

NETWORKING SKILLS

I. Overview

- A. 70% of jobs are found through networking. It's the most productive thing you can do.
- B. Most jobs are found in rings 3 through 5.
- C. It's about relationships and information, not job hunting.

II. Effective job search networking includes:

- A. Systematic information gathering about employers which leads to...
- B. The identification of best potential employers which leads to...
- C. Conversations with people who work there which leads to...
- D. Opportunities as they arise.

III. Three types of contacts

- A. Initial contacts – People whom you know
- B. Secondary list – People who know people who could help you
- C. Key contacts – People who could help you

IV. What you gain from networking

- A. Getting the word out
- B. Information on your target market
- C. Information on your specific targets
- D. Advice and ideas
- E. Sponsors
- F. Referrals
- G. New friends and associates
- H. More control of your search

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

Two major reasons people do not network are Fear and Not Knowing How to Network.

I. Fears

- A. Rejection
- B. Appearing needy or weak
- C. Imposing on others – pushy or aggressive
- D. Being cold or impersonal
- E. Dealing with strangers
- F. Incurring obligations
- G. Wasting time
- H. Dealing with small talk
- I. Efforts may not be productive

How to offset fears: Dampen your critic, become your own coach (positive self talk)

II. Why people will not talk to you when you call

- A. They are too busy
- B. They do not know you
- E. They are afraid you will pressure them
- F. They do not know how to help you

III. Why people will talk to you when you call

- A. They know you
- B. You were referred
- C. You have something to offer
- D. They have probably been in transition in the past
- E. They feel they can be helpful
- F. They are flattered that you respect their opinions
- G. They want to be courteous

- H. They are curious
- I. They may need you someday
- J. They may be actively looking, too
- K. They may want to recruit a friend
- L. They have a desire to “help those who help themselves”
- M. They are altruistic
- N. Others once helped them

Networking Motivation

The secret is to find a motivation that is more compelling than the obstacles that block you from networking.

You probably won't be out there networking on a daily basis until you find YOUR compelling reason.

DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP! Once you have identified it, visualize it daily.

My compelling reason to network is: _____

Managing Your Attitude

- Think of it as Exploring or Researching instead of Networking
- Don't wait until it's fun
 - It may become fun only after you start to have some fun with it.
 - It may never become fun
- Be prepared and ready
- You are 3 to 5 people away from meeting anyone you want to – even if you have a valid and honest reason for doing so, and are clear and focused
- Be prepared. Practice what you will say.
- Exercise
- Maintain/expand your knowledge base
 - Journals
 - Magazines
 - Newspapers
 - Books
 - Movies
- Join organizations
 - Networking
 - Professional
 - Community
- Adopt a time management system
- Take a course in your field
- Attend a professional conference
- Balance your activities: Take a rest. Exercise. Enjoy your family.
- Keep your family informed.
- Expect highs and lows
- Be patient. This process takes time but it does work.
- Networking is a way of life, a career asset.

Personal Meetings (modify slightly for telephone meetings)

- Prepare
 - Goals and agenda
 - Conversation starters
 - Self introductions
- Explain your purpose and situation, briefly
- Make requests
 - Short, clear, specific, undemanding
 - Who do you know?...Use your name?
 - What do you recommend?
 - Avoid:
 - Asking for openings at this company
 - Transferring responsibility for your search. E.g.: "Keep your ears open and call me."
 - Gather some information from every meeting
 - Follow up promptly on referrals
 - Express thanks for time, referrals, and ideas
 - Reassure that you will treat his/her contacts with dignity
 - See if you can offer them ideas, contacts, etc.
 - Obtain their business card for later follow-up
 - Monitor conversation time: respect their time
 - Confirm the amount of time you need.
 - Get to your points quickly.
 - Be prepared.
 - Don't overstay your welcome.
 - Follow-up. Let your contact know what you did with their contacts.

After you land a job

- Be gracious to others who are networking
- Keeping up your network

Creating a Contact List

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| - Business associates | - Military Service |
| - Friends | - Volunteer associations |
| - Family | - Competitors |
| - Neighbors | - Vendors |
| - LHH current clients | - Secretaries |
| - LHH alumni | - Local Chamber of Commerce |
| - Retirees | - Professional associations |
| - Clergy | - Executive recruiters |
| - Reference librarians | - Accountants |
| - Newspaper editors/reporters | - Attorneys |
| - Christmas/Chanukah lists | - Bankers |
| - Consultants | - PR firms |
| - Articles | - Marketing directors from targeted firms |
| - Fraternities/sororities | - Athletics/sports/hobbies |

Telephone Techniques

1. Dress professionally when you place business calls. Your confidence and business approach come through on the telephone.
2. Stand up when you talk on the phone. You tend to have more energy and vitality when you stand.
3. Smile when you talk on the telephone. It will relax you and put you in a more positive frame of mind.
4. Ask if it is a convenient time to talk.
5. Be business like and clearly state the purpose of your call (what do you want and why are you calling?)
6. Find a private and quiet location to make your calls.
7. Have a clean desk or work area that is well organized and comfortable.
8. Call between 7:30 and 8:30 am, 10:30 and 11:30 am, or after 5:00 pm to catch the contact at his/her office.
9. Enlist the secretary's help. Ask if there are better times to call, or if she/he could set up the meeting.
10. A series of calls made at one sitting allows you to achieve greater calls than making calls intermittently.
11. Be confident. Your manner will largely determine how you will be received. (Don't make calls if you are depressed)
12. The less information you give the better.
13. Close by thanking them and confirming the meeting time and place.
14. Keep trying-persistence is the key.

Books and Directories

- CityBusiness book of Lists
- Contacts Influential
- Corporate Fact Book
- Minnesota Directory of Manufacturers