

Studies show that over seventy percent of all jobs are filled through networking!

What is a network?

A network is a group of people who can give you additional information about jobs or occupations.

What is the purpose of a network?

The purpose of a network is to get as much information you can about the job market and occupations, and to **develop job leads**.

Making contacts with people can help you find a job, as most employers would rather hire someone they know, or someone who has recommended by an acquaintance.

How do I build a network?

Begin by making a list of all (yes, all) the people you know. This can include relatives, neighbors, fellow workers, former acquaintances, bankers, doctors, ministers, professional colleagues, etc. (See *Developing Your Network*)

Then what do I do?

Systematically ask these people if they can refer you to someone who works in an occupation of interest to you, or if they can provide you with advice in conducting your job search.

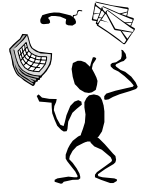
Another method to tap the hidden job market is by making "cold calls." You might contact the local Chamber of Commerce for employer listings, or obtain company information from your college career services office on companies where you would like to work. Another resource may include lists of established professionals, which you may obtain from college alumni offices.

Before you begin contacting people on your list, decide what type of information you want from the contact, such as:

- ✓ Information about the company
- ✓ Information about the line of work
- ✓ A referral to someone who may help you
- ✓ Advice on conducting your job search

How do I contact these people?

In many cases, you will want to set up a brief meeting, or **information interview**, with the contact.



To do this, call the individual and say, "Hello, my name is Laura Scott and (so and so) suggested I speak to you because I am interested in finding out more about the public relations field. Might you have some time to meet with me and provide me with some information on the industry?" If the answer is yes, arrange an appointment time. If the answer is negative, say, "Could you recommend someone else I could contact?" Then repeat the process.

Begin by calling the people on your list who you can talk the most easily. It does get easier with each call!

Remember, an information interview is not a job interview...but may bring you a job lead.

Use the following suggestions when calling contacts and referrals to set up information interviews:

- Write an outline of what you are going to say on the phone. This will help you be less nervous.
- If you are calling as the result of a referral, use the name of the person who referred you to begin the conversation.
- Mention that you need only about 20 minutes of the person's time for the information interview.
- Express the need for a personal interview as opposed to a phone conversation.
- If someone sounds busy, he/she probably is. Ask if there is a better time to talk.



Developing Your Network

When you go to your information interview, arrive early and dress appropriately. Write out questions you will ask in advance.

During the information interview, ask how the person got started, what they like and don't like about their job, company, and industry. Ask for information about career opportunities in the field. Most important, ask who you should contact regarding possible opportunities. This referral information is the key to getting results.

Questions to ask during an information interview?

- How did you get started in this business?
- What are the positive aspects of being in this business?
- Where do you see the industry heading in the next few years?
- What are the current career opportunities in the industry?
- Who would you recommend I contact regarding job opportunities?
- Is there anything else I should know about the industry?

Leave when your allotted time is up and always send a thank you letter. This is not only courteous, but helps set you apart as a professional while keeping your network alive.

Finally, be organized. Keep records, including the date of every contact you make with every person.

WHAT TO DO AFTER MAKING CONTACT *STAY IN TOUCH!*

- Write a brief thank-you note
- Mention you'll be in touch with a career update
- Be persistent, but not annoying
- Ask your contact if s/he can recommend anyone else in the field you may contact

OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

843-953-5692

www.cofc.edu/~career

Check for job listings and mentors on CisternOnline

ALUMNI SERVICES

843-953-5630

www.cofc.edu/~alumni

Join the Alumni Association

Don't Forget!

SCHOOL	ACTIVITIES/HOBBIES	FAMILY/FRIENDS	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
Alumni Association	student government	parents	banker/broker
faculty/advisor	club group members	siblings	barber/beautician
classmates	religious group friends/clergy	uncles/aunts	accountant
on-campus recruiters	community organization friends	cousins	dentist
career center	commuting acquaintances	neighbors	doctor
college friends	exercise club acquaintances	all relatives	business owners/managers
high school friends	fellow hobby enthusiasts	past neighbors	employees of targeted company
deans	golf acquaintances	internet BB/chat contacts	executive recruiters
past teachers	job search groups	spouse/significant other	insurance agent
roommates	military buddies	friends of family	lawyer
roommate's parents	professional organization members		mail carrier
college friends	parents		newsletter producers
	college friends		political party officials
			real estate agents
			reporters/editors/columnists
			town/city council persons
			local and US senators/representatives