



**NETWORKING
FOR
SUCCESS**

Networking is the key to finding internship or job opportunities. Most individuals know how to meet new people and find new contacts through friends, colleagues, mentors or online. However, when it comes to knowing the details of how to network, some are left without much guidance.

SKILLS OF A GOOD NETWORKER

Below is a list of skills that good networkers will possess.

- Quality vs. quantity—The number of people you know does not matter. It is the quality of your contacts that does. Who are the decision makers? Influencers? Who can help you and how?
- Slow down—Get to know people not only from a business perspective, but also from a personal perspective.
- Go low tech—In some cases, a quick phone call can be more efficient than many emails.
- Diversity—A diversified portfolio is preferable.
- Practice 3rd party networking—Take the time to introduce two people so they can benefit from meeting each other.
- Avoid last minute networking—Try to build relationships before you need them.
- Make random “hello” calls—When someone comes up in a conversation or comes to mind, make a random “hello” call.
- Unlearn shyness—If shyness is a challenge for you, start a conversation with a stranger in the elevator just before you reach your floor. Think friendly.

USING SOCIAL MEDIA AS A NETWORKING TOOL

A very high percentage of employers use social media sites such as LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com), Facebook (www.facebook.com) and Twitter (www.twitter.com) to promote job openings and locate qualified candidates. You may utilize these sites to expand your social and professional network, search for jobs and promote your skills and accomplishments. When participating in sites such as these, it will be very important for you to review your profiles to ensure that they convey the message that you would like employers to receive. If you have personal information that may hinder your candidacy, it is highly recommended that you remove these items.

LINKEDIN

LinkedIn has become a highly valuable resource for both employers and students. Employers utilize LinkedIn to search for candidates for both internship and job opportunities, so it is highly recommended to build a complete profile to serve as your online resume. LinkedIn is also a very effective tool for locating individuals who are in organizations in which you are interested. Below are some tips for getting started on LinkedIn:

- Build a complete profile using your resume as a guide (e.g., education, experience, organizations, courses, projects, etc.).
- Include a well-written and descriptive summary.
- Add connections including professors, supervisors, coaches, teammates, mentors, alumni, etc.
- Search your connections for second-degree connections. This is a great way to meet new people in your field and to expand your professional network. Ask for introductions to individuals of interest.
- Be open to introducing others who you feel may benefit from one another.
- Join groups of interest, review job boards, and participate in discussions to help connect with others.
- Start building your profile early on instead of waiting until you need your network.
- Finally, be sure to keep your content professional including all status updates, headlines, and photos.

FACEBOOK AND TWITTER TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Make sure pictures, postings and other items on your Facebook profile are appropriate for employers to see, even if you have it set to private.
- Don't talk negatively about a past or current employer.
- Use these networks to promote your professional experiences, activities and interests.
- Remember that employers may not have access to Facebook at work or personal e-mail 24/7; you must have patience when communicating with them through social networks and sources. Following up through a source such as email or phone is encouraged.

STEP-BY-STEP NETWORKING TIPS



**Acknowledge
the person**



Clarify your interest



Establish a bond



**Share actionable
steps**

Review the networking tips below (adapted from jobbankusa.com).

- **BUILD RAPPORT.** State, “I was referred by (give name of mutual friend/colleague).” Then you may state, “I’m contacting you about a career matter, but let me assure you that I am not calling to ask you for a job — nor do I expect you to even know of any job openings. Let me start by telling you a bit about myself and my professional background...”
- **STATE “WHERE YOU’VE BEEN” BY USING A “POSITIONING STATEMENT.”** This is a succinct verbal statement that explains “who you are” professionally. Example: “I am a senior finance major at KCT BS. My strengths include analysis, problem solving, communication and innovation. I have had two financial analyst internships which have further honed my skills and now I am seeking a full-time position after graduation to continue my passion for the financial field.”
- **SHARE YOUR SITUATION.** This is a concise explanation of why you’re looking for guidance. Example: “Although I have many resources available here at KCTBS, I know that meeting directly with someone in my field of interest to gain valuable guidance and insight will be very beneficial to my career management.”
- **IF YOU ARE ALREADY OUT IN THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD,** you may use an “exit statement” to explain your situation as to why you left or want to leave your most recent position. Example: “As a result of a merger between two business units, over 1500 positions have been affected, including mine. I now have the opportunity to explore other career options in financial services that will leverage my proven strengths in analysis, problem-solving, communication and innovation.” The “exit statement” must be expressed in positive terms, so there will be no suspicion that you “did something wrong” to lose your job.
- **ASK FOR HELP.** “Would you be willing to help me?”
- **“DECOMPRESS.”** Take the pressure off. Reassure your contact again that you are not asking for a job. Reiterate, “As I said, I am not asking you for a job, nor do I expect you to know of any appropriate positions. However, I am interested in any advice or guidance that you could offer, in addition to any networking contacts you could provide. (Give name of mutual friend/colleague) told me that you’d be a great person to talk to for this purpose. Would you be willing to review some of my credentials and give me candid feedback?”
- **ASK AGAIN FOR HELP —** and leverage the notion of “six degrees of separation.” Ask for contacts from your contacts! And always “come from generosity.” This means you should be on the lookout for opportunities to offer something of value in return. For example, if you hear of an opportunity that matches the skills set of one of your connections, pass the information along with an offer to connect them to someone within that organization. This gesture will let them know that you have them on your mind.
- **SUGGEST A TIME TO MEET AND OFFER A SIGN OF THANKS.** Offer some days and times that are available on your calendar as possible dates to meet. If the contact responds back with a date and time that conflicts with class, work or other commitments, it’s okay to kindly ask if another time or date will work instead. Thank the contact in advance for their time and help. Example: “I know your input will be of great value, and I appreciate your willingness to help.”
- **FOLLOW-UP.** Follow-up after your networking meeting and keep the conversation going with a two-way value exchange; note that if the contact is a “center of influence,” try to have your follow-up discussion face-to-face instead of on the phone, unless the contact is outside your geographic region.
- **THESE STEPS ARE JUST A GUIDELINE.** Feel free to change or add to any of the above steps to create an approach that is most comfortable and appropriate for you.

FURTHER HELP @ CAREER GUIDANCE CENTER

- Find out more about interactive workshops and sessions which are run regularly throughout term time.
- Get connected with people through Centre of Corporate Relations.

CONTACT DETAILS

Career Guidance Centre
KCT Business School
Kumaraguru College of Technology
Coimbatore - 641049

Phone no: 0422 2661366
Website: www.kctbs.ac.in
www.facebook.com/KCT.BS

