

NETWORKING

Networking is using our relationship with family, friends, neighbors, acquaintances or other “human” resources to put us in touch with others. Clarkson can help you make connections with alumni by obtaining an alumni report or through the alumni mentoring program on eRecruiting.

Benefits of Networking

- Obtain information about your field/major.
- Clarify your job target/skills.
- Make contacts at companies where positions may exist, get the names of additional people who could help you with your career goals.

How to start: make a list of people you know.

- Family- relatives, extended family, family friends and business associates of relatives.
- School – professors, advisors, past teachers, staff and alumni
- Friends – people you socialize with, see at parties, friends you know but rarely see.
- Clubs/Athletics – member of sport teams, coaches, people at the gym, sorority or fraternity members.
- Employers and past employers

Using E-mail with Networking Contacts

- Pay as much attention to your e-mail as you do your resume and cover letters. Address your contacts by “Dr.” “Mr.”, “Mrs”, or “Ms.” Unless you are on a first name basis. Spell-Check Do not use informal slang.
- When using e-mail as a way to establish initial contact, send a separate message to each person.
- Once you have sent an e-mail to a potential networking contact, it is your responsibility to follow up with a phone call to set up a time for the two of you to meet.

Examples of how you make the contact

- If you have identified someone you want to talk to.

i.e. Hello, my name is _____, Bob Smith (one of your networking contacts) suggested I call you. I am considering a career in _____ and would be interested in any advice you could share with me. Could we set up a time for about 20 minutes to talk about this?

- No personal referral

i.e. Mr. Jones, I am _____ a student at Clarkson and I am very interested in a career in the _____ industry.

Asking the Right Questions

- What caused you to enter this field (industry, or business)?
- Would you knowing what you know now, enter this field today?
- Based on what you know about me (refers to your resume), do you believe I have the necessary skills to...?
- Is there anything you would recommend I do to prepare to move into this field?
- Are there any strategies I might consider to learn more about this field?
- Are there any other people you think I should contact for additional perspectives on what I’m trying to do?
- May I follow up with you at a later date to inform you of my progress?

Contents of the Initial Letter/E-mail

Paragraph 1

I obtained your name through an alumni report from Clarkson, I identified you _____ (because what? - Occupation, grad program, career field. /industry, employer?). I am currently _____ (What? - exploring internships, investigating occupations, considering graduate school, researching your employer, etc..?) and would like to have an information interview with you.

Paragraph 2

(Because you are NOT enclosing a resume you need to summarize your skills, interests, and experiences you like to use, etc... that relate to why you selected this alumni)

Paragraph 3

I will be calling you ____ (if you e-mailed, then in 3-4 days; if you wrote a letter, then a week) to have a conversation. I look forward to speaking with you.

Even if you only develop a friendly relationship with your first contacts, your time is not wasted. Often, the best results from networking meetings come later. The person you met with may pass your name on to a friend, supplier or consultant. The more people you impress the more opportunities you can expect. Networking takes practice, begin with people you know. Good Luck!

Reference:

"Monster Careers, How to Land the Job of Your Life" by Jeff Taylor