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# Network for Work

## Get the job you want through effective networking

Besides the traditional ways of searching for a job, networking is an excellent job-search method to consider.

Not only will it link you to career opportunities, it will give you access to the “hidden” job market and all the background information which are not usually found from recruitment advertisements or job interviews.

Through networking, you also obtain referrals to other contacts who may offer you even more information. The more referrals the better, as they will broaden your list of contacts further.

### Preparing a list of contacts

Make a list of everyone whom you have contacted within the past 5 or 10 years. Include ex-colleagues, vendors, ex-classmates, people you met at seminars and conferences, or even the parents of your children’s friends whom you might have been in touch with.

Send a message to each contact on your list, starting with the people you know quite well. Explain to them that you are doing some research to look for a job and that you need advice, information and referrals.

Inform these contacts that you will contact them by phone. Subsequently, follow up on any leads and send a thank-you note to each person you have called.

### Arranging interviews

From the leads that you have followed up on, you will end up with a number of direct contacts in your chosen profession. The next step will be to arrange for a short interview session with these contacts individually.

This should be a fact-finding or exploratory interview in which you are the interviewer.

### Important tips for an effective fact-finding interview

- Prepare a list of questions. Keep your list short and your questions concise.
- Dress professionally.
- Bring a copy of your resume to leave behind, just in case. This may be useful for them to pass on to the HR department in their company.
- Write down some important notes – it is good to have this written down for your own personal review later.
- Try to limit each interview session to 45 minutes or a maximum of 1 hour. You would not want to take up too much of their time.

If you are lucky, you may coincidentally be offered a job on the spot. However, keep in mind that your objective of these interviews is to receive advice, information and referrals. Never expect that you will be offered a job from an interview session.

Always remember to follow up with the interviewer within 48 hours. Send a thank-you note, reiterating your interests and asking them to remember you whenever they hear of any job opening.



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## Essential networking tips

- **Organise your list of contacts** - include details like how and when you contacted the person, the outcome as well as the follow up actions required.
- **Expand your network by tapping onto others' networks** - always ask for referrals
- **Never ask the people in your network for a job** – be genuine and sincere
- **Always send a thank-you note** – within 48 hours
- **Do not rely on networking alone to look for a job** – continue to liaise with your recruitment agency and to look through the job classifieds