Over 30% of job seekers when surveyed, indicated they obtained their job through someone they knew, someone in their “network.” Even when an opening is clearly published, your network can make the difference in your probability of being interviewed. You know far more people than you think you do. The key to successful networking is not to restrict your contacts to those people who are in your target fields. Consider: family members, friends, professors, alumni/ae, acquaintances, former work supervisors, co-workers, members of professional associations, clubs, and groups, etc.

Going on the supposition that everyone knows someone else, you can use your primary contacts to learn about people who may be more closely related to your goals. Your best friend’s parents may have acquaintances who could be helpful to you.
St. Vincent’s HealthCare understands this. Our entire Mission is to help people.

Our nurses are caring and compassionate, going above and beyond for those in need.

St. Vincent’s is looking for nursing students and nurses who also consider this profession a calling.

Learn more about our Mission-driven culture and opportunities by visiting

jaxhealth.com
Networking is building connections and relationships with family, friends, friends of friends, professors, neighbors, co-workers. You network with people every day even if you don’t realize it! You would be surprised by who knows who.

Think of people that can be helpful to you including:
- Neighbors
- Classmates/former classmates
- Relatives
- Teammates
- People you socialize with
- Sorority, Fraternity & Student organizations
- Former Employers & co-workers
- Members of your religious congregation
- People who provide services to you
- Friends of parents and relatives
- Professional Associations
- People dependant upon networking (i.e. realtors, insurance agents, etc.)
When contacting people in your network, explain your background information, education, career goals, and what you are looking for. Ask if you can be referred to colleagues in their organization who could tell you more about job opportunities.

Attend networking events in new industries, towns, or social circles. Try looking in newspapers if you have never done this. Look for jobs at small companies if you have always worked for big corporations (and vice versa).

Analyze the kinds of help you will need in achieving your goals. Analyze and develop your people skills. Build and cultivate your network accordingly.

**Keep track of your contacts including:**
- Contact name
- Address, Phone # & E-Mail address
- Occupation
- How you met contact
- Outstanding point about the contact
- Date last contacted
- Conversation summary
- Names of 3 referrals
- Dates of follow-up on these 3 referrals
- Date of thank-you note for referrals
- Friends

Avoid assumptions - you never know who can help. Nothing gets you further than a winning attitude. First impressions count. Practice and develop a killer ‘elevator speech.’ Keep track of your contacts and referrals - Don’t skimp on frequency - stay in regular touch. Remember: Message + Reach + Frequency = Top-of-Mind Awareness. Focus on quality, not quantity. Make sure your networking is goal-oriented - know what help you want. Boost your efforts via social networking sites.

**Professional Associations: Are Ready-Made Networks of professionals in specific fields**
Professional Associations host Annual Conferences - bringing its members together for workshops, seminars, etc. Local chapters host meetings and events for its members. Associations also publish newsletters and Publications and webpages with job boards. Associations have Membership Directories making it easier to identify contacts for your network.

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**DEVELOP YOUR CAREER NETWORK**

![Diagram of networking connections with categories for Faculty Members, Internship/Volunteer/Work Experience, Co-workers/Supervisor/Clients, Family Members/Family Contacts, Friends/Classmates, and Your Name]
Networking
Networking is a systematic process of establishing and maintaining relationships with people who have the resources or capability to help you further your personal or professional goals.

Functions of a Network
An effective network offers these benefits:
• Opens doors to new opportunities inside and outside of your work place.
• Provides support when dealing with positive and negative changes in your personal and professional life.
• Creates a resource pool or skill bank that may help you to round out weak areas or to enhance your effectiveness in new skills or work efforts.
• Provides referrals for new career opportunities.

Types of Networks
FORMAL: A professional group designed to promote networking among its members.

INFORMAL: Personal relationships that you have developed over time and can rely on for support.

INTERNAL: Professional relationships and contacts developed in the workplace.

EXTERNAL: Professional relationships and contacts developed outside the workplace.

Preparing Yourself to Network
Assess your skills - What do you have to offer to individuals, groups or organizations? What are your skills, knowledge, and abilities?

Believe in yourself - How confident are you in your technical competence? If you were to write a 60 second commercial about yourself what would you list as your strongest assets?

Have clear goals - What are your goals? Are you able to say clearly how a network could support you in reaching your personal or professional goal?

Know your style and personality - How comfortable are you in meeting new people? Are you able to talk about your strengths and skills in a confident manner? What environments make you most comfortable meeting and talking with new people? Do you prefer to communicate with people in person, on the telephone or in writing? Do you tend to meet people and not follow up with them? What would help you to keep in contact with each other?

