



Importance of Networking

When done correctly, Networking can be the most effective way in finding your ideal job. Most people find it difficult or uncomfortable to openly discuss their employment situation to strangers and even sometimes family and friends.

Informal Networking

Develop contacts – friends, family, neighbors, people in associations – anyone who can assist you in generating information and job leads. One of the first steps when entering the job market, whether its because you were laid-off or you are looking for a career change, you should contact everyone you know. You will be surprised by the people they know. Email is a perfectly acceptable way to network – keep your message brief and to the point.

If you are attending a gathering (birthday, holiday, etc.) it is appropriate to mention in casual conversation that you are seeking employment. Remember to obtain the phone numbers or email addresses on any leads – within the week you can follow-up.

Formal Job Search

Try going to a association or business meeting or event (local chamber networking events are great). You'll find that many of the participants have the same goals you do and will be glad to exchange business cards. Also, use the internet. Do you belong to any discussion groups? Visit discussion boards specifically geared toward job searching.

Job Search Networking Tips

- Conduct informational interviews with your contacts and ask for referrals for additional meetings
- Follow through with referrals, and always thank contacts in writing (email is fine)
- Create an inventory of your accomplishments, including your educational background and work history, to keep at hand should a chance encounter become a contact
- Make a list of the assets you will bring as a prospective employee
- Bring business cards and a pen
- Write some notes so you'll remember the details on who you have just met on the business cards you collect or in a notebook