



Education That Works For a Lifetime

Networking

Whether seeking employment or simply attempting to obtain information on careers or hiring trends, it is often the case that speaking with others directly involved with a specific field or company may be the best way to gain knowledge. This process is often referred to as networking. Here are some guidelines that may aid you in utilizing networking to its fullest.

A loose definition:

A process of cultivating and maintaining relationships in which a mutual exchange of information, advice, and support facilitates the growth, success, and happiness of all involved.

It may be helpful when an individual is:

- Exploring a new or initial career direction
- Making career decisions
- Preparing tools for a job search
- Developing a job search strategy
- Identifying contacts or leads in the employment realm
- Managing your career
- Providing emotional support.

One might find individuals to network with in/at:

Social media

Career or job fairs

Networking groups

Social/recreational/community settings

Training or academic settings

One-on-one meetings

Conferences and conventions

Methods of networking may include:

In person

Via e-mail or other online communication

Over the phone

By writing letters and notes

Through public speaking opportunities

Planning your Networking Strategy

Establish well-defined goals for networking/determine your purpose(s):

- Career Choice
- Job search
- Career management
- Business development

Determine your objectives/identifying the steps you need to take.

Map out a plan to meet your objectives.

A well-developed plan will:

- Be systematic
- Fit your personality
- Balance quantity and quality of contacts
- Meet your goals
- Be based on thorough preparation/homework will be done

Assess the role of those who will be in your network

Your Network STARS

Strategists. The people who help you plot a course toward your goals

Targets. The people most closely linked to your career or business goals-prospective employers, customers, or clients

Allied Forces. The professionals who provide expertise to strengthen your networking efforts

Role Models. The mentors or sages of your search who set a good example and offer advice and wisdom

Supporters. The people who provide emotional support along the way to reaching your goals.