

## How to Network

### Career Development

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#### WHAT IS IT

This Guide is designed to help “experienced managers” such as Directors, Managers, or Specialists in any function and located in any country identify potential job opportunities.

#### WHY USE IT

This Guide has been created to provide you with very concise and focused information that in the opinion of the author represents best practice guidelines. As such the Guide will help you use networking as a very effective method to identify job opportunities and hopefully secure a new job

In many countries up to 80 % of jobs are actually secured through effective networking. The prime reasons for this degree of success include:-

- Simple and effective approach with costs normally being limited to telephone calls
- Method relies upon a polite exchange of information between two parties and a simple request being made by one for “some helpful information” in the form of two more names.
- The response may not always result in two useful names being provided. However more often than not, human nature tends to lean towards a very favourable response.
- Not all jobs are openly advertised
- Many companies actively encourage the assistance of staff to introduce potential employees and some organisation offer generous cash payments.
- The adage of “it’s not what you know but who you know” still holds true today and can assist the networking process.

### BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

#### **1. WHEN TO USE**

Networking is a very simple yet effective method for identifying new job opportunities.

You can start the process through contact with a limited number of personal, family, social and business contacts. Then you can increase this to a much larger number each of whom can often help you with additional information to assist your job search.

Some individuals are avid, well-practiced and sometimes life-long networkers and are therefore able to effectively use their established network of contacts or grow the size of their network for job search purposes.

Other individuals may not think they have a network of contacts at all, but when prompted can often produce a list of 10 or more individuals that they know and each of these is likely to know someone else. So the process of developing sometimes an extensive network of individuals can help your job search goal.

## 2. HOW TO USE

**Best Practice:** Effective networking starts with an initial list of close business and social contacts and then extends through a chain of named individuals to those individuals who may wish to employ you or can refer you to someone who does.

- Use a spread-sheet to list names each of whom will be willing to provide you with at least two more names of individuals who they think it would be helpful to contact.
- Generate a list of at least 50 perhaps 100 useful names, but the 'quality' of these names is important so take care to be selective over your choice. For example:-
  - Both your Dentist and the Landlord of your favourite pub will know a wide range of people and each should be able to provide the names of at least two individuals who would be interested to help you. Dentists and Landlord may seem to be unlikely individuals to feature in your job search but consider the typical size and range of their connections, possibly several hundred strong.
  - Asking people for 'information' rather than asking who 'could give you a job' should make them less defensive and more willing to help you.
- The key to these initial contacts is to ask them for just two useful names. Neither of these may be potential employers but when you contact these new names then these may lead to individuals who can help you with your job search, even potential employers. When you speak or telephone these initial contacts ensure you:-
  - **Explain** your circumstances – “developing your career”,
  - **Confirm** your intention of “progressing your career into X”
  - **Ask** for “information” not for details of jobs
    - I.e. ask for the names of two people who they think you could talk to and who might be interested in someone with your kind of expertise / background OR know someone who themselves might be interested to make contact with yourself.
- Your goal is to achieve a face to face meeting, or a telephone discussion with someone who has the authority to create or offer you a job.

## 3. TOP TIPS.

### New to Networking?

Networking is very easy for some individuals but sometimes quite daunting for others. If you think you may fit into the latter category then you may be pleasantly surprised to find how easy it actually is and how helpful most people can be to someone in your circumstances.

How extensive is your “little black book”? Little Black Books often contain invaluable data which the owner may have spent many years collecting and formatting for ease of access and usefulness? It is never too late to start.

**Log all Connections:**

Keep accurate records of all your contacts preferably including the date of your initial and follow up contacts. A simple spread sheet can serve as a helpful record for the string of contacts. So you can introduce yourself to a complete stranger by reference to someone who knows and who has provided you with this connection.

**Never miss an Opportunity:**

Good networkers network at all opportunities not just when they are seeking to develop their careers. i.e.

- Business meetings
- Social meetings
- Clubs and societies
- Churches
- Baby sitting circles
- Neighbouring seats on Aircraft
- Anywhere in fact that provides the opportunity to exchange useful information.

**LinkedIn:**

*LinkedIn* is possibly the world's most powerful networking tool for professionals and business people with over 80 million members. As such we suggest you regard it as an important tool for your job-search.

There are already many guides available providing best practice guidance on gaining value from LinkedIn so review these first and feel free to contact IYIC if you need additional guidance.

**NEXT STEPS**

We trust that this Success Guide will assist your Career development and future success.

You may find some of our other Success Guides of value for your Personal or Career Development. For your convenience we list these below and you can access the index for these via the link below:-

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