

Networking

Guide

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Networking Guide

80% of jobs live in the “hidden job market” and are never listed publicly. So, even if you applied to every job out there, you still only applied to around 1/5 openings, the same positions everyone else is competing for.

To gain access to the hidden job market you must network and ‘get in the conversation’ by connecting with the people who know about the opportunities.

Networking at Events

Have a personal/elevator pitch prepared. A short (30-60 seconds) professional summary.

Pitch Example

Hi, my name is _____ and I am a _____ major/graduate from Pratt Institute. I have a background in _____ and an interest in _____. I am currently seeking advice/an internship/position in the field of _____ at _____.

Informational Interviews

Information Interviews are NOT job interviews! They are ways to learn about industries and make professional connections. You are surrounded by referral sources! But you must tap into them and start making connections early.

Information Interviews serve two purposes,

1. Explore to discover interests
2. Engage to discover unlisted opportunities

Requesting a Referral:

“Hello, my name is _____. I am a student at Pratt Institute, and I’m very interested in [Industry/Job]. I understand that you may know [Name] or some people in that field. Could you refer me to them to learn more about their work?”

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Setting up the conversation:

1. Introduce yourself and how you got their contact information
2. Ask them when is a good time to talk
3. Tell them you are researching and asking for advice [Do not ask for a job]
4. Request a brief meeting [Respect their busy schedule]

For Example: “Hello, my name is _____. I received your contact information from _____. I’m a student at Pratt Institute, interested in your field of work, and _____ said you would be a great person to talk to. If you have the availability, may I buy you a cup of coffee and we meet for perhaps 30 minutes? I’d love to hear about your story and work experience.”

Preparing for the meeting:

- Research the person’s field and organization.
- Review their LinkedIn profile to gain a better understanding of their background.
- Develop a list of questions you’d like to ask (see below).
- Be prepared to answer questions about yourself.

Sample Questions to Ask:

1. How did you get to this point in your career?
2. What do you like most and/or least about your work?
3. How do you feel one can be successful in this field?
4. How much time do you spend on given tasks at your job in a week/day?
5. Do you suggest other similar organizations I should consider?
6. How do you think job prospects will change in this field over the coming few years?
7. What is the work environment/culture like?
8. Do you know anyone else in this field who could provide me with additional advice?

Following Up:

Be sure to send a thank you note with your contact information, thanking the person for their time. If you have further questions, ask to connect on LinkedIn.

Networking Checklist

- ☐ I recognize how networking can help me track down solid job leads, as well as receiving referrals and introductions.
- ☐ I understand that proper networking is not about using people and asking them for jobs.
- ☐ I regularly try to cultivate new networking relationships.
- ☐ I use multiple different methods in building and maintaining my network of contacts.
- ☐ I belong to at least one social networking site (e.g., Facebook) and one professional networking site (e.g., LinkedIn).
- ☐ I spend most of my time on networking rather than on job boards.
- ☐ I spend more time networking face-to-face instead of online.
- ☐ I am an active volunteer for at least one organization in my community.
- ☐ I use informational interviews
- ☐ I belong to at least one industry/professional/trade group.
- ☐ I try to keep my connections informed of my situation – especially when
- ☐ I am actively searching for a new job.
- ☐ I attend meet and greets at professional/industry conferences, trade shows, and other events.
- ☐ I regularly show my appreciation to my networking contacts.
- ☐ I attend special networking events with the goal of building my network.
- ☐ I participate in at least one active industry/profession-related online discussion group, or write a professional blog, or comment on industry-related blogs

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