Networking: The Art of Making Your Contacts Count!

Career Exploration and Development
Kent State University
Ways Positions are Found!

- 35% friend, relative or other associate
- 30% contacted employer directly
- 14% answered a classified ad
- 8% utilized campus career center

Information from www.Resumemagic.com
4 in 10 job seekers have found their “favorite or best” job through personal connections.

Other Top Sources:

- **Online Social Network**: 21%
- **Online Job Board**: 20%
- **Classified Ad**: 19%
- **Recruiter**: 10%
- **Career Fair**: 7%
- **College or University Connections**: 7%

This is in line with recruiter preferences: recruiters rate referrals as the highest-quality source of hires.

Percentage of recruiters who rate candidates from the following sources as “highest quality”:

- Referrals: 64%
- Social Networks: 59%
- Corporate Career Sites: 50%

* Category includes Facebook (10%), LinkedIn (5%) and Twitter (5%). Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses.
Bureau of Labor Statistics: 80% of all positions are secured via networking

OLD Adage: “It is not WHAT you know, BUT…”

It’s not who you know, but who you GET to KNOW
How C.E.D. Can Help:

Providing resources such as Mock interviews, Internship opportunities, Resume/CV and Cover Letter critiques, etc.
Networking: What is it?

- **Practice of Gathering Contacts:** the process of building up or maintaining informal relationships, especially with people whose friendship could bring advantages such as job or business opportunities.

  - *Encarta World English Dictionary*

- "The basics of it is making professional friends... which simply focus on the relationship and connection first..."

  - Jeff Robeck
Why is it SO Critical?

- There is strength in numbers
  - Like-minded individuals + Similar interests
  - Insurmountable tasks become manageable with support
“It’s manipulative”- not genuine
“It’s only for extroverts who like schmoozing”
“They won’t want to talk to me”
“They are too busy to give me time”
“I tried networking...it didn’t work”
A New Perspective

- Resistance is Normal
- Networking is about using social, personal and professional contacts to help you to learn more about a field of interest, or organization.
- Networking is not only for Extroverts
- It can be planned...and happens when you least expect it to
- Networking is not about only selling yourself, it’s about learning and getting more information
A New Perspective

- Think of it as purposeful communication that eventually links your special skills and talents to those who need it.

You have been communicating one way or another your entire life; networking is just refocusing those efforts for a greater gain.
In-Person Networking

- Use the Building a Network worksheet to get started.

- **Talk to the obvious people** (your family, former co-workers, faculty, advisors) as well as people you wouldn't normally include in your job search (your doctor, dentist, clergy, hairdresser). Attend career fairs and other industry specific networking events. Professional Associations often have student chapters and membership rates. Association meetings are a great way to make contacts.

- **Get involved and explore your interests.** Do not limit yourself to just attending career fairs and professional events. Networking can be done at events associated with your personal interests, organized by social groups or religious institutions.

- **Always be aware of how you act and what you say, both online and in person.** You never know when there is a potential contact right in front of you.

- **Prepare your one-minute elevator pitch** and if a conversation lends itself, speak up and let people know that you are in the job market.

- **Follow up and don’t let fear stop you** from reaching out. Instead of thinking, “I don't want to impose on others.”, think, “Every contact I make brings me closer to my job.”
Going UP?

**Elevator pitch**

**Step 1:** Remember that they are human, and take a deep breath

**Step 2:** Be prepared but not rehearsed

**Step 3:** Provide your name, experience, and what YOU bring to the table

**Step 4:** Be ready to respond
What is Your Communication Style

Are you an Introvert or an Extrovert?

Knowing how YOU communicate helps you effectively approach others

**Platinum Rule:** “Treat others how they want to be treated”
Getting Started is Easy

- Talk to people you already know
  - Tell them your story
  - Set up informational interviews with people in careers you desire
    - Goal: insight about career/industry/organization, contacts, market trends, where skills best fit, pros/cons, etc.
    - Know your “product”

- Informational Interviews

- Keep your contacts up to date

Diagram showing the flow of contacts:
- Family
- Friends
- Professors
- Contact or Lead
Tip Sheet

- Plan approach
- Do your homework: research people/company
- Set goals: write agenda (prepare questions)
- Dress appropriately
- Create positive first impression:
  - Handshake, interesting brief intro, prepare conversation starters
- Information is ultimate goal, *not a job*
- Be respectful of their time
- Exchange cards and provide grateful exit
- Follow-up
- Create reciprocal relationship
Utilize all resources available

Real World

Virtual World
Career Fairs

- Don’t get lost in the crowd!
- Be prepared to walk up to potential employers
  - Research companies that will be represented and learn something about them
  - Know what you are going to say and how you are going to approach them
  - Bring resumes

Career Exploration and Development
Spring Internship, Co-op & Career Fair
Thursday, February 23 – Kent State Field House
Hey, how’s it going? Can you tell me a little about your company? I really need to find a job as soon as possible. Oh... hold on, I just got a text. Are you guys hiring psych majors?
Hi Ms. Owens, It is very nice to meet you. My name is Kerri Jones and I have really been following your company over the past couple months. I am very excited about the new advocacy and social justice newsletter that was just posted on your website. That has recently become one of my areas of interest and passion. I would love the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the position that is available in HR. When is a convenient time for you?
Social Networking

Is it your best friend or your worst enemy?
LinkedIn

- Professional rather than social
  - Profile is set up like a resume
- Connections = Friends
- Free version
- Join Groups (over 90,000)

“The value you get out of LinkedIn also depends on your time commitment to proactively manage and use its features and capabilities” - Jason Alba - LinkedIn expert
Recap

Networking allows you to:

- Tap into the hidden job market (side door approach)
- Have an edge on the competition due to the relationship you have established
- To be informed
- Gain visibility for future opportunities
- Gain referrals (recommendations by people industry trusts)
  - Good people know other good people. Therefore, it’s easier and safer to recruit an employee who, by word-of-mouth, has been recommended as a good fit.
- Strong networking = shorter job search
Final Thoughts

- “Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.” Thomas Edison

- You can reach the top!
  - We are with you along the way.
You’re Hired!