How to Build a Network
List your personal and professional goals - Write down your goals. Practice saying them aloud so that you are comfortable talking about them with others.

List key contacts - Make a list of a.) people who can help introduce you to people who could assist you in meeting your personal or professional goals, b.) people who are doing the type of work you want to do, and c.) people who could possibly offer you work in your professional area.
Identify professional organizations - Find out what groups or organizations are already formed that are linked to your professional goals. Find out when meetings occur and check it out for interest. Consider how the goals of the organization or the membership could support you and help you to grow.

Demonstrate your expertise - Show people what you are capable of doing. Be willing to volunteer for projects that allow you to demonstrate your knowledge, experience or skill. Demonstrate how you can contribute.

Keep business cards and rolodex current - Keep cards in an easily accessible place and check periodically for accuracy of information.

Set goals to meet and contact new people - Set monthly goals for yourself to meet new people who can expand your network.

How to Maintain Your Network

Keep in contact often - Let your network know that you are there. Contract with individuals to contact with them monthly, bi-monthly, etc.

Give as well as receive - Find out how you can help the members of your network. Networking is a two-way street.

Follow up when activity takes place - Be sure to keep your network in the loop when events of interest take place. Also make sure that you let people know that you are aware of actions they may have taken on your behalf.

Show appreciation - Send thank you notes or show your appreciation in other ways when your network does something to help you reach your goals.

Networking Tips

In a presentation to DOS employees, Leslie Shields, author of Work, Sister, Work, made these points about networking. Is it really about who you know? Does it make a big difference? The overwhelming response is YES. Here are some strategies to make networking beneficial to you.

1. Set “networking goals.” Who do you want to add to your network? Why? How will you contact these individuals? Plan on meeting your contacts regularly for breakfast, lunch, dinner or after-work drinks. When you approach a busy individual and ask them to have lunch with you, have an agenda in mind. Be specific about what you want. If they ask what you need to talk about, you do not want to say, “Well, uh, I don’t know. John Smith just thought we should get to know each other.” This is not practicing networking, you are practicing antagonizing!

2. Create a system for keeping track of your network connections. Keep notes on information gathered and the people who give it. Make notes about small talk. For example, “How was your trip to Jamaica?” “What were the results of the mentoring program you developed?” “How does it feel being elected the president of the PTA?” This makes people feel remembered and engaged when they talk to you.

3. Develop a diverse set of contacts. It takes, let us say, 50 pairs of eyes and ears to find a new job or career, open doors to the right people, or locate a business opportunity. As a result, the more diverse your network is, the more beneficial it can be.

4. Be generous with your time and information. Networking is a system of IOUs. If people have been helpful to you, be helpful to them and others. Recommend and exchange resources. Pass along book reviews, articles, reports and program materials. Introduce your contacts to each other and let others know you are interested in meeting new people.
“Over 30% of job seekers indicated they obtained their job through someone they knew”

After your own acquaintances as mentioned above, you are connected with a large number of other people (including alumni from your college(s), members of organizations you join, conference attendees and speakers, authors of articles you like). You can reach out to this group through your common interests.

“As an alumna of the same graduate school, I would like your help...”

“I recently attended the conference on X, Y, Z, where I participated in your fascinating workshop on...”

“I just read your interesting article in the Globe magazine on...” (See “Developing Your Job Search Network” chart for an example of brainstorming a network.)

5. Practice mingling and the art of small talk. A good start is to read either: How to Work a Room by Susan Roane or Great Connections by Anne Barber and Lynn Waymon. When attending social functions, don’t limit your interaction to one or two people. Don’t hang on the wall or stay in one spot. Read newspapers and magazines. Arm yourself with information - facts, opinions, or quotes - that will spark an exchange.

6. Observe networking etiquette. Respect confidentiality. Don’t take information you have received and pass it on recklessly. Before giving the name and number of a contact to another person, always ask permission of the third party. Respect other people’s time. If you have asked for 30 minutes, take responsibility and end it at 30 minutes. When connecting by phone, always ask “Is this a good time to talk?” Thank everyone who gives you a lead with a telephone call or a short note.

7. Remember the rule of No’s. The Rule of No’s states that if we ask for what we want, we will get turned down sometimes. Don’t take it personally if someone turns down your request for an information meeting or cancels an appointment with you. It is important to be persistent, but don’t be a pest. If you don’t get your phone calls returned after three times, or if someone has canceled a meeting more than once, take them off your list. Think of networking as an investment. Connect today so that you can gain tomorrow. Make networking a part of your life!
Contacting People in Your Network:

Informational Interviewing

As the name implies, an informational interview is one you conduct with a person in your network to gather information, to learn about career options and job openings, and to build your professional network along the way. As we all know, in today’s competitive and ever-changing job market, it’s not what you know, but who you know. The more people who are familiar with you, your qualifications and your career interests, the more doors will open for you when the time comes to land that job.

