

JOB SEARCH TOOLKIT:

Tools & Techniques You Need for a Successful Job Hunt

The following section is entitled: **Chapter 2: Networking**

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The full text of the Job Search Toolkit is available at: FirstFind.org>>*Look for a Job.*

Chapter

2

Networking

Now that you have a list of jobs to look for, it is time to start telling people that you are looking for a job. When you do this you are **networking**. Networking is something we do every day. When you ask a friend to recommend a movie, you are networking. Ask someone else for the name of a good dentist and you are networking. Tell someone the best place to buy a chocolate cake and you are networking.

You can also use networking to find a job. This essential part of your job search can be done online and in person. The first step to take before you make connections is to check and edit your online image and make sure you look job ready.

Using the Internet to Network

Type your name into a search engine. It doesn't matter whether you prefer Google, Bing or Mozilla. If you already know you have a very common name, or the search shows thousands or millions of results for people with your name, you should begin using a middle initial or full middle name in job applications and on your resume to set you apart.

If you have a profile, account, or have commented on any of these sites they will show up on the first page or two:

- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Instagram
- YouTube

You may also find links to when you were quoted in a news story or appeared in photos from a charity, community or church activity.

How Can I Use Facebook to Find a Job?

First of all, know that any potential employers can find anything and everything you post online. It's important that your Facebook is rated G and shows you in the best light. If a hiring manager searches your name and finds a Facebook posting that boasts of the number of drinks you had before you passed out, or a rant about all of the idiots you worked with, including your boss, they won't be impressed. A simple, "I hate Monday mornings" is not going to endear you with an employer looking for a reliable office worker.

Follow this basic rule for Facebook: If you wouldn't want your boss, mother, father, sister, brother, grandmother or kids to see a posting, then it shouldn't be on Facebook.

Once you know that your Facebook profile is workplace-friendly, you can use the site for networking for your job search. Look at your list of Facebook friends to see if anyone is working for a company or in a job you are interested in, or might know someone who is. Send a private note that says something like, "Hi Sarah, I'm looking for a job and I see you work at ABC Audio. Do you know if they are looking for a receptionist? I have 2 years of experience at a really busy company." Or, "Hi Bob, I'm looking for work in Security and I remember you had a friend, Mo, who worked security for Macy's. Do you know if he is still there? Can you give me his name and number?"

If you know the phone number of any of these people, it's probably better to pick up the phone and call them to ask the same question.

Use your Networking Activity form at the end of this chapter (also in the Appendix of this Toolkit) to keep track of these requests.

Here's a sample of what this will look like:

Networking Activity			
Contact /phone or email	Company/Title	Date	Action/Follow Up/Next Steps
Bob Ford 646-000-1234	Frank's Taxi/ Dispatcher	04/20/16	Asked Bob for contact information for his friend Mo who works in Security for Macy's. Call back or email by 5/1/16

If you are not employed and are actively looking for a job, you can also post this information on Facebook. Stick to positives when adding this information. Write something like, "Looking for a job with a good agency as a Home Health Aide." Don't write, "Out of work again, laid off when the company was bought. Anyone know about a job, any job? I'm getting tired of Ramen noodles and unemployment won't last forever." Never post anything like, "Another waste of time of a job interview. It's pretty clear that they're only hiring cute young women for this job."

If you are working but looking for a new opportunity, don't announce your job search on Facebook, or anywhere else online. Your boss should not find out that you want to leave the job when someone sends them a link to your post.

What is LinkedIn and Do I Need a Profile There?

LinkedIn is the world's largest online professional network, with more than 100 million users in the U.S. LinkedIn is not a site where you share birthday news or pictures of your last family event. Users post professional profiles that include job history, education and skills. Most LinkedIn users have college degrees but this does not mean that all users, and all jobs posted require the same level of education. LinkedIn can be a great place to find people for networking. For example, you can reach out to an old boss or co-worker as a connection for your job search.

To figure out if you should create a profile on LinkedIn, search the site for profiles of people you know with jobs that are similar to the one you have, or the one you want. If some of them show up with LinkedIn profiles you should take the time to create your own LinkedIn profile.

