

NETWORKING

Networking is the process of building relationships with individuals who can provide information and connections that may assist in advancing one's career. It is important to note that networking helps to uncover the "hidden" job market and is **the most effective way to look for a job**. **Networking, however, is not just about finding a job**. It is also a way to gather information about careers and industries of interest to you.

Networking Tips

- Clarify your goals. Know which positions and industries you are generally interested in before you try to find contacts.
- Use resources such as the St. Louis Business Journal Book of Lists and try to create a list of employers you wish to explore.
- Research the employers as extensively as you can; websites are a great way to do this. This step is important because you will become more educated and will be able to better discuss your goals with your network contacts.
- Make a list of potential *people* to network with; this list can include classmates, friends, faculty, former employers, co-workers, coaches, association or club members, neighbors, church members, parents of your friends, individuals from your high school or college alumni association.
- Prepare a phone script for contacting employers and utilize employer research to create potential questions to ask.

Creating your Personal Pitch

- Create a 30-60 second statement that introduces you.
- Establish your work and/or educational situation
 - Work: include job title, career area, functional area, or experience overview
 - Education: include year of graduation, degree and major
- Pitch your positive points and personal accomplishments and qualities
- Clarify what you need or want in terms of objectives and goals

Follow through and follow-up

- Contact employers and conduct informational interviews.
- Follow up with employers and networking contacts by phone, email and/or mail.
- Always send thank you letters.
- Consistent follow up is essential.
- Remember that networking is a two-way street and that you must offer any assistance that you may be able to provide to others.

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