



Networking Know How

Networking is about building mutually beneficial relationships with others. It's about helping people who may, in turn, one day help you and it's a key part of any effective career or job search strategy.

Networking is not about asking others for jobs; however job opportunities may be brought to your attention via your networks and your successful networking efforts.

GETTING STARTED

Start by identifying the networks that you already have, such as:

- personal contacts - friends and family
- social contacts - people who you have less frequent contact with through social functions, sporting activities and other pursuits
- professional contacts - university staff, professional associations, employers and co-workers.

Don't limit your contacts; let everyone in your network know what you are seeking in terms of your career, you'll be surprised by what links there may be. Other opportunities to build your network include:

- attending career fairs and expos
- attending employer information sessions
- attending professional association events
- joining student clubs on campus

Log in to [UniHub](#) to access information about upcoming career events and employer information sessions both on campus and externally

PREPARATION FOR NETWORKING

Before attending an event or meeting, you need to be clear about what you want to achieve out of the activity. Think about:

- What you know about the person/people who will be at the event or meeting - do some research to find out more about them and what you may be able to help them with
- What you'd like to know from the person/people you'll be meeting - what types of information or contacts could they potentially help you with
- What you want the people you're meeting to know about you - consider the types of information about your career goals and unique skills and experiences you'd like to share.

REMEMBER: If the goal of your networking is to find employment, avoid the temptation to ask for opportunities; networking is a two-way relationship and the more you give, the more you'll get in return.

EFFECTIVE NETWORKING

Have A Solid Introduction

First impressions count so make sure yours is a good one. Develop your elevator statement or 'pitch', which is a short, sharp summary of who you are which could be delivered in the time it takes to travel a few floors in an elevator. Your 'pitch' should include something about who you are, your career goals and your current position. Try writing your elevator pitch now – in 50 words or less explain who you are and why someone would want to know more about you.

Learn To Read Body Language

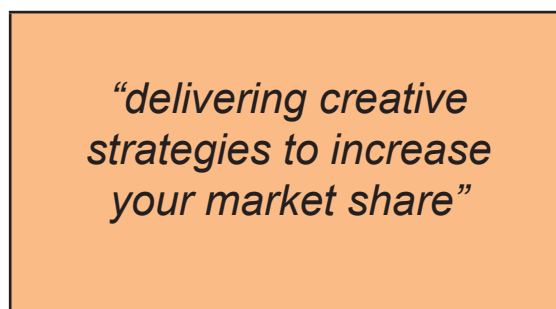
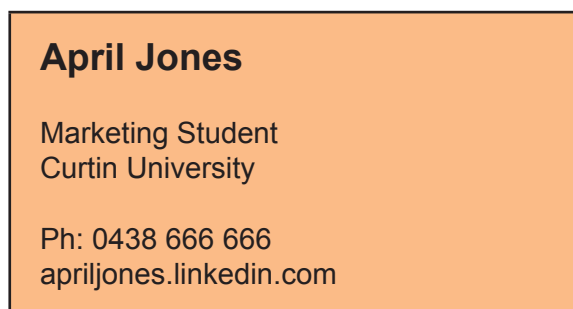
Look for signs that someone is open and approachable before you strike up a conversation with them. If they appear to be rushed or distracted, politely ask if there would be a better time for you to talk. Be mindful of your own body language and the messages you're sending. Practice smiling, making eye contact and appearing confident and relaxed.

The 60/40 Rule

Do more listening than talking; 60% of the conversation should be about them, 40% about you. Use open ended questions like who, what, where, when, could you tell me more about... to encourage others to speak about themselves so you can learn how you might be able to assist them. If you've done your preparation right, you should also have some questions planned that will help you gather information that is relevant to you and your career goals.

Give Business Cards Not Resumes

A resume says 'I want a job', a business card says 'Let's keep in touch'. Business cards may seem a bit formal when you're starting out in networking but they're the best way to give your details to a contact and encourage them to give their contact details to you. See a sample student business card below:



Have An Exit Strategy

Whether it is a one-to-one meeting or a group situation, you need to be aware of your contacts' time and yours. Plan how to politely end the conversation, thank your contact for their time, reconfirm any actions that you've promised to undertake and move on. For example, "It was lovely to meet you today; I really appreciate your time. I'll send that article to you when I return to the office on Friday."

Keep In Touch

Part of building a successful relationship is keeping in touch. Following the meeting with your contact you should send a thank you note reiterating your appreciation for their time and what you found useful about the conversation. A quick email will suffice but a short handwritten note will really help you to stand out. Make sure you deliver on any actions you promised within a reasonable time frame and if there was nothing immediately following the meeting, look out for opportunities to reciprocate their efforts, such as sending through an interesting article or an event notice.

Ongoing Management

Effective networking is not a series of 'one off' events whenever you have needs, but rather an ongoing practice that you need to commit to throughout your career. Keep your contact lists up-to-date, maintain your business card files and electronic contacts list, and touch base with those in your network on a regular basis. And remember, it is far more difficult to rebuild a network than it is to maintain one.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE

Complete our Stop Googling, Start Networking Module, online through [Curtin Challenge](#) or in person at a [Professional Development Workshop](#), and view our [job search strategies resources](#) on UniHub for more information.