However, some job postings on LinkedIn do not require you to have a LinkedIn profile. To find out if the kind of jobs you are looking for are posted, go to your favorite search engine and type in the job title and "LinkedIn job postings." For example, you might type in "food server LinkedIn job postings." Your search results will show several links to Food Server (or Restaurant Servier) jobs on LinkedIn. If one posting catches your eye click "apply" and you will find out if you apply through LinkedIn, and need a profile, or directly to the company. For food servers, for example, applicants are usually directed to company web sites. However, applicants for Administrative Assistants are often asked to apply through LinkedIn, and must create a profile.

Another way employers spread the word about job openings on LinkedIn is in Groups. LinkedIn members can join Groups that range from college alumni to field of interest and previous employers. Some examples of LinkedIn Groups are Army Veterans, Security Specialists and Wal Mart Alumnist. Groups post information, share ideas, answer questions and group members post jobs for free.

Finally employers search LinkedIn for people with specific skills. These are likely to be targeted at individuals with strong work experience in an area that requires additional education or work history. One example would be a Bookkeeper who has worked with QuickBooks.

What Goes Into a LinkedIn Profile?

If you have decided that a LinkedIn profile can help your job search, set aside a couple of hours and begin by creating an account. A basic LinkedIn account is free and should meet

your job search needs. LinkedIn does a good job of walking you through building the parts of your profile once you have created an account.

Here are some tips for writing your LinkedIn Profile:

1. Use a clear headline that describes the work you do. For example, Administrative Assistant at ABC Audio or Health Care Professional.
2. Include a professional photo. This is not one from a vacation or a party. This is a photo of no more than your head and shoulders in the kind of clothes you wear for work. A cook can wear chef's whites; a customer service professional can wear a neat blouse or shirt.
3. Write a summary that describes, in no more than a few sentences, what you do. You can use one from your resume or create a new one. For ideas look at profiles of people with similar skills and experience.
4. Be precise in your job descriptions.
5. Include your top skills.
6. Join relevant groups. They will be listed on your profile. When searching for groups make sure they are in the U.S. and have more than a few members.
7. Provide specifics about your education.

How Do I Use LinkedIn for Networking?

Once you join and complete your profile on LinkedIn, you will be prompted to add connections. Do not automatically link to your email address book. This will send LinkedIn connection requests to everyone with a generic message. Do send personalized requests to co-workers, people you went to school with, and friends and family members who are on LinkedIn. A personalized request can be as simple as, "Brad- I enjoyed working with you at ABC Audio and would like to connect on LinkedIn."

You can ask your LinkedIn connections questions related to your job search. You can send a direct message, "Hi Jenny- I'm looking for a job in customer service. Are there any jobs at ABC Audio where you work or do you know anyone else hiring?" This would be the kind of thing you write to someone you know pretty well. It's even better to call Jenny and ask the question. While you are on the phone offer to buy Jenny a cup of coffee so you can meet in person to talk about your job search.

For people you don't know as well, maybe you worked with them a while ago, you want to set up a networking conversation, preferably in person or on the phone. Start by sending a message, "Joe- Thank you for connecting with me on LinkedIn. I enjoyed working with you at Prime Security. I see you are at ABC Audio now. I'm looking for a new job with a good company and would love to find out about your work. Can we meet for a cup of coffee next week?"

Another way to use LinkedIn for networking is to check out the connections of the people you are connected with. When you find someone in the kind of job or company you are interested you can ask the person you know to make the introduction. This sounds like, "Joe- I see that Sal at Epic Home Construction is one of your LinkedIn connections. Can you introduce me to Sal? Epic Home is a company I would really like to learn more about and could be a great place to work."

When you read job postings on LinkedIn look at the entire web page. If you have a connection to someone at the company, or one of your connections does, it will be included for you on the page. Look on the right side of the page for a sentence like, "See how you're connected" or "You are connected with someone at ABC Audio." If it's a 2nd or 3rd connection you can send a note to your connection that says, "Joe- I just applied for a job at Epic Home Construction and I see you are connected to Sal Smith who works there. Can you introduce me to Sal so I make sure my resume gets to the right person?"

