



NETWORKING

Definition: A supportive system of sharing information and resources among individuals and groups having a common interest.

Types of Networking:

A) Networking for a job. Here are the steps:

1. Research local online job postings first: know who is hiring, which companies or businesses are offering those types of jobs, and what the demand is for that occupation.
2. Conduct career research via occupational inquiry on the occupation and informational interviewing on relevant companies/businesses to understand local labor market conditions for that type of job.
3. Have a polished, customized resume ready to distribute.
4. Know your "Elevator Pitch"- how to briefly introduce yourself and discuss your target job.
5. Make a networking list of people you know, including social media contacts; additionally, list relevant events and groups to attend.
6. Alert people on your networking list that you are in the market for a job and be specific.
7. Create a weekly calendar of events and groups to also attend.
8. Follow up with all leads your contacts provide and track the information.
9. When possible send handwritten thank you notes to people who provide you job leads; when not possible, send a thank you email.

B) Networking to gather information about an occupation. You conduct this type of networking when you wish to gain information about a particular type of job or industry. "Occupational inquiry" involves talking to people who are working in the field of interest. Here are the steps:

1. Research the occupation thoroughly online first.
2. Create **customized questions based on your non-negotiables and ideals (assessment results can help you figure them out), which will allow you to maximize your time with the person and the outcome of the visit.** Write down your questions before you begin contacting anyone. Ideally, work with a career advisor to formulate your questions.
3. Next, make a networking list of people you know, including contacts through social media.
4. Alert people on your networking list that you are gathering information about an occupation; do they know anyone in that field who may be willing to talk with you for 20-30 minutes?
5. Follow up with all leads via email; introduce yourself and mention who recommended that you contact them. Explain you are doing some career exploration, mention the mutual contact who referred you and explain that you would like to meet with her/him for about 20-30 minutes to learn about the occupation.
6. Meet with your leads, via Zoom or in person. DO NOT send a resume and do not take one with you if you are meeting in person. Dress business casual and, during the meeting, provide them a list of your written questions and have a copy for yourself. At the end of your meeting, ask them for a referral to another person in the occupation. Plan to meet with a minimum of three people, as it is important to have at least three data points from this research.
7. When possible send a handwritten thank you note; when not possible, send a thank you email.
8. Afterwards, write a journal entry about your experience, including any details you want to remember such as small talk and general impressions about the person and company. Ask yourself questions such as:
 - What did I learn? Are there alternative entry points?
 - Why is this person successful?
 - What did I like about the job?
 - What did not appeal to me?
 - Do I need to get more information?
9. Follow up with all leads and watch your network grow.
10. When you follow up with a lead, contact the original person who recommended the lead, thank them a second time, and let them know you followed through and the impact of the visits. You are building important relationships and possible future job leads.



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Types of Networking (continued):

C) Networking to gather information about a business, company, or organization. This type of networking is conducted at the specific organization/company with the holder of the job you would like to have or with the manager who oversees the people doing the type of work you would like to do. Here are the steps:

1. Research the company thoroughly online first.
2. Formulate questions based on what you are looking for in a company, as well as questions related to the occupation (see previous section). Write down your questions before you begin contacting anyone. You may want to review your questions with a career advisor.
3. Next, make a networking list of people you know, including through social media.
4. Alert people on your networking list that you are gathering information about a particular company; do they know anyone in that field at the company of interest who may be willing to talk with you for 20-30 minutes?
5. Follow up with all leads via email and/or a phone call; introduce yourself and mention who recommended that you contact them. If you are sending an email, type "Referral from (include mutual contact's name)" in the subject line. Explain you are doing some career research, mention the mutual contact who referred you and explain that you would like to meet with her/him for about 20-30 minutes to learn about company/business/organization.
6. Meet with your leads either in person or online. DO NOT take a resume or email one in advance! Dress business casual and have your written questions with you. Before you end the meeting, ask them for a referral to another person in the company or at a company that is similar. It is important to have more than one data point with this research.
7. When possible send a handwritten thank you note; when not possible, send a thank you email.
8. Write a journal entry about your experience, including any details you want to remember such as small talk and general impressions about the person and company. Ask yourself questions like:
 - What did I learn?
 - Is this the kind of job/work environment I want?
 - What other information would be useful?
9. Create a system, in a notebook or on your computer, for organizing all your answered questions and any additional information you'd like to remember.
10. Follow up with all leads and watch your network grow.
11. When you follow up with a lead, contact the original person who recommended the lead, thank them a second time, and let them know you followed through and the impact of the visits. You are building important relationships and possible future job leads.

D) Network to survey a need (for providing a service, business, or product) for self-employment purposes. Here are the steps:

1. Research online as much information as you can regarding the product or service. Know the competition. Know the major players locally and nationally, including which companies or businesses are offering that product/service.
2. For services, conduct occupational inquiry visits on the occupation. For businesses and products, conduct informational interviews on relevant companies/businesses to understand local labor market conditions (see previous two sections). Understand the demand for the product or service.
3. Have your marketing materials ready to distribute, particularly for feedback.
4. Know your "Elevator Pitch"- how to briefly introduce yourself and discuss your service/product.
5. Make a networking list of people you know and include social media contacts.
6. Alert people on your networking list, providing them information on what you are offering.
7. Follow up with all leads and track the information.
8. Send thank you notes (preferably handwritten, but emailed if you are not able to) to people who meet with you and for people who provide you leads.