



## NETWORKING TIP SHEET

### MEDIA, STRATEGIC NETWORKING, and PERSONAL BRANDING a.k.a. the NEW Job Search

Since the economy has changed, so has the job search process. With so many people looking for a job, and fewer jobs out there to find, how do you set yourself apart from all your competition? It can be simply described as 3 basic steps:

1. Have a plan.
2. Get out there.
3. Make a name for yourself.

**Personal Branding:** Remember, you are marketing yourself to potential employers. This means that in order to successfully sell yourself to an employer (a.k.a. get a job), you have to think like a marketing professional trying to promote any other type of product. Part of this is creating your own personal brand, or in other words, creating a name and reputation for yourself in your field. You need to make yourself visible to employers in your field as someone with a lot of relevant knowledge and skills.

**Social Media:** There has recently been a huge boom in the use of social media websites for job searching because of the ways in which they lend themselves to strategic networking and personal branding. Below you will find a brief description of how three different social media sites can help you conduct a more effective search.

**LinkedIn:** LinkedIn was created as a professional networking site, and is now one of the top sites for job searching. Professionals, job seekers, and recruiters alike populate it. The basic idea is similar to Facebook- staying in contact with others, but with a professional focus. You start by sending requests to people you know on LinkedIn for them to join your professional network. These people are known as your 1st degree connections. Your network also consists of 2nd and 3rd degree connections- people who your connections are connected to, and who their connections are connected to. The content of your profile is like a resume, including things like education, work experience, and volunteering experience (which is optional). Having a LinkedIn profile can help you establish a professional online image, and it is often one of the first search results displayed by Google. You can also brand yourself by joining groups related to your field and participating in relevant discussions. LinkedIn has a job search tool which not only allows you to search for advertised jobs, but also strategically network by seeing who you are connected to at the company that is hiring. You can then intentionally contact your friend who is connected to the person at Company X, and ask for an introduction. You can also just search for companies you are targeting and see how you can use your connections strategically.

**Facebook:** Facebook is a social networking site, which was not designed for job searching, but just for keeping in touch with friends. You can use it strategically, though, to stay in touch with friends who might be able to help you in your search, and to keep your network frequently updated regarding your search.

**Twitter:** Unlike Facebook, which is designed for keeping in touch with people you already know, Twitter is designed to help you build relationships with and spread information among people you don't already know. Twitter has over 140 million active users, and many companies and organizations use twitter to recruit. While Twitter is still relatively new, here are some current strategies for using it in your job search.

- On Twitter, you can "follow" anybody you want, without them having to approve you. Both people and organizations are on Twitter. Target professionals in your field, follow them, and follow who they're following. Often people/companies will follow you back just because you're following them. Now you have the ability to make yourself visible to them, which you can take advantage of by "tweeting" info relevant to your field, and joining in relevant conversations. Twitter is another excellent tool for personal branding (so make sure to keep everything you put out there professional and appropriate!). You also have the ability to contact people directly through Twitter without needing an introduction.
- Search for jobs or topics you're interested by using hashtags. Hashtags are global conversations and are searchable by putting in the topic preceded by a #. Popular job search hashtags on twitter are: #jobsearch, #job, #hiring, #jobhunt, #employment. For more job search related hashtags: <http://www.glassdoor.com/blog/hashtags-job-search-twitter/>

**Potential employers will Google you and search your profiles, so make sure to clean them up!**



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### THE UNADVERTISED (HIDDEN) JOB MARKET

The Unadvertised or Hidden Job Market consists of **jobs that haven't yet been advertised, and jobs that don't yet exist-jobs** that are created for a particular person. By far, more jobs are in the Hidden Job Market. You find these jobs through networking. Remember the saying, "*it's not what you know, it's who you know*" (and who knows YOU!)

#### HOW TO NETWORK

**What is a network?** Simply, your network is the people you know (also called your "contacts").

##### The basic idea of networking to get a job:

- You have a network.
- Your potential employer has a network.
- Your goal is to use your network to *connect* to the employer's network.

In other words, you use the people you know to connect to people the employer knows, resulting in you being connected with the employer.

**Forming a network:** You already have a network. It consists of your friends, family, past and present coworkers, classmates, professors, etc. When you're looking for a professional job, you need to build a strong network of people in your career field. Use the people you already know, but strategically make contacts by:

- Doing internships or volunteering
- Joining professional and student organizations related to your career field
- Taking any opportunity you get to meet people in your field, like attending conferences or other events
- Getting to know your professors- they often have good connections
- Getting to know your classmates that have similar career goals as you
- Doing informational interviews (This is when you sit down with someone and ask them questions to get information about their job, field, company, etc. This can be a way to get to talk to someone you haven't been able to connect to otherwise.)

**Using your network to build your network:** Leads can be difficult to find. If you only focus on finding leads within your current contacts, you're likely to hit a dead end quickly. Instead, focus initially on collecting names and expanding your network. The basic process is simple. Start with your current contacts. Tell them all that you're looking for a job, as well as a little about what you'd like to do, and the skills that you have. Ask them if they know anybody you could talk to that might be able to help you. Collect names. Meet with the people your contacts referred you to. Ask them for leads or referrals. Collect names. Meet with those people, and so on. Every time you talk with someone, always end the conversation by asking if there is anyone else they would recommend you talk to.

**Get referred!** An employer would much rather hire someone who has been referred to them by someone they trust than to take a chance on someone they don't know much of anything about. A referral can get you an unadvertised job, or it can move you to the top of the pile of resumes submitted for an advertised job. It's not just important to KNOW people, but to form good relationships, so that people think of you when they hear of an opening, and believe that you will excel at the job. Your best contacts are the ones who are familiar with your abilities and your performance, and are impressed enough by you to want to recommend you to others!

**Strategic Networking:** In order to get a job in this economy, the random networking people once did (telling everyone you know you're looking for a job and hoping someone comes up with something for you) may not be sufficient. *Strategic networking means having a plan and connecting to people intentionally.* To start, you have to do your research, which will include things like identifying organizations you're interested in, figuring out who works there, and who you need to talk to if you want to get a job there. Next, you will need to formulate a plan for how to reach those people. There are now several online tools that can help you strategically network. For more information on these, turn to the next page.