

COMPILING A TARGET LIST

A target list consists of companies that hire people for the type of positions you seek. You want a list of at least 50 and up to 100 organizations. If you are like most of my clients, that seems like a daunting task. Here are ways to identify companies and organizations that belong on your target list.

Publications

- **The Business Journals:** <https://www.bizjournals.com/>. These weekly publications cover the local business scene in several dozen U.S. cities, from Washington, D.C. to Honolulu. Articles, features, even ads can help you identify local companies and nonprofits of interest.
- **Industry- or location-specific publications.** Whether it's *Crain's New York Business* (<https://www.craigslist.com/>), *Variety* or *UpsizeMag.com* (a boutique online publication serving Minnesota's business community <https://upsizemag.com/>), there's a niche blog, newsletter or magazine that can help you identify target companies.

Lists, Lists, Lists

A great place to discover new companies are the many “top” and “best” lists that are published each year. Here are some of the most comprehensive lists.

- **The Book of Lists.** Each local Business Journal publishes an annual Book of Lists, which identifies 25-50 top local companies in dozens of categories.
- **Fortune 500.** The Fortune 500, the Global 500, Best Places to Work and many more lists can be found here: <https://fortune.com/rankings/>
- **Inc 5000.** *Inc* magazine covers startups, and their annual list focuses on privately held companies.
- **Fast Company.** Fast company focuses on innovation, whether it's in a Fortune 500 company or in a start-up. It's “World's Most Innovative Companies” list can help you find the niche company of your dreams:
<https://www.fastcompany.com/90603436/the-worlds-most-innovative-companies-2021>
- **Forbes.** Another business publication that compiles multiple useful lists. The Global 5000 is just one: <https://www.forbes.com/global2000/#43d5b72d335d>
- **Find Your Own List:** Drop a search term into your search engine to identify niche, customized lists in almost any industry. Including your geographic location can help to narrow a list. For example, a search for “Equine-Assisted Therapy” got me to this state-by-state list in a couple of clicks:
<https://www.doubledtrailers.com/find-an-equine-therapy-or-therapeutic->

[riding-center-near-you/#states](#). Equine-assisted therapy is a pretty niche field, so if I can find a list for this industry, you can find lists relevant to almost any field or job out there.

Industry Associations

If there is an industry or professional association related to your field, their membership list is a great source of target companies. Search for “association” + your industry or field.

- **Conference Attendees and Programs.** If there is an annual conference for the industry, can you get the attendee list? This is the most efficient way to identify all the players. If you can’t get the attendee list, get the program. Usually, speakers and presenters are identified by company. Organizations that advertise in the program or have booths in the exhibition hall are also potential targets.

Non-Profit Listings

- **Guidestar.org.** If you are interested in the foundation or non-profit sector, www.Guidestar.org has a fabulous search tool. Plug in the topic, and all non-profits related to that topic pop up. A national search for Equine-Assisted Therapy turned up 586 organizations in the United States. Narrowing the search to Maryland yielded 10 organizations. Note that you will have to register with Guidestar, but it’s free.
- **Council on Foundations:** If you are interested in working for foundations, check out www.COF.org. They don’t have lists of foundations per se, but if you search for a type of foundation, such as “Family Foundations,” you can dig up some names.
- **The Chronicle of Philanthropy:** This free publication is another excellent source of information on foundations, including job postings. You do have to register, but it’s free.

LinkedIn, Indeed etc.

All the major career and job search sites allow you to search for companies. LinkedIn identified three companies when I searched for Equine-Assisted Therapy. You can also plug in the title of the role you are seeking, and check LinkedIn for where people with that title work, or what companies are hiring for that title on Indeed, Monster etc.

Washington, D.C. Resources

I am based in the Washington, D.C. area, so here are some local resources.

- **Fairfax County Economic Development Authority.** The EDA website provides a list of the top Fairfax County companies, with links to the websites.
www.fairfaxcountyeda.org
- **Northern Virginia Technology Council.** The member directory is a good source of potential employers.
https://www.nvtc.org/NVTC/Membership/Directories/Public_Directory_Alpha.aspx
- **Federal Times.** This weekly publication, aimed at the federal government, helps identify agencies and offices that may appeal to you. And their advertisers are a veritable who's who in government contracting. www.federaltimes.com

The Yellow Pages

Laugh if you want to, Google it if you are too young to know what I am talking about, but for certain sectors, the *Yellow Pages* (www.yellowpages.com) can provide a quick overview of local companies in a specific sector. For example, if you are looking for restaurant or food service jobs, the *Yellow Pages* is an efficient way to compile a local list.