DEVELOP YOUR OWN POSITION

Have you been applying to posted positions but haven’t found your perfect fit? Consider developing your own position by approaching employers and promoting your unique skill set. Here are a few steps to get you started.

**Step 1: Network, network, network**
Networking can help you tap into the ‘hidden’ job market. You never know who might be looking to hire. Your friends and family are a good place to start, but don’t stop there. Reach out to all your acquaintances…that contact who you met while volunteering might have a friend who is looking for an employee with your skill set. The more people you speak to, the more likely you are to find a lead.

**Step 2: Create your pitch**
There’s no point in networking if you feel flustered when you meet a potential employer. Put together a 30-second ‘career pitch’ that highlights your key strengths (you could draw from your resume), volunteer experience, academic background, work history and interests. Be clear about what you can offer—remember, you want to showcase how you can make a difference.

**Step 3: Identify possible employers**
Put together a list of 5 to 10 employers who you’d like to work for. Identify what you like about these employers and how you’d like to contribute to each workplace. Do you envision yourself in a particular role? What type of tasks do you hope to work on? What type of people do you want to work with? Go through your list and identify common threads. Then expand your search by applying to posted jobs that include these common characteristics.

**Step 4: Contact potential employers**
Get out there and contact employers. Try cold calling (see the FIND WORK SEARCH LEADS resource for tips) or set up informational interviews (see the HOW TO CONDUCT AN INFORMATIONAL MEETING resource). Bring a portfolio to demonstrate your skills. If you need help, contact Co-op and Career to meet with a co-op coordinator or a career educator. Keep positive and good luck with your search.