

This is the most exciting part of your job search. You have come a very long way and should be proud of what you have accomplished. Know that you are far, far ahead of the average person searching for a job. You have a community of friends, an excellent resume and a slick LinkedIn profile. You know exactly how to answer the questions “Tell me about yourself.” & “What are you looking for?” In this section we will discuss networking.

File “3002 - Networking Yourself”

Read ALL of this document. You will notice that you have already completed some sections (see how far ahead you are?). After reading, come back here and we will cover a few points in more detail.

- “What is Networking?”
 - The most important piece of information to take away from this section is that *networking is about building relationships*. Be self-aware and try not to be so busy “networking” that you miss a relationship!
 - The organizer (or portfolio) (Step 4). This is a must-have. 9” by 12” is a great size because it will hold copies of your resume flat and you don’t want to fold them before handing them out. Your organizer is your new American Express card; *never leave home without it*.
- Step 5 “Start making lists”
 - It’s very important not to ignore a possible contact. Even that sweet little old lady down the street that always makes you fruitcake for Christmas is a potential contact.
 - This is a good time to explain contact levels. Anyone that you know that will answer the phone if you call is a “1st Level Contact”. Your 1st Level Contacts will suggest people for you to meet; these are “2nd Level Contacts”. 2nd Level Contacts will offer names of people you should meet and those people are “3rd Level Contacts. It goes on from there but you get the point.
 - A note on making lists. How you manage this list is entirely up to you. You can keep an electronic copy (see file “3901 - Sample Phone List.xls”) or you can keep a paper copy (see file “3902 - Individual Contact Record.doc”). A very intelligent friend of mine suggested using a spiral notepad; with a page dedicated to each person. There are free software options, Google Calendar/Voice/Contacts or even day-planners. Use a method that works for you.
- Step 6 “Networking”
 - Make the call. Your 1st Level Contacts are easy, which helps. 2nd & 3rd Level Contacts may make it a little harder to pick up the phone. Remember that 60% (or more!) of jobs in today’s market are found through networking. You are reaching out to friends or friends – of – friends. Pick up the phone and make the call. Every call is easier after the first one.
 - Be sure to keep your lists close at hand when making phone calls. You want to be able to share your target companies and any other pertinent information when speaking to people.
 - Set a daily goal for how many phone calls you will make. Setting this goal gives you a “light at the end of the tunnel” and helps motivate you. Be realistic.
 - A note on Networking, it can be hard to keep track of who you called, who you need to call and who you are meeting with. Look at “3903 - CAREER TRANSITION LADDER” and consider using it or something like it. Bob Costello built this to help his clients track their networking and it has proven its value many times over.

- “The Conversation”. This section is full of great examples. You may want to practice some of these examples with a friend or in front of the mirror.
- “The Response”.
 - Remember this is an informational *interview*. You want to make a positive impression so dress appropriately.
 - Bring your organizer with you and make sure to practice your 2 Minute Drill ahead of time.
 - Be respectful of their time.
 - Ask for help or guidance; it’s a good idea to take notes during the meeting.
 - Leave a copy of your resume or your networking One Sheet (we will discuss that later).
 - Thank them for their time and let them know you will check in to inform them of your progress.
 - Make it a personal goal to retrieve 2 names from every person you meet with. This will help to expand your network. You won’t get 2 names every time but it’s a solid goal to strive for.
- “The Follow Up”
 - Follow up is a very important part of networking and most often overlooked or at the very least, not given the priority it deserves.
 - If you have personally met with someone; you owe them a Thank You Note. This should be hand-written on a thank-you card. Go with simple cards, nothing flowery or fancy. You should send the thank-you note within 24 hours of your meeting.
 - You should also follow up call every one you have met with personally. Call each person every three weeks. Remind them of your conversation, let them know your progress and mention any meetings you may have had with names they suggested.
- Remember to update your notes after every meeting and every phone call. Keeping accurate notes on your networking will make it more productive and help you to remember personal details about individuals. When you bump into someone you have networked within the past; they will be impressed you remembered something about them.
- “Other Closing Thoughts”
 - Recruiters. Recruiters can only help your search. It never hurts to contact a few recruiters.
 - Newspaper ads. If you get the paper, by all means look for ads that match your skills.
 - Company websites. You have made a list of companies that you would like to work for. Connect with (“follow”) those companies on LinkedIn. Go to the company website and look for a “Careers” section.
 - **WRITE IT DOWN BY HAND.** Taking notes and writing things down (pen/paper) helps to strengthen your memory.

Read the document “3003 - General notes on networking” for more notes on networking.

Your Job Hunt Schedule

I mentioned earlier that online activity can be detrimental to your search if you choose the wrong time of day. You had a schedule when you were working and it’s just as important to have a schedule now.

- Of course everyone has personal demands that influence their schedule. Consider the information below as suggestions. Taking your children to school is a priority that you may have to schedule around; laundry can probably wait until the evening hours.
- Think of your job hunt as your ‘new job’. You should spend at least 40 hours per week on your job hunt.
- Start your day by 8AM at the latest. Earlier is better.

- Phone calls should happen from 07:30 AM to 9 AM. This is the best time to catch someone at their desk but not in the middle of a project. They are more likely to answer the phone during this time.
- Schedule meetings from 09:30 AM to 3(ish) PM. Remember to allow for travel time between meetings. Don't forget about road construction when allowing for travel time. This is Oklahoma!
 - If you have a day that there are no meetings scheduled. Look for other excuses to get out of the house. Go to Starbucks or the library and update your LinkedIn profile from 11:30 to 1 PM. Many people check LI during their lunch hour.
- Make more phone calls from 3:45 PM to 5:30 PM. Again, you are more likely to catch someone "wrapping up" their day and willing to pick up the phone instead of sending your call to voicemail.
- 5:30 PM and the rest of the evening. This is your 'online time'. Update LinkedIn, apply for jobs online. Write your blog. Your online activity should almost always be scheduled for after 5.
- The logic behind this kind of a schedule is you want to call and meet with people during business hours when they are more likely to be available. This is your person to person activity and due to the schedules of others, has some restrictions (usually 8 AM to 5 PM). Online activity is just you and the computer so can be scheduled for any time.
- Do some research on tools that can help automate your online activity. Buffer (www.buffer.com) is a great example of a tool that can automate your Twitter posts. Automating your online activity (such as posts to Twitter, LinkedIn & Facebook) can really help you make the most of your schedule. Spend the evening finding great stuff to post and let the tools post it for you throughout the following day!