

Networking

Networking is an extremely powerful concept. Looking for a job is very hard work but you can increase your chances of success tremendously by networking. Developing a network support system is a process that should continue throughout your life. Networking is a mutually beneficial concept, not a one-way street. As you grow in your career, you, in turn, should help others in their search. The primary objective of networking is to become better known so that many doors will open for you now, and in the future.

The best networking is done before you need it, so you can never start too soon.

- Another reason to network is to tap into that "**hidden job market.**"
Eighty-five percent of the jobs that are available are filled by word-of-mouth.
- Meeting someone through a **mutual contact** or **referral** is like having a seal of approval. Most employers who need to hire someone start informally identifying candidates long before the position is formally announced. These "pre-approved" contacts are what the professional world revolves around. Networking is an integral part of how business really operates. Make your goal known and most people are willing and happy to help you reach your goal.
- One of the most effective job search strategies is the use of an **alumni network.** (Both ONU alumni and your undergraduate alumni).
Great connection to a city or area of law.

1. DO SOME HOMEWORK BEFORE YOU CALL OR WRITE.

If you are seeking a permanent or summer position in a particular geographic or substantive area, advice from an alum can prove invaluable. However, before you contact anyone by letter or telephone, take some time to decide what you are asking that person to do for you.

N **List your points** on paper will keep you focused

T Are you looking for **names of organizations** that customarily hire

people with your individual background and interests, or those that have more general openings at this time?

T Are you specifically **seeking a position** with the alum's organization?

T Are you **requesting advice** on summer or part-time experience that will make you more marketable later?

2. BE SURE YOUR EXPECTATIONS ARE REASONABLE.

; Many alumni are probably not realistically in a position to help you as much as you might hope or even expect.

(The majority will help to the limit of their abilities, as they genuinely care about their alma mater.

T Don't forget to thank those who have aided you, even if their advice did not seem quite pertinent to your situation.

3. TREAT ALUMNI RELATIONSHIPS WITH CARE.

It is crucial to **use great care in asking for assistance** from a graduate.

T They place their own reputations on the line when they refer or recommend you.

T Failure to adhere to the standards of etiquette may well damage your chances and close the door to subsequent students.

T Treat alumni with the same courtesy and respect you will expect to receive.

4. SAY "THANK YOU" AND FOLLOW THROUGH.

N Immediately after you have spoken with or received a letter of advice from an alum, **write a short thank-you note.**

5. KEEP YOUR ALUMNI CONTACT INFORMED.

N Keep in touch periodically.

T If you are interviewing in your alumni contact's city, write or call beforehand and possibly arrange to meet over breakfast or lunch.

6. IT IS STILL UP TO YOU.

- K Remember, just because your contact has opened a door for you, you are not guaranteed anything.
- i You must prove yourself in an interview
- i Your contact has placed their credibility on the line for you.

7. KEEP THE OFFICE OF LAW CAREER SERVICES INFORMED.

(Let us know what happens in your job search. We want to help you in any way that we can.

8. A FINAL NOTE.

Many people are confused by the following terms. Here are their definitions:

- Alumna - one female graduate
- Alumnus - one male graduate
- Alum - denotes either gender
- Alumnae - several female graduates
- Alumni - several male or a mixed group of graduates
- Graduate - an alum. One can be a former student, but can never become a "former graduate".

You might find it very helpful to keep organized by keeping **index cards** on your network of contacts. Below is an example of a contact card:

Date _____
Name _____
Title _____
Employer _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Telephone _____
Last date contacted _____
Purpose _____
Future action _____