Contacts may be followed up either by phone or in writing, but the goal of both should be an appointment. A short letter of introduction is usually preferred where you do not know the person. Indicate the source of referral. Since this is not a letter of application, you need merely state that you wish to set up a meeting time to discuss your agenda. Two or three background sentences about you will suffice. You may enclose a resume for additional information, if you wish. Assure the person that you do not expect him/her to know of specific openings. Indicate at the end how you plan to follow-up. “I will phone next week...”

Here are some tips for setting up an informational interview:

» When calling or writing for the interview, make sure to specify that you are only seeking information or advice (or both). Do not go into the interview under false pretense and violate the “rules” by asking for a job.

» Always request a short meeting (20-30 minutes). You will usually get more. Don’t delay the end of the meeting; be prepared, be professional and be businesslike. Don’t waste his/her time.

» Prior to the interview, prepare yourself well. Know yourself and know as much about the employer and your career field as possible. Be prepared with relevant questions.

» Dress as you would for a regular job interview even though you are not seeking employment at this time. Image is extremely important and you want to create a positive one.

» Bring copies of your resume, but don’t show it unless the employer asks to see it. You want to create the impression you are prepared, but you don’t want to violate the conditions under which the interview was arranged.

» Topics of conversation should revolve around the profession, the growth of the organization, and any particular points of interests you might have concerning the organization. Bring out your own qualities and abilities as a way of indicating why you have such a strong interest in that field.

» At the end of the interview, ask if there are any other people or organizations he/she would recommend that you contact. If yes, ask if you can use his/her name.

» Always send a thank-you note. It may earn you more points than you can imagine. Remember that the purpose is not to get a job offer immediately but for the employer to remember you later, especially when a job opportunity may occur.

» Many job seekers feel embarrassed about asking people to assist them. Advice is free and people love to give it.

Everybody you know is a possible source who might lead you to a job in the “hidden job market.” When you think you are bothering someone, keep in mind that most people love to talk about their jobs and what they do for a living. In fact, they are very flattered when someone asks for their advice. Just do not take their advice and favors for granted. Be sure to acknowledge their help and send thank-you notes when appropriate.
Making Contact

Before you begin calling people to set up informational interviews, here are some tips:

**When to call:** The best time to phone an individual is before 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday.

**Establish an objective:** Determine why you are contacting this person. What are some of the things you want to learn?

**Visit them at their work site:** Whenever possible, you want to meet them at work in order for you to gain exposure to various work environments.

**Prepare a script:** Develop a conversational script which you can loosely follow. The script can make sure you maximize your phone conversation with that person and get useful results.

**Evaluate your approach:** As you make contacts, rework your script or approach and go with what seems to work. Remember, the purpose of a networking contact is not to ask for a job but to gain information about the following:

- Facts about the organization
- Feedback on your resume and qualifications
- Tips for your job hunt
- Other departments or jobs you might wish to contact
- Additional names of individuals within or outside the organization that might assist you
- Potential job openings

Follow Up With Contacts

“Follow up” is the key to an effective job search. Make sure you follow up with contacts on a regular basis. It is important to:

1. **Follow up each meeting with a thank-you letter expressing gratitude for the specific help you received.** If the interview went well and the individual agreed to keep you in mind regarding future opportunities, remind him/her that you appreciate the assistance.

2. **Keep detailed records concerning whom you have interviewed, date of the meeting, what transpired and any additional contact names.**

3. **Maintain copies of all correspondence.**

4. **Maintain contact in the future.** This step is the most neglected. Establish the on-going nature of your acquaintance during their interview by mentioning that you would like to get back to this person to let him/her know the progress of your exploration. Future contact can be made by phone or letter.

5. **If the person directed you to call someone else, follow up and let them know what the result was.** Many people have expressed frustration in never hearing back from an individual they have helped.

To follow up on every contact in your network takes a great deal of time. Therefore, it is important for you to set some daily and weekly goals in the beginning of your job search to help you manage your time effectively. The more organized you are, the less time it will take you to find the job of your choice. Furthermore, you must be willing to take some risks. Be assertive and pro-active in your job search. If you are re-active or passive, your search will be extremely frustrating.
Examples of risk-taking include:
» Cold calling a stranger to request an interview
» Writing a personal letter to potential employers
» Seeking out the person with power to hire you within a specific organization
» Dealing with the secretary screen.
The more pro-active you are, the more opportunities you will have to choose from.

