

## Network Your Way to a Job

The shortest way to a good job is through a network of individuals who are employed already. They know where the best jobs are. Making contacts among these people will give you an "in" when you're ready to job shop seriously.

The best time to start building a network is while you are still in school? Why?

- By establishing a network early in your life, you will have time to add many people who can help you locate a job when you're ready.
- Networking is the perfect way to meet professionals in your field—individuals who can advise you on short cuts to finding job opportunities. For example, they can direct you to the right person to contact in an organization.
- Building relationships takes time. The better your relationships with the people in your network, the more likely they are to want to help you when the time comes.
- Employees know when openings come up in their companies and in the firms of other people in their network. Often, these positions are never advertised. Unless you're part of a large network of people who work for different companies, you'll never hear of these jobs.
- If someone an employer respects recommends you, you gain attention that you'll never receive from sending unsolicited résumés.
- Networking helps you develop your people skills and communication skills. It's like tying your shoes, the more you do it the better you get.
- Throughout your career, you can trade ideas and information with your network, not only about finding a job, but your career in general and about challenges and problems you encounter on the job.



**Action:** Make a list of at least 10 people who would be helpful to include in your network when you begin to look for a job. This might include acquaintances in professional positions, family members, teachers, small business owners you know, and everyone else that you might call on.

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