

# 10 Tips for Effective Networking

*These tips are all equally important, there is no particular order that you need to follow. Practise them all to make sure you network effectively.*

1. Make a contact list of up to 20 people you want to talk to about your career plans: start with people you already know and record their names, phone numbers and emails. These might be friends, family, friends from college, teaching staff, members of clubs or groups you belong to, current or previous workmates and employers.
2. Make contact with the people on this list, using your introductory speech that tells the person a bit about you in a professional way (*see **Introducing Yourself – The 'Elevator Pitch'***). This is a good way to practise; even if they can't help with your inquiry they will be supportive and might be able to assist you to improve your technique.
3. Work continuously on increasing your contact list. Ask each person you speak to if they know of anyone else you should talk with, and whether they could introduce you. Write down all names and contact details immediately, as it is easy to forget details.
4. Prepare some questions that you might want to ask about the person, their role or the organisation, but be prepared to ask others that seem relevant at the time.
5. When networking, present yourself well visually (i.e. clothes, shoes, hair, general cleanliness) the same way as you would if you were going for a job interview. Have your resume and business cards handy.
6. Understand that not everyone you meet will want to help you. If someone you approach declines to assist you or refuses a request for information, no matter what their reason is do not put pressure on them but end the conversation politely and withdraw.
7. Always thank the person you are talking with for taking the time to listen and/or advise you. If you end up getting a job through a contact or using tips they have provided, or if that person is helpful in another way, send an email or card thanking them.
8. Effective networking means continuously moving your job search to the 'next level', as you gain more knowledge. For example, when you find someone in your target industry that is helpful, extend the conversation to ask more direct questions, such as asking how and when they recruit staff, and if it would be possible to do some work experience or 'work shadowing' (this means you observe someone doing their job for a day but don't provide any actual assistance). This is a great way to find out more about the organisation and the job, and to help you to identify your own strengths and skills.
9. Networking goes both ways – always be considerate about the people in your network and help them out when you can with information you think they might need; this is courteous and also a good way to let them know you value and appreciate them.
10. Remember that there is no beginning or end to networking – you will need to continuously build and maintain your networks throughout your career. Use an excel spreadsheet, diary or something else to make sure you keep track. Sending a Christmas card (or similar) each year also tells the people in your network you appreciate them. *See **Ways to Build and Access Your Network***.

Information also available on <http://careers.angliss.edu.au>

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