

Work Ministry

Networking

Introduction

Networking is all about communicating with people *on purpose*. The *purpose* of your reaching out to people for assistance with your career search is to inform and gain support for your efforts. A job search Network is a set of relationships of people sharing information such as the local job market, company and job leads, target company contacts, methods for the job search, feedback on the process, advice and support through to the successful conclusion of the search.

Where and how are the issues to plan and address for successful networking.

How to Network

Each of us is connected to a number of people through:

- Family and friends
- Peers
- Former companies and organizations
- Interest groups
- Job Support groups

Since managing time and effort is important, a job search includes decisions about investing time with people and assisting them while seeking help and assistance.

To be an effective Networker:

- Gather and give information without expectations
- Share ideas and contacts
- Take responsibility for follow up on any commitments to others for networking support
- Build a reputation for integrity and become a "center of influence" for your profession and contacts in the field
- Keep key people informed on both your process and progress

To focus your efforts, develop a list of target companies and continually work at getting contacts for reaching key people within those companies who are hiring managers or resources for reaching same.

Some potential networking errors include:

- Setting high expectations of others
- Asking someone for a job versus assistance in job search

Some networking tools are:

- Methods for tracking contacts, referrals, details of meetings and sources of information for the process
- A Broadcast sheet that summarizes core competencies, career goals and target companies to distribute to people in networking meetings
- Business cards for networking and social occasions that provide people with your key skill sets and contact information
- A draft of a thank you letter to send as needed to confirm actions taken and extend appreciation for the assistance provided

Where to Network

The general rule is to network with people in informal situations as appropriate, perhaps offering your business card for contact if a person indicates an interest in assisting you with a specific issue. More formally, there are networking groups throughout every community with a variety of resources available to support the process. The Work Ministry Website has lists of Faith-Based Organization resources and other sources as well that could be of assistance. Since Job Support groups are totally focused on the issue of assistance, that's the primary recommendation for spending time and energy for the process of career transition to new opportunities.

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