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Quick Tips Networking

70% of all jobs are found through long-term networking contacts. Every job search strategy should include a plan for networking. If you ever got a job through a friend of a friend, you have already done some networking. Networking is just talking to people about your career interests so that they can get you connected to job opportunities. Networking leads to referrals and a referral generates 80% more results than a cold call. Below are networking tips.

Getting started

- Write down your interests, values, skills and strengths
- Practice introducing yourself to a professional in your field
- Research the employers and organizations in your field
- Make sure you have professional marketing materials (resume, cover letter, clothing, etc.)

Use social media to network

- Create a professional presence in all social media site you use; employers will look you up
- Maintain privacy settings on personal social media for your friends and family to access
- Develop and maintain a professional LinkedIn page
- Establish new contacts strategically; connect with people with common career interests
- Seek LinkedIn recommendations and endorsements from people who know you well
- Join LinkedIn groups that reflect your professional interests
- Comment thoughtfully on professional Facebook pages and join discussions wisely

Create a networking list

Make a list of people and places that can support your networking strategy. These may include:

- Workshops, seminars, conferences
- Career fairs
- Student clubs and professional associations
- Community gatherings, social events, family gatherings
- School and alumni events

What will you say?

Practice what you will say when you network. You might:

- Introduce yourself, school, year in school and major
- Discuss your future career interests and plans
- Ask questions about the organization, career path, skills the employer seeks
- Ask for advice or suggestions for a new graduate entering the profession
- Arrange a meeting, informational interview, or job-shadow
- Follow up with a thank-you letter and make plans to stay in touch

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Admin. Building, Room 270
303.615.1133
careerservices@msudenver.edu
msudenver.edu/career



NETWORKING CHECKLIST

Assess your current strengths and pick a few tasks to add to your networking repertoire.

Confidence

- I know the values and principles that are important in my life.
- I can list three major accomplishments that I am proud of.
- I am clear about my abilities and the resource I can be for others.
- I have a written list of long- and short-term goals that I review periodically and revise.

Courtesy

- My professional demeanor represents who I am and what I do.
- I introduce myself in a way that is clear, concise and personable.
- I reintroduce myself to people rather than waiting for them to remember me.
- I focus on people as they are introduced to better remember their name and what they do.
- I am an active, respectful and perceptive listener.

Business cards

- I have business cards for my job search that are attractive and reflect my interests and studies.
- I have sufficient business cards handy for each situation.
- I give out my business cards appropriately.
- I write information I want to remember on the backs of the business cards of my contacts.

Acknowledgements

- I receive and give acknowledgements regularly.
- I nurture my network with calls and notes in a timely and appropriate manner.
- I have personalized note cards.
- I graciously receive and accept acknowledgement and support.

Manage time and information

- I have established an effective system for organizing my network information.
- I return phone calls within twenty-four hours, organizing my thought before I call
- I prepare for networking events in order to maximize the opportunity.

Effective requests

- I ask for and use the support of others.
- I make requests of my network in a clear, concise and non-demanding manner.
- I consistently find opportunities to ask, "Who should I be talking to?"
- I follow up promptly on leads and I value every contact.

Participation

- I am a member of a professional or community organization and serve on a committee.
- I regularly give referrals to and make requests of my network.
- I consistently reevaluate and add to my network.
- I am committed to the success of the people in my network.
- I operate with integrity, discretion and professionalism in all my interactions and endeavors.
- I approach each contact and opportunity with an open mind.

High tech touch

- I use appropriate etiquette for voicemail, E-mail and social media; my messages are clear and brief.
- I navigate the Internet to gather information, make connections and find opportunities for myself and others.