Keep Track of Networking

It's exciting to make all of these connections and with each one you are broadening the circle of people who know you are looking for a job. As this list grows it can be tough to keep track of people. You don't want to contact someone twice with the same request and you don't want to answer a phone call or email message from someone responding to your request by asking, "Who are you?"

Use the Networking Activity Form at the end of this chapter (also in Appendix B) to keep track of networking.

Here is an example of these notes:

Networking Activity			
Contact/ Tel or email	Company/Title	Date	Action/Follow Up/Next Steps
Jenny Stockton jenny@abcaudio.com	ABC Audio Receptionist	04/20/16	Asked about customer service jobs. Call back or email by 5/1/16 to set up time to meet in person.

What About the Rest of My Online World?

Check any site where you will show up to make sure it represents you in the best light, just like you did with Facebook. Delete that YouTube video with suggestions on how to respond to robo calls. The fake foreign accent may be accurate and the content is funny as a joke but does not describe the kind of employee who gets hired quickly.

Other Types of Networking

Once you have checked the online world for possible people to network with, it's time to sit down and make a list of the other people you can contact. Friends, family and former co-workers all go on the page. Make a list of all these names then add them to your Network Activities form so you know who to call.

It's a Good Thing I Have a Cell Phone to Make All These Calls

Cell phones are great, very convenient and a lot of people don't have land lines any more. When you're searching for a job it's very important to make sure every phone call, on a cell phone or land line, whether you are the caller or receiver, is professional.

Here are some rules to follow:

- Make and take calls in a quiet place. Do not call from the supermarket, playground or with a TV playing in the background. If an employer calls while you are somewhere noisy simply say, "I'm leaving the subway, can I call you back in 20 minutes?"
- Cancel call waiting or ignore it or any other incoming calls when you are speaking with someone about employment.
- State your name and number clearly when leaving a message. Don't think, "I don't have to leave my number, they can find it."
- If you know the connection is bad or you are in a dead zone, reschedule the call.
- Never answer the phone with a suspicious, "Who is this?" When you are looking for a job, any phone call could be from your new boss. Answer politely by saying hello or stating your name.
- Have a pen and paper (your notebook, Networking Activity Form) so you can write down information.

Plan Before You Pick Up the Phone

Make a plan before you make networking phone calls or visits so you can make the best impression and get your questions answered. Every conversation should be professional even if you are speaking to a good friend or relative. Remember, you are not networking for a restaurant recommendation. You are looking for information to help you get a job.

These calls will take two basic forms:

- The person you are calling works in a type of job that you have had in the past and you would like to do this type of work again. You know the general duties and requirements for this type of work.
- The person you are calling works in a job you have not had but you think you have the skills and background to do the job. This call will help you get information about job duties and requirements.

All calls begin with a polite greeting and an explanation of the reason for the call. All calls close with a statement of thanks. It's helpful if you write some notes about what you want to say and have the notes ready when you make the call. Practice your networking techniques. Rehearse your lines for your call in front of a mirror or with another person. You can practice with a friend or relative and they may recommend other people to network as they listen to what you are doing.

Here is a sample of notes for a networking call.

June 21, 2017
Mary Jones- 914-111-2222
ABC Audio Company
Receptionist
Greeting: Good morning, my name is Shelly Stark and I am calling to speak to Mary Jones.
Reason for call: I have worked as a receptionist before. I loved the job and was very good at it. I was wondering if ABC Audio is hiring any receptionists. (If Mary tells me yes) What's the best way for me to apply for the job? (If Mary tells me no) Do you know of any other companies or people that might be hiring receptionists?
Name, title and phone number of people to call next: Sue Ship- ABC Audio, Office Manager – 914-111-2223 Peggy Gold – Well Made Auto Parts Company, Controller 914-222-3333
Closing: Thank you very much for speaking with me today. I really appreciate your taking the time to give me this information.

