



NETWORKING

A MANUAL

PS 18:29-30

29 WITH YOUR HELP I CAN ADVANCE AGAINST A TROOP;

WITH MY GOD I CAN SCALE A WALL.

30 AS FOR GOD, HIS WAY IS PERFECT;

THE WORD OF THE LORD IS FLAWLESS.

HE IS A SHIELD

FOR ALL WHO TAKE REFUGE IN HIM.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2002

80% of All Jobs are not Advertised!

64 Percent of a Drake Bean Morin Survey found their new jobs through NETWORKING

SEARCH METHODS

There are a variety of ways that people pursue job searches. They are successful to varying degrees. The list of methods is pretty long:

- Internet Posting
- Classifieds
- Recruiters/Headhunters
- Job Fairs
- College Placement Offices
- Cold Calling In Person
- Churches
- Direct Mail Campaigns
 - Blasting your Resume
 - Letters with Follow up
- Networking

One thing that every expert agrees on is that NETWORKING is the most effective and efficient way to find a new job. Networking applies to a wide variety of job seekers in a wide variety of circumstances. Job seekers consistently report that networking is the most important part of their overall searching strategy.

Many people who looked for work in the late nineties are shocked at the change in the market. A few years ago, a call to a headhunter or a posting on the internet was all that was needed to prime the market to provide a steady stream of interviews and offers. With change in the market, the effect of these passive methods has declined precipitately. Job hunters can waste valuable time, waiting for methods that worked a few years ago to kick in again. They are usually disappointed.

WHAT IS NETWORKING

Networking is:

- Getting Others to help you in your job search
- Using informal alliances and information referrals
- A Two Way street
- A way to replace the vulnerability of the individual with the strength of the group.
- An Activity
- A Skill
- The exchange of information or services among individuals, groups or institutions.
- A method employed by a job seeker to contact individuals, groups or institutions about employment opportunities.

Networking is talking to people to engage them in helping you. There is a methodology to networking like many other skills. There is a protocol that protects both the job seeker and the network they seek to engage. In the next few chapters, we are going to learn the Raw Material, the Methodology, the Protocol, the Tools, the Do's and Don'ts and the Obligation of Networking.

Networking is a simple call to someone who knows you or to whom you have been referred. The result of a networking call is information, vital information to the career explorer about other contacts, your job hunting approach, growing or changing companies, or even a job opening. The new paradigm that networking leads you first to information and then to a job is a critical shift. Almost anyone can help provide information. That's why you should cast an extremely broad net.

One of the vital things that you must learn is that most people will gladly help you find a job. Once you adopt that mindset and set about the process to make it easy for people to give you assistance, networking gets easier and less threatening. Many career explorers report that very few people refuse to help out.

To help, your network has to understand what help you want. It is not fair to make a networking call before you have done the work to know what you need. The elevator pitch is a key part of good networking. Making appointments with out one wastes the time of your networking contact and may do damage to your career prospects.

It is also vital that you not make the mistake of expecting too much from one particular networking contact. No one other individual will take responsibility for finding you a job or for recommending you to their associates if they do not have knowledge of your skills and abilities. Some job seekers seem to delegate the responsibility of job hunting to a networking contact who is not receptive to that task.

You can expect that networking will be hard work.. There are lots of calls to make, records to keep, letters to write, people to meet. It is hard work. Job search networking will require discipline to do things that don't "feel" natural. It is emotional work that will test your ability to continue to do

work when you don't "feel like it". Networking requires humility; you will have to ask for help and be open and direct with what you need when your emotions may be telling you to keep it all inside.

Networking is can also be incredibly rewarding. You will meet new friends and may have your faith in humanity restored. Networking , while a vital job hunting skill, is also an important business and social skill. Networking, when you are not job hunting, is an important source of contacts, information, help and advice. It is a life long skill that shapes our success in life

THE RAW MATERIAL OF NETWORKING

The raw material of networking is contacts. While some people view making the contacts as the goal of networking, it is only the beginning. Networking begins with contacts and goes from there. The logical question is where do I find contacts.

Most people have the contacts they need. You find them in:

- Your former business associates
- Vendors
- Friends
- Neighbors
- Parents of your kids friends
- Family
- Civic Clubs
- Church
- Trade Associations
- Alumni Associations
- Former Classmates
- Networking meetings
- Other contacts
- Industry Professionals

My best networking contact was a meeting at the gym while we were drying off after a shower!

