

# Networking to Find Out About Job Openings

Very few jobs are found through traditional approaches, like answering ads in the newspaper. The majority of jobs that people get are found through the process of “networking” with friends, relatives, and personal contacts and through direct application. Networking involves connecting with people who can provide you with information on job openings or connect you with other people who might know of job openings.

## Steps to Effective Networking Include:

1. Start by contacting people you already know, your friends, family, neighbors, etc. should be part of your initial network. Don't hesitate to let people know that you are job hunting. Ask your family or friends the following question “who do you know that I could talk to about employment opportunities?” *Follow-up is essential to effective networking.* After you speak with someone about a job lead or a referral, send them a letter thanking them for their help and suggestions. Keep them updated on your progress and ask them to keep you in mind should they learn of any other job leads or if they think of anyone else who might be helpful to you.
2. Give your contacts enough information about your skills, qualifications, and the type of job that you are pursuing. It is a good idea to make a copy of your resume available. The resume will give the individuals in your network a better idea of your skills and career goals as well as help them recommend you more effectively to prospective employers should the opportunity arise.
3. Keep records of your networking activities, including the name of each person that you contact and the information, which they provide. A filing system using index cards could be used to organize and provide a visual reminder of your progress. You could also use a notebook to record your contacts. Having a record of each of your contacts will assist you when contacting referrals and when following up on prospective job leads.
4. Follow through on the information that you are given, this is the crucial step in networking. As you check out job leads, contact referrals, and initiate contact with prospective employers you should be continuously gathering further information and referrals. As your network expands, your prospects of discovering job openings increases.
5. Be aware of the impression that you make, be sure to project a friendly, confident image. Never put pressure on anyone to find a job for you. Whenever contacting someone you do not know well, write the questions that you wish to ask beforehand. You will feel and appear both better prepared and less nervous. When initially contacting your referrals always indicate who referred you to them. Remember to express your appreciation to everyone who takes the time to speak with you regardless of whether they were able to provide the information that you wanted.
6. Follow-up as you establish your network, keep in contact with the people in your network. Remind them that you are still committed to your job search and let them know of your progress.

**Download Worksheet for  
Networking**