

# Networking

Networking involves identifying and making contact with people and organisations to assist your job search. It is estimated that around 70% of jobs are not advertised. Networking is one of the most valuable and powerful strategies a job seeker can employ to access these 'hidden' jobs.

## Grow your network

Things you can do to grow your network:

- Join a professional association and attend professional development seminars and information evenings.
- Attend conferences, industry workshops & exhibitions relevant to your chosen industry.
- Join your alumni and maintain contact with your fellow students.
- Voluntary, temporary or casual work — wherever you will meet people.
- Use online networking sites like LinkedIn to build and manage contacts.
- Mentoring programs at RMIT -visit [www.rmit.edu.au/careers/mentoring](http://www.rmit.edu.au/careers/mentoring)

## Prepare to network

The aim of networking is to gather information and ideas about jobs, organisations and employment trends. It is a chance to meet people who may be in a position to hire you, alert you to vacancies or provide you with referrals to other contacts. It always involves you communicating with someone about yourself and your needs.

- Know and be ready to discuss your skills, interests and career aspirations.
- Practise introducing yourself and being an attentive listener.
- Before meeting with a new contact, research them and the organisation they work for.
- Prepare some questions to ask. Refer to 'Information Interviewing' Quick Tips, for some guidelines on these questions

## Some areas of interest to discuss may include:

- Current trends in the industry.
- The culture of the organisation.
- Career structure/opportunities in the profession/company.
- Skills valued by the employer.
- Skills might contribute to the company.
- Ways of getting into the profession/company.
- Other contacts that may be useful.
- How he/she entered into the field.
- Professional publications and websites that might be useful to read.
- Companies in the field that are expanding.
- General advice and information.

## Skills for successful networking

You need the ability to:

- Leave your comfort zone.
- Initiate introductions.
- Talk with stranger.
- Use open questions.
- Request and accept feedback.
- Follow up leads.
- Find common ground and connection points.
- Be persistent (don't give up!)
- Be enthusiastic—show people how determined you are to succeed.
- Be organised.

## Online Networking

Where to find

- LinkedIn.
- Facebook.
- Instagram.

## Who to network with

Everyone you know is a potentially valuable contact. If you think about all the people you know, then add all the people they know...you start to see that there are many people who could assist you.

Begin by listing:

- Friends, family and acquaintances.
- Neighbours.
- Fellow students and alumni.
- Work colleagues—past and present.
- Sporting and other mutual interest contacts.
- Teachers, tutors and lecturers.

The list will grow once you start talking to people.

## Further information

See the Resumes section on our Jobs and Career advice web pages

[www.rmit.edu.au/students/life-and-work-opportunities/jobs-and-career-advice](http://www.rmit.edu.au/students/life-and-work-opportunities/jobs-and-career-advice)

Updated January 2018



Disclaimer: The information on this fact sheet is provided as a guide only. RMIT Careers and Employability takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information or services supplied. Providers listed are not owned or operated by RMIT. Students should contact providers directly for further information. RMIT CRICOS provider number: 00122A