Get the idea? Everyone is a potential networking contact. If you have enough of a personal connection to make the call they are a networking contact. Almost all of these individuals will be glad to take your call and to try to help you network as long as you follow the protocol and don't try to delegate your job search to a contact.

Don't forget to pray. Asking God to reveal to you the contacts you need is a good step. Calling on his wisdom and his help is only good sense. Leaving him out of this part of your life is simple folly.

THE METHODOLOGY OF NETWORKING

To network you start with your contacts and make a call or a personal contact. The goal of both of these is a short meeting with your contact. The meeting is important because the duration of the meeting is the likely duration of the contact's focus on your job search. A few minutes to meet is your opportunity to make a brief positive impression and to solicit help.

A typical call would go like this:

Sarah Seeker: Hello, Chris, this is Sara, our kids are on the same soccer team. Is this a good time for us to talk for a minute?

Chris Contact:: Sure, I have a moment. Is everything ok?

Sarah Seeker: Oh yes every thing is fine. A couple of weeks ago I found out that my job at Acme Widgets was going to be eliminated. I would like a few minutes of your time to solicit some advice on my job search. I have heard that you are knowledgeable about the Widget and Cog market.

Chris Contact:: Sarah, I am so sorry. I am not sure that I can help, ABC Cogs is in cutback mode too. We aren't hiring.

Sarah Seeker: Chris, I certainly understand. I am not looking for a job at ABC. I am just networking and I really appreciate your willingness to help. It would be so valuable to me to get your insight. Is there a good time for us to spend a few minutes together. Maybe I could buy you a cup of coffee?

Chris Contact:: I am really booked this week. How about the 22nd at three.

Sarah Seeker: That would be great. Could you give me the address of your office?

Chris Contact: The best directions are on our website. I look forward to seeing you then.

Sarah Seeker: Thank you and I will see you then.

Sarah should start, not by getting in the car but by preparing for the meeting. A little research, the preparation of a few questions can transform the coming meeting from ho-hum waste of time to a productive exchange that leads to the job you are looking for. It is so easy for Sarah to fall into the trap of showing up and winging it and thereby wasting the time.

What should she prepare/research:

- The company- What business are they in? Who are their competitors? The web site and a couple of searches is normally enough to give Sarah what she needs.
- The meeting – What questions are you going to ask? In what order? Be flexible, but be prepared too.

PROV 15:22-23

22 PLANS FAIL FOR LACK OF COUNSEL,

BUT WITH MANY ADVISERS THEY SUCCEED.

23 A MAN FINDS JOY IN GIVING AN APT REPLY--

AND HOW GOOD IS A TIMELY WORD!

- Yourself – Sarah needs to speak in sound bites. There is not time to tell her life’s story so she should develop a few sentences on what she has done (accomplishments, results not positions) for other organizations and what she is seeking from the networking contact.

Sarah should arrive at the meeting ten minutes in advance with a notebook or portfolio with a printed resume inside. She should begin the meeting allowing a few minutes for small talk and personal connection (be especially sure to remember Scott’s wife’s name and the name of his soccer player child). Then Sarah should begin by telling Scott about the layoff being very sure to say nothing negative about his former employer. Then Sarah should tell Scott about what she is looking for in employment offering a few statements about her prior contributions to past employers that provide credibility to her search.

Most of the time, Chris will pick up the conversation and offer any help he can think of. If not, Sarah can offer a copy of her resume and ask for input. Then Sarah can ask a series of open-ended questions to try to prompt help. This is where her preparation comes in. What is important is that Sarah is as specific and direct as possible.

What advice would you offer me in my job search? Who should I be talking to?

Who do you know that I should speak to in this field?

Who do you know that I should network with in this industry?

Do you know anyone at one of these companies on my target list?

Do you know any companies who are growing who also have a good reputation?

Sarah should avoid questions than can be easily answered with a yes or no. Open-ended questions are the key. Practice the *golden silence*. After Sarah asks a question, she should be quiet, be very, very quiet. Most of us hate silence and will start talking to fill the void. Sara’s goal is to get them to talk to provide her with the information you need.

Sarah should dole out her questions carefully, only after the conversation seems to stall. Each question should be designed to re-invigorate the conversation. If there is time, Sarah might ask about Chris’ company. This is an important opportunity to identify an opportunity to help Chris. Good networking is a two-way street.

Sarah should take notes. Don’t be bashful. It is a sign of respect that she writes down the names and numbers. When a contact is mentioned, she should ask for the phone number and ask if it’s ok to use Chris’ name when she calls.