When you make the call make sure that

- You smile. You may be nervous but you always sound better when you smile, even on the phone.
- You are polite and professional with everyone. You never know if you are talking to someone who may interview you later. You want everyone you speak with to remember you as a nice and polite person.

If you have questions about the job write them down. Here are some questions you can ask about a receptionist job:

- I am interested in learning more about what a Receptionist does. Do you have time for a few questions? (If yes,) Do you need Receptionist experience to get a job like yours?
- How much time do you spend on the phone?
- Do you do other work besides greeting people on the phone or in person? (If yes,) What type of work?
- Do you need computer skills for the job? (If yes,) What kind?

If your questions are answered and if you feel you are qualified and you want to ask about job openings, you can ask the person you are speaking with. You can write this into your script.

If there are no job opportunities, ask for the names, titles and phone numbers of other people you can call. Always make certain that you can correctly spell and pronounce the names. Make sure you know the company name. You sound much better prepared and more serious when you have the right information.

If the person does not have time to answer questions, ask for a good time to call back. Make sure you agree on a specific day and time. If the person does not offer a specific time, you can ask, "Can I call back on Tuesday at 10:00 AM to ask some questions?" Write the date and time of the call in your notebook and on your calendar and make certain you keep the appointment.

When you call a good friend or relative, you will probably start with some casual conversation or catching up. But tell this person that you are actually calling for a work-related reason.

Calls to New Names

In addition to the people on your contact list, call the people you learned about when you asked about others who may be hiring. When you make these calls always say how you got their name. The greeting for this call will look like this:

"Good morning, my name is Lois Long. Mary Jones gave me your name and suggested that I give you a call."

Here's another sample:

"Good morning Mo. Bob Ford gave me your contact information. I'm looking for a job in Security and Bob said you would be a good person to call since you work in Security for Macy's."

Scheduling Interviews

During these calls your goal is to get information and appointments for interviews. Always have your calendar handy so that you can write down the date and time of the interview and make certain that you will be available. When you schedule an interview write down all of the following information:

- The date and time of the appointment
- The exact address including any floor or department
- The name, including correct spelling, and title of the person you will meet
- The name and correct spelling of the company

If you do not get a specific appointment for an interview but are told to come in and fill out an application, write down the following information:

- The name and correct spelling of the company
- The exact location you need to go to including address, any floor or department
- The name, including correct spelling, and title of the person who suggested you complete an application
- The best time to come in to apply. Don't just ask for the application hours. Ask for the best time. There may be times when someone is available to see job seekers without appointments.

Use Your Calendar

When you learn about application times or make appointments for interviews, make certain that you put this information on your calendar. It is also a good idea to schedule time on your calendar to make your calls.

This example is an idea of what your calendar would look like so far.

Job Search Schedule						
Week of <u>June 6, 2016</u>						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	10AM Create Top 5 List	9AM Make <u>networking</u> calls	9AM Make follow up calls	2PM Fill out application at ABC Audio, 222 Main Street, 5 th Floor Flushing		

How to Use Events to Add to Your Networking List

You can always network. Whenever you meet someone, use your networking skills to ask if he or she knows anyone who is hiring someone with your skills. One great place to do this is any type of event where there are lots of people who you don't know or know really well. This can be a party, a community event, even an afternoon at the municipal pool. Tell people you are looking for a job and are trying to find connections for your search. This is not the time to take out your notebook and go through the entire page. This is the time to get the person's phone number, find out when you can call them, and follow up with the phone call to start the networking.

Good networking is a cycle; one person leads to another and another.

Here's what the conversation at the block party might sound like:

Fred has just met Carl and after some brief chatting says,

"Carl, it's good to meet people in the neighborhood. It's a nice place to live. You know, I'm looking for a new job right now. I have experience as a painter. Can I give you a call to see who you might know that could connect me to a job?"

When Carl says yes, Fred should agree on a time and date and say, "Great, I'll call you on Tuesday at 10 am at 914-111-2222."

It's important not to complain or be negative because you never know who Carl is connected to. And always follow up with the call.

Good luck with your networking. It's a very important skill.

The full text of the Job Search Toolkit is available at: FirstFind.org>>Look for a Job.

