So, you’ve been searching for a job for months. Maybe you’ve applied via job boards or you’ve visited companies in the flesh. Whatever methods you use, your efforts often fall flat. Even worse — not only are the jobs you’re finding less than stellar, the ones you do apply for go unanswered. What's the deal?

I’ll let you in on a little secret: There is such a thing as the hidden job market and if you aren’t tapping into it, you’re missing out. The Wall Street Journal even reports that about 80 percent of jobs are never advertised. This means there is, in fact, a secret place these jobs are hiding. And it’s up to you to find them. Here are some ways to do it:

**Network your butt off**
Someone always knows someone who knows someone. It’s just the way the world works. So, in order to find those someones, you need to make a conscious effort to meet and talk to them. That’s where networking comes in.

You don’t have to go to large events or attend major conferences to network effectively — though if you have the chance, these are great tactics. Letting your friends and family know that you’re on the job search, going to alma mater meetings, attending professional development workshops, or spreading the word with your professional network are all effective forms of networking. Remember, the more you do it, the greater your chances of locating those hidden jobs.

**Use niche job boards**
Often the hidden job market is located within niche job boards. Niche job boards cater to a specific profession or an industry, rather than to all job seekers as a whole. This is how hiring managers can recruit more fit candidates and avoid clogging up the employment pipeline. How do you find the right niche job board for you? First, find out which ones your industry finds credible. Next, investigate whether or not these niche job boards have the success rate you’re looking for. After all, although a niche job board may work in one industry, it doesn’t mean it will work in another.

**Go social**
I’m sure you’re aware of social media’s role in the job search. Well, it’s also the perfect place to find hidden jobs, and it’s as easy as a few clicks here and there.

Let’s say you were an engineer. If you search through Twitter by special hashtags, you can locate jobs that you may not have known about before. Facebook is also home to its own job board. LinkedIn is, obviously, a mecca for professionals and the job search. While these platforms all have elements of traditional job search methods, they present them in a modern way, bridging the gap between the job search and new communication methods.

While you may be frustrated in your job search, be sure to look into the hidden job market in order to expand your search. You’ll likely find a lot more options than letdowns in your future.

*What do you think? Do you utilize the hidden job market in your job search?*