Sarah should watch the clock and end the conversation with a sincere thank you. As she wraps up she should summarize the information she gleaned and ask if it’s ok to keep Chris posted on her progress.

While it’s easy to imagine that the networking is over, it’s not. The thank you is an important part of the process. Sara should write a thank you for every networking contact. Buying some good quality note cards and writing a neat thank you for the time and the contacts is a social grace that will make Sarah stand out.. It’s a way to re-introduce herself after the meeting..

Another way to “seal the contact” is to follow up by e-mail. This allows her to send a soft copy of her resume and a v-card if she uses outlook. This follow up ensures that it’s easy for the contact to file her resume, to forward it to a colleague and to put your contact information into Outlook.

The final step in the process is recording the contact. It’s important to write down the information you received or learned from Chris. Sarah should enter any contact names and numbers in her contact manager.

THE PROTOCOL OF NETWORKING

The Protocol of Networking is that you are nicely asking for something that your contact can reasonably provide. The problem for most job seekers is that the jobs are hidden. For that reason, what you need is information. It smokes out the jobs. When you ask a networking contact for something that they cannot reasonably provide, you are breaking the protocol of the process and won’t be successful. Once the contact cannot provide what you ask, the interview often ends quickly.

When you call, ask if it’s a good time. Don’t be pushy or demanding.

This is not a time to argue or to discount information or contacts. Take notes and follow up. You have asked for the time and it is up to you to use it well.

Never claim a contact you don’t have. It’s ok to say that Bill suggested that I give you a call, only as long as it’s true.

Be persistent. People are busy and don’t always return calls that they should. You have an important need and calling or e-mailing several times is ok. But, never, never sound judgmental or disapproving to a networking contact. You can’t nag someone into being what you want or expect.

Be Positive! Don’t bad-mouth your previous employer or anyone else. This is a near absolute rule. By presenting yourself in a positive manner you increase the likelihood that someone will focus with you long enough to help. Being sour or resentful can be the kiss of death to your networking with this contact. People want to help positive and enthusiastic people.

Don’t be a stalker. Your contacts are networking contacts not your magic genie. You do yourself and your networking contact a disservice if you delegate your job search to them. They can provide you with information, they are not going to take over your search. You can call back for specific question or to update them on your job search progress. Calling or e-mailing every few days is over the edge.

THE TOOLS OF NETWORKING

The tools you use to network are as important as networking itself. They are the tangible investments that reflect your dedication to exploring career opportunities and your ability to navigate in an increasingly complex business environment.

TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION

A busy signal does not indicate to return callers that you are an important person. It indicates that you are not keeping abreast of new technology. Since you do not want to miss a call, voice mail is a

must. If you are networking from home, consider establishing separate voice mailboxes for your personal and business calls. If you use an answering machine, be sure to eliminate all background noise. Be sure your voice mail message is short, clear and professional.

A system that alerts you immediately if you have a stored message is not essential but desirable. If your system does not offer this feature, check your messages often. Return missed calls immediately. Your skill at following up on telephone calls is the first indicator of your ability to work quickly and efficiently. Since most professionals return calls at specific times during the business day, a missed call returned quickly may mean the difference between speaking to someone who will be willing to help you and playing a losing game of phone tag.

Although many people use cell phones for business, using a cell phone as your primary source of communication is less reliable than a landline. The degradation in sound, background noises, and irregular or intermittent connections does not convey the professionalism of a phone call placed from a private location. The concentration needed for successful networking is also hard to achieve when you are dodging traffic or driving down the highway at 60 miles an hour. By all means, use a cell phone as a backup, but call your contacts when you are in a reliable cellular area.

E-MAIL

A permanent personal e-mail account with a reputable Internet Service Provider (ISP) such as America Online, Earthlink, or Microsoft Network is an essential networking tool. Although we do not endorse a specific ISP, we recommend these companies because we think they provide consistent service and will remain in business despite the volatile technology market.

Make sure your ISP's service is easy to use and provides good technical support. Make sure your e-mail program transmits attachments, such as your resume, quickly and easily. Most important, make sure your e-mail address is businesslike and allows contacts to identify you readily.

CONTACT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A system to keep track of each contact's information can be as simple as a notebook and a 3" X 5" index card file or as complex as a Palm Pilot equipped with sophisticated contact management software. Be sure to record the person's full name, title, address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address. Note the information obtained from your conversation while it is fresh in your mind. This information will be critical to the success of your follow-up activities.

