
- **Study Abroad Office** (in the basement of the Environmental Design Building, next to the College of Music, 492-7741) Work abroad information is stored in yellow boxes in the reference library. You can find information on working, teaching English, internships, and volunteering abroad. You can also find CIEE's Work Abroad Program applications and a Work Abroad booklet (\$1) designed by the office.
- **Norlin Library** Books on working abroad are on reserve under "study abroad."

On the Study Abroad Web page (<http://www.colorado.edu/OIE/StudyAbroad>): There are two sections where you can find information on working abroad:

- **The Work Abroad and Travel section:** You'll find links to CIEE's Work and Volunteer Abroad pages and *the* resource for work abroad information; a link to the IOP pages which provides a very comprehensive list of links for various organizations and programs involved in teaching, working, and internships abroad.
- **The Returning Student Information section:** You'll find links to on- and off-campus organizations such as IAESTE, AISEC, etc.

In the Business School Library

- **Biotechnology Directory**-TP248.17 B56 Business Stacks
- **Corporate Finance Sourcebook**-HG 4057. A1565 Business Holdings
- **CorpTech Directory of Technology Companies**-Paper HG 4057. A16 Business Holdings, CD-ROM HG4057 .A16 Business Holdings
- **Directory of American Firms Operating in Foreign Countries**-HG4538.A1 D5 Business Holdings
- **Directory of Executive Recruiters** -HF5549.5.R44 D58 Business Holdings
- **Directory of Foreign Firms Operating in the United States**-HG4057.A155 Business Holdings
- **Harvard Business School Career Guide Finance**-HG65 .F56
- **Harvard Business School Career Guide Management Consulting**-HD69.C6 M363
- **Hoover's Handbook of World Business**-HF3010 .H66 Business Holdings
- **International Jobs** -Business Buck HF5549.5.E45 K63
- **Plunkett's InfoTech Industry Almanac**-Business Buck HC79.I55 P58

On the World Wide Web

Here are a few pages which are not included on IOP's page listed in the Work Abroad section of the CU Study Abroad Office homepage.

International MBA Vacancies Profiling Graduate Opportunities:

<http://www.hobsons.co.uk>

Asia-Net: <http://www.asia-net.com>

Asia-Net is for bi-lingual professionals with Japanese, Chinese or Korean language proficiency.

Asian Career Web: <http://www.rici.com>

Asian Career Web provides English/Asian bi-lingual job seekers with information regarding international careers and prospective employers in Asia-Pacific nations.

ChiliNet: <http://www.chilnet.cl>

Directory of opportunities in Chili.

Employment Opportunities in Australia (EOA): <http://www.employment.com>

Eurojobs: <http://www.eurojobs.com>

Eurojobs lists positions in Europe.

Indo Job Web: <http://www.indoweb.com>

Indo Job Web provides professional employment opportunities in Indonesia.

Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET): <http://www.jet.org/>

(JET) provides English teaching jobs in Japan for young college graduates from overseas.

Jobs.cz: <http://www.jobs.cz>

Jobs.cz offers opportunities in the Czech Republic.

On-line Career Center-Scandinavia: <http://occ.riksmedia.se/>

REED ONLINE: <http://www.reed.co.uk>

Reed Online lists professional jobs in the United Kingdom.

Telejob: <http://www.telejob.ethz.ch/>

Telejob offers positions in Switzerland.

Work@za: <http://www.mg.co.za>

Work@za provides on-line professional job opportunities from the Daily Mail and Guardian in South Africa.