

NETWORKING

Ever heard the phrase, "It's not what you know, it's who you know"? To expand who you know, you need to network. Networking is the process of developing and maintaining relationships with people such as family, friends, former employers, professors and staff. It's often a concept that sounds more intimidating than it actually is. If you have ever asked a classmate for a suggestion on what class to take, then you have used your network. Networking connections are not always logical, and you never know who will lead you to the person you need. It's not all about what your network can do for you; you also need to offer your advice or connections to your contacts.

What is Networking?

The process of interacting with individuals who either have positions or work for organizations similar to those that interest you, who are willing to share information about their position or organization, or provide the names of others who have positions or work for organizations similar to those that interest you. Networking helps you learn about careers and establish relationships that can indirectly lead to a job.

Why is Networking Important?

- Networking is regarded as one of the most effective career exploration and job search strategies.
- 70-80% of job vacancies are never advertised. You may only be exposed to 20% of available jobs without networking.
- The amount of time it takes for you to find a job can be drastically reduced if you network.
- The referral process can put you in contact with key people you might otherwise never meet.
- Networking allows you to build a list of contacts in your field of interest.
- 75-85% of jobs are landed using networking.

POSSIBLE NETWORK CONTACTS

People you Know Well:

Your Parents
Your Parent's Friends
Your Friends
Your Friend's Parents
Church Members
Neighbors

People Related to the Industry:

Group/Club Members
Speakers from Meetings
Trade Association Members
Professors
Contacts from Professional Conferences
Past Colleagues or Clients
Past Supervisors
Executives

People Who Know People:

Chamber of Commerce
Local Bank Managers
Restaurant Owners
Career Counselors
Doctors/Dentists
Church Leaders
Local Reporters
Hair Dressers
Politicians
Teachers
Lawyers
Alumni

NETWORKING CONT.

TOOLS FOR BUILDING & MAINTAINING A NETWORK

Social Media:

- LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com/) is a professional networking site that allows registered users to maintain a list of people they know and trust. It is a great way to keep up with current contacts, join groups of interest, and also expand your network.

Career/Networking Events:

- Always have a resume prepared for use when attending internship/job fairs. Create a business card -it's a convenient and professional way to exchange contact information with others (especially at a networking event where you might not bring a resume).

Elevator Speech

- An elevator speech is a thirty-second speech prepared for instances where you may run into someone working for the company you are interested in or someone with more information. Having an elevator pitch prepared will help you to say what you want in a few sentences.
- Be clear that you are seeking information and be prepared to ask open-ended questions to help you gain information.

Be Prepared

- Ask for additional leads and contacts. Follow up with a thank you note, email, etc.