

CBAT NETWORKING: “WORKING YOUR NETWORK” TO A CAREER

Networking: The Basics

- Networking is about building relationships.
- Networking takes time.
- Networking is mutually beneficial.
- Networking is about listening. Ask open-ended questions.
- Networking is about staying in touch.
- Networking is about saying “thank you.”

Networking in College

- Faculty, advisors, others you get to know on campus
- Peers in campus organizations—fraternities, sororities, campus chapters of professional organizations, church related entities
- Campus work study connections
- Off campus work connections
- Friends—and their parents
- Guest Speakers in classes or during Alumni Return to the Classroom events
- Alumni—contact the college or the ETSU Alumni Association for possible names
- Internship contacts—supervisors, staff, clients
- Informational Interviews
- Online Networking

STRATEGY: Informational Interviews

- WHO? Who do you talk to? Alumni or professionals in your field
- WHAT? What do you discuss? Their jobs, job seeking strategies, resume critique, likes/dislikes of their profession, a typical day in that field, etc.
- WHEN? Breaks, mutually convenient dates/times
- WHERE? Meet at their place of business
- WHY? They like to share information about their careers—this makes a connection for you! In addition, you will
 1. Learn realities about the “real world of work;”
 2. Learn about different aspects of your chosen field;
 3. Learn whether your career choice is a good fit for you—or not;
 4. Learn strategies for entering your chosen field;
 5. Obtain an edge over other job seekers;
 6. Prepare for the job interview through research and practice.

- HOW? Prepare by doing your research on the individual's organization. Ask good questions. They will be impressed.

STRATEGY: Online Networking

Online networking is yet another tool for the job search, but it does not supplant the job search itself. There are numerous sites and forums for job seekers online, whether discussion groups, newsgroups, or electronic networking sites focused on connecting business professionals. The following list is not an exhaustive list, but highlights sites which have received positive reviews and/or offer their services free to job seekers.

- Eacademy.com (www.eacademy.com): On the Forbes Best of the Web site. "More than 20,000 members from 120 countries learn, network, and develop their careers together."
- Linked In (www.linkedin.com): CBAT students have used this site with success. Driven by friends with professional purpose.
- MediaBistro (<http://mediabistro.com>): On the Forbes Best of the Web site. ". . . Dedicated to anyone who creates or works with content, or who is a non-creative professional working in a content/creative industry. . . ."
- MyWorkster.com (www.myworkster.com): Free site to job seekers. Expand business contacts, post resume, join groups, build network of contacts.
- PowerMingle.com (www.powermingle.com): Free site to job seekers. Mix and mingle online with professionals of similar professional backgrounds/interests. You can search professionals you want to meet as well.
- Real Contacts (<http://jobs.realcontacts.com/home.asp>): Free site to job seekers. Learn about job openings and stay connected with your network.
- The Virtual Handshake (www.olinebusinessnetworks.com): Free site to job seekers. "A great resource for learning more about building relationships online—for job-hunting or freelancers searching for new clients."

Other Techniques

- The "network buddy"—find someone to push you to stay committed to the networking process and in touch with your network. Meet weekly to evaluate your progress.
- Networking business cards
- Alumni Chapters in new geographic locales
- Professional organizations—join as an investment in your job search
- Church connections

Resources:

"Tools for Networking on the Internet" compiled by Quintessential Careers
 "Networking Timetable for College Students" by Katherine Hansen
 "Breaking the Myths about Career Networking" by Sherri Edwards
 "Informational Interviewing: A Powerful Tool for College Students" by Katherine Hansen
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