

To Find A Great Job, Build A Great Network

by Bob Roth

The "College & Career Success" Coach

Picture yourself standing in the center of a circle surrounded by all of your friends, relatives and acquaintances, approximately 200 people. Then, picture each of those 200 people at the center of their own circles, surrounded by everyone they know. If you were to contact all 200 of your relatives, friends and acquaintances with a question, you would have access to information and feedback from the more than 40,000 people in their networks. That is the power of networking.

You may think that you don't know 200 people, but most students do. You just don't realize it yet. So let's see if we can identify the 200 people you know. Start by listing your relatives, friends and acquaintances. Include everyone in the following groups:

High School - Use your yearbook to list classmates. class officers, club members, team members, teachers, administrators, counselors and service personnel. Also include acquaintances in the classes ahead of you and behind you in school.

College - Roommates, dorm mates, friends, classmates. class officers, club members, team members, professors, administrators, counselors and service personnel. Also include acquaintances in classes ahead of you and behind you in college.

Local Community - (At Home and At College) Neighbors, Police, Fire, Ambulance, Bank, Hospital, Religious Institutions, Library, Recreation, Accountant, Barber, Hair Stylist, Car Mechanic, Retailers, Business Professionals, Politicians, Community Leaders, City Employees, Village and Town Employees, etc.

Relatives - Parents, Siblings, Close Relatives, More Distant Relatives

Employers - (Past and Present) Supervisors, co-workers, executives, employees in other departments, suppliers, customers and delivery people.

Associations - Local and National Business, Professional and Community organizations.

Military - Active and Retired Military Personnel, Members of the Military Reserves

After you complete your list, you will find that you know more people than you thought. Record their names, mailing addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses and notes about your relationship, their professions and information exchanges. The group that you've just assembled is your network. However, to be effective, your network must be cultivated and nurtured. Most of all, it must be used and strengthened.

"An effective network is the secret weapon of the best job hunters."

College students who create and effectively tap their networks can unleash a plethora of targeted and useful job hunting information. Whenever you need information and contacts for your job search, you would be wise to tap your network. There will be people in your network who have the information and contacts you need.

Your network can only work if you contact the people within it. The key to a working network is mutual respect, concern for others and a genuine interest in helping others. Importantly, you must understand that networks operate in both directions. Not only do they provide you with information and contacts, you must be willing to share your information and contacts with others.

Creating and maintaining a network is very difficult, since a network requires constant attention. That means that you must contact and share information with the people in your network on a regular basis. If you only contact people when you need help, you may turn them off. The best networkers take a genuine interest in others. They contact their network just to keep in touch and to see if there is anything they can do to help. Because they can unleash the power of their network, giving people will always receive more in return.

Since networking can provide critical information about people, employers and job opportunities, it makes a lot of sense for college students to take advantage of this job hunting technique. It works in even the worst economic times and helps to uncover the jobs that never get advertised. That's why I say, "To find a great job, build a great network."

Visit Bob's web site: www.The4Realities.com. Bob Roth is the author

of The 4 Realities Of Success During and After College -and- The
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