Informational Interview Sample Questions
1. How did you get into this field?
2. Which majors are most successful with securing employment in this field?
3. How would you describe a typical day/week on the job?
4. What are the most satisfying aspects of your job?
5. What frustrations or drawbacks do you experience in this position?
6. How would you describe the work environment?
7. How often do you travel and for how long?
8. What percentage of your time are spent utilizing computers? Interacting with people? Writing reports? Reading job-related publications?
8. How much contact do you have with people outside of your organization? What is your relationship to these people?
9. Do you ever have to represent your employer at after-hours social functions? Is this something over which you have some control?
10. How does your career affect your lifestyle? (The amount of work required, your material needs, and time for leisure, travel, outside interests, and family?)
11. How do you see the jobs in the field changing over the next five to ten years?
12. What educational degrees, licenses, or other credentials are required for entry and advancement in your field? Are there any which are preferred or helpful, although not required?
13. What are the trade/professional groups to which you belong, and which do you find most beneficial to your work? Do any of them assist college seniors interested in entry-level positions in your field?
14. What personal characteristics, personality traits, values, interests, etc., do you believe are necessary or helpful for success and satisfaction in this occupation or organization?
15. How do people usually learn about job openings in your field?
16. What do you wish you had known about this career field before you entered it? What about this employer?
17. How is the organization structured? What kinds of entry-level jobs are available within organizations like this?
18. What is your organization’s leadership management philosophy?
19. What are your organization’s plans for growth?
20. Do you have a formal training program? Could you please describe it to me? What percentage of training occurs in the classroom? On the job?
21. What are the typical career paths within your organization?
22. What impresses you about this organization?
23. Are there any books or periodicals that you would recommend?
24. What special advice would you give to a young person entering your field?
25. What are your personal future career plans?
5425 Ute Road  
Jacksonville, FL  32234  
September 12, 2014  

Mr. John Goodnight  
Director of Sales  
MCI Corporation  
3003 Phillips Highway  
Jacksonville, FL 32224  

Dear Mr. Goodnight:

Last week, I spoke with Ms. Barbara Morning, and she recommended that I contact you concerning opportunities in the sales industry in Jacksonville.

By way of introduction, I have enclosed a copy of my resume which highlights my education and experience. Both my degree in English and college leadership activities have prepared me for a career in sales. Thus, I am seeking information from you about the sales industry in Jacksonville.

Furthermore, your comments and suggestions of any people or situations I should pursue would be most welcome. If possible, I would like to arrange a brief meeting with you next week to hear your ideas about the local sales industry. I will contact you on Monday, September 26 to arrange a time that is convenient for you. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Doe
Job Search Informational Interviewing: Sample Telephone Script

Charity: Hello, my name is Charity Case. I would like to speak to Mr. Goodnight. He should be expecting my call.

Secretary: May I ask what this is in reference to?

Charity: Yes, I’ve been in contact with Mr. Goodnight about the sales industry in Jacksonville and wanted to follow up with him.

Secretary: I’ll see if he’s available.

(If the person you want is not available, ask for a better time to call back. Alternatively, leave your number with the message that “I’m following up on my letter of ___(date)_____. I was referred by our mutual friend, Barbara Morning.” If the secretary insists on screening you further, you may want to tell him/her that you are calling Mr. Goodnight because you have been referred by a friend of his. No matter how difficult it might be, always remain polite and cheerful! The last person you want to alienate is a front office person.)


Charity: Hello, this is Charity Case. Our mutual acquaintance, Barbara Morning, had suggested I contact you about my interest concerning opportunities in the sales industry in Jacksonville. I sent you a letter last week and I was wondering if you have had a chance to read it? I am hoping we can get together to discuss your ideas. (If he hasn’t read it, give him a synopsis of your letter. Make it clear that you are not asking for a job.)

John: Yes, I did. I would be willing to meet with you although I’m very booked up for the next two weeks. (If he can’t see you, ask, “Could you suggest a name or two of other people who may be able to help me?”)

Charity: I’m happy to fit in with your schedule. I only need 30 minutes of your time. First thing in the morning or late afternoons are best with me, but I’m sure I can arrange my time if neither of those are convenient.

John: I could see you on October 8th, at 8:00 a.m.

Charity: That would be fine. Where should I come?

John: My office is located in the main building of our complex on Phillips Highway. When you come into the main lobby, the receptionist will direct you to my office.

Charity: Thanks so much. I really appreciate your taking the time to see me. I’ll look forward to meeting you. Goodbye.

By having an outline prepared for points you want to make will make telephone contacts much easier. Use the outline to direct your conversation but do not read your script. Be prepared for any situation you may encounter.
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