Outlook is a corporate standard and will make communication easier with your contacts.

RESUME

A well-written, well-designed resume is your advertisement for an interview. Make sure it is clear, concise, and accurate. Ask someone whose professional opinion you value but who does not know you well to review your resume and provide objective feedback.

The accepted standard for a resume is no more than two pages containing your professional experience in reverse chronological order (figure 2). Deviations from this format may very well dilute your message.

Figure 2. Sample Resume

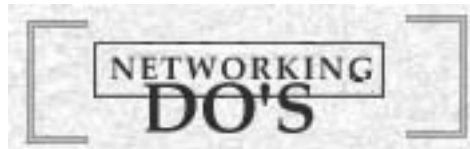
NAME	E-mail address@isp.com
Street Address	Office phone: (XXX) XXX-XXXX
City, State, Zip+4	Fax number: (XXX) XXX-XXXX
OBJECTIVE	
Note: Choose your words carefully. Be sure that your objective doesn't limit your prospects or contain jargon.	
EDUCATION	
Degree (spelled out), Institution, City, State.	
Major and honors, if any.	
CAREER EXPERIENCE	
Note: Present your experience in reverse chronological order. Describe your last ten years of experience in detail, even if it takes up to one and one-half pages to do so.	
Company Name, City, State	(19XX to present)
TITLE	(Dates in the position)
Responsibilities include: primary and secondary responsibilities, title of the person you report to, number of direct and indirect reports, matrix management responsibility, budget responsibility, and external and internal interfaces.	
Note: The reader should be able to determine the scope of your responsibilities in no more than four or five sentences.	
KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS	
Note: For your most recent job title, include three to five bullet points outlining your key accomplishments. Your accomplishments should be as quantitative as possible. Don't forget to use power words such as "met, achieved, exceeded" and phrases such as "successfully developed and implemented."	
Saved the company \$X in X months	
Note: Continue with sections for each job title, but use fewer bullet points in the section on key accomplishments. When you reach the last third or quarter of page two, change to the following format:	
OTHER CAREER EXPERIENCE	
Company Name, City, State	(19XX to present)
TITLE	(Dates in the position)

Note: Never reveal personal information such as marital status or children.

If your professional experience encompasses several areas, and you feel you may qualify for a variety of positions, consider developing several resumes. Each should focus on a specific functional area.

THE DO'S AND DON'T OF NETWORKING

Following are two lists of networking do's and don't that summarize much of what has gone before in an easy to remember list format.



1. Identify an organization, job title, career path, or person of interest to you. **DO RESEARCH** so that you can talk intelligently to your contact.
2. When you speak to that person, ask **IS THIS A GOOD TIME?**
3. Give a quick **SUMMARY** of **WHO YOU ARE** and **WHAT YOU WANT**. Focus on what you have in common. Have a goal. State your purpose.
4. **BE FLEXIBLE**.
5. Ask for information and advice, **NOT A JOB**. Be prepared with a short list of questions or topics.
6. At the meeting, ask for **REFERRALS**.
7. **LISTEN** attentively.
8. **RESPOND** with intelligent questions or comments. Speak in sound bites.
9. Ask for a resume **CRITIQUE**.
10. Be **COURTEOUS** -- write a thank you note.



1. Don't push yourself on someone who isn't interested or able to speak with you.
2. Don't ask personal questions or questions about money.
3. Don't ask for a job.
4. Don't overstep your time limits.
5. Don't come unprepared, either about the company, the career path, or yourself.
6. Don't interrupt.
7. Don't focus entirely on your own needs. You're there to learn.
8. Don't ask the person to circulate your resume for you (unless she offers).
9. Don't forget to say "thank you."
10. Don't become a pest, continually calling the contact for advice and referrals after your initial

meeting.

THE OBLIGATION OF NETWORKING

Networking is talking to people to engage them in helping you. Networking creates an obligation in you to provide the same help and the same service that so many people are going to provide you. It's how the game is played.

2 COR 1:3-4

3 PRAISE BE TO THE GOD
AND FATHER OF OUR LORD
JESUS CHRIST, THE FATHER
OF COMPASSION AND THE
GOD OF ALL COMFORT, 4
WHO COMFORTS US IN ALL
OUR TROUBLES, SO THAT WE
CAN COMFORT THOSE IN
ANY TROUBLE WITH THE
COMFORT WE OURSELVES
HAVE RECEIVED FROM GOD.