

Objective: Did you ever get a job because your friend worked at the place. Yeah? Well that's called networking. Three-quarters of all jobs in the US are filled this way. Use this activity to learn more about networking.

How to get it done:

With your advisory, read the following information and discuss the different ways to network. Once your discussion is over update your resume.

Why do employers prefer the friends and relatives of their employees?

Pretend you are an employer. You have a job opening to fill. Which of the following would you be most eager to interview:

- an unknown person who answers your advertisement,
- an unknown person who mails you a resume - out of the blue, or
- a friend recommended by one of your workers?

The "friend" wins hand down. All other applicants are unknowns.

See, as a manager, you might say to yourself, "Gabby's a good employee. She works hard. She's always on time. She likes the job. She's someone I can count on. I'll bet her friend has these same qualities too."

So, you invite Gabby's friend in for an interview.

Now, there's no guarantee that Gabby's friend is going to get the job. But, more than likely, the friend will get first crack at the opening.

Unfortunately, it can have just the opposite effect if Gabby is a poor worker.

So, I should be a little leery about asking "anyone" to help me?

Yeah, if you ask a slacker to try and arrange a job interview for you, it will probably backfire. The manager's going to think that the slacker told you all about his "cushy" job- and now you want a cushy job too.

Be a little cautious about who you ask. Use your instincts. You can tell who's hard working and dedicated. You can also tell who's not.

Does this networking stuff really work?

Absolutely. Three-quarters of all job openings are filled through networking. For every one job that's filled by advertising, placement agents, or mass mailing campaigns -three are filled by networking. That's about 4 million jobs a year.

Networking is also one of the easiest ways to get a job. All you have to do is socialize and talk to your friends.

Picture this: you know lots of people -relatives, neighbors, friends, and the casual people you bump into every day. If you think about it, you probably know at least 50 people.

These 50 people are your "primary network." They are the eyes and ears you need to learn about a job opening. Talk to them. They probably work for 50 different employers. Surely one must know of a job opening where they work. Surely one of them could set you up with a job interview.

There's also a "secondary network." Each of the 50 people you know, knows another 50 people -their relatives, friends, and neighbors.

If your 50 people talk to their 50 people, you'd have 2,500 people helping you find a job.

Two-Thousand, five-hundred people, how am I going to manage them?

Don't. Concentrate on the 50 people in your primary network. Set a goal: "I need to talk to five people everyday." Get a notebook and write down the names of the people who say that they might be able to help you. Give them your resume. Call them back after a week to see if they've had any luck.

Use the dialogue tips on the right and talk to five new people everyday. Keep networking right up to the moment when someone offers you an actual job.

Tips for Networking

1. Call a friend:

"Hi, Gabby? This is Bobby Reed -I'm one of the morning customers at your coffee shop."

2. Ask for some help:

"Gabby, I need a little favor and I thought you might be able to help me."

3. Say exactly what job you're looking for:

"I'm looking for a job as a barista."

4. Ask if they know of any job openings:

"Do you know of anyone who needs a full-time window washer?"

5. Get the name and telephone number:

"That's Bobby Reed at Reese Espresso. Do you have his telephone number by any chance?"

6. Ask for information about the person:

"How long have you known him? What's he like? Is he the person who could hire me?"

7. Get a recommendation:

"Would you mind if I said that you and I were talking and you recommended that I give a call?"

8. Ask if they could set up an interview:

"Gabby, if I gave you a copy of my resume, could you give it to Bobby Reed and ask if he'd talk to me about a job?"

9. Show some gratitude:

"Gabby you're a life-saver. If I get the job, I'll buy every espresso in your coffee shop!"

10. Follow-up:

After the interview, call your friend to let them know you did -and thank them again.