

SIX STEPS TO NETWORK YOUR WAY TO A JOB



You are part of the most networked generation sharing your stories with friends via Facebook, Flickr, and YouTube. With every status update you are marketing yourself to your audience. So why aren't you doing this to get job interviews? Networking is marketing, its communicating, building and maintaining relationships, listening more than talking and it's about being helpful to others. You do this instinctively with friends. You need to translate those skills to your job search. Here are 6 steps to help you network your way to a job.

1. **List the companies you want to target.** The more defined your job search is the greater your chances are for success. Without a list of companies you are targeting people will not know how to help. You also need a list of the professional organizations where you can make important contacts.
2. **Who do you know.** Write down a list of people who might have information on available jobs in the companies and/or field you want to pursue. Identify those people on the list who could know other people who might be helpful to you in your job search.
3. **Set networking goals.** Successful plans have measurable goals.
4. **Never network in the dark.** Preparation is essential. You want to demonstrate you know something about the company, the field and them. You need to be clear about why you are contacting them. You need to have your list of questions prepared. (See *The Ten Informational Interview Questions You Should Ask*)
5. **Networking is a give and take.** Networking is not about asking for a job. Instead, you need to ask questions, listen for opportunities and how you can help them, learn about the field, act on the information provided and of course thank them.
6. **Develop your network.** Networking is an ongoing process of building relationships. Stay in touch with the people you have networked with during your job search.