

Today, networking is becoming increasingly important in finding a job. **Networking means developing and keeping relationships with others (people you know, but don't really know, and new people you've never met before). Networking starts with a mindset and an intention to discover, explore, and be open to what you may encounter.**

Networking is how a job seeker finds out about those jobs that are never advertised. When networking, you must consider everyone you meet as a potential contact. Who? Family, friends, schoolmates, professional people, association members, just to name a few. The secret to succeeding is uncovering your network; ask each person in your network if they are willing to refer you and who they know in your field of interest. Below are some basic questions to ask your referral. Remember: be specific in your information you give to your contacts. The more specific you are in your needs, the easier it is for the contact to keep an eye out for any news.

Basic Questions to Ask Referrals:

- Do you know anyone who might have or know of a job opening in my field?
- Do you know anyone who might know someone who would?

Basic Questions to Ask People who you do not know:

- How did you obtain your position or get into this field?
- What do you like or dislike the most about your job?
- Do you have any suggestions on how a person with my qualifications and skills might find a job in this field?

Ten Critical Rules of Networking

1. Be open-minded: ongoing process. Personal and professional contacts have a way of coming together.
2. Be prepared: It does not do much good to be willing to network if you are not prepared to do so.
3. Treat those in your network as equals: Not a bureaucracy. Everyone is equal in the eyes of a Rolodex.
4. Choose members based on information, not position. Share and acquire info. Primary value is as a source of referrals and info.
5. Do not be afraid to ask: not to let your resources go to waste by being unused.
6. Do not waste your resources: You can abuse the members of your network only once- after that you may find that they make themselves unavailable to you.

7. Give without expectation: Although you do hope to reap some reward somewhere down the line, do not make doing so the only reason you network. If you give of yourself, only because you expect something in return, you leave yourself open for disappointment and can cause ill will between you and another member of your network.
8. Say thank you: Express your appreciation. If someone is helping you via networking, be certain you let him or her know how much you appreciate it.
9. Set realistic and achievable goals: No one else is going to do your entire network for you. You are in control of your own life, in the end, only you make the decisions and take the steps that determine how successful and productive your life is.
10. Be committed and determined to do whatever it takes: Networking requires commitment and patience. It is an ongoing process. You cannot build good networking relationships instantly; they take time to develop.

Do's of Networking

- Do try to give as much as you get from your network
- Report back to anyone who has given you a lead
- Be businesslike in your approach
- Continue to expand your network
- Be clear about what you are looking for

Don'ts of Networking

- Be afraid to ask for help that you may need
- Expect your network to function like a placement office
- Be discouraged if someone brushes you off
- Be shy
- Pass up any opportunities to network

Remember:

The key to finding a job is research. Know yourself and the industry you are trying to enter. Being specific in your needs and what you are looking for in a job will help take away some of the frustration in finding a job. If you know yourself, then you will be able to successfully market yourself to potential employers. Researching an industry will help determine if it is something you are really interested in obtaining. It will also help when you start having interviews. If you have any questions or need more information, please visit Student Career Services. Happy job hunting!