

Video Transcript: Networking

Here are the facts:

1. Networking is the single best way to land a job. In fact, 2 out of 3 people get their job through networking.
2. Students don't network nearly enough. How do I know this?

So, what are the reasons students don't network? It comes down to two things. The first is you're a little intimidated, maybe a little scared about contacting someone you don't know. And two, you're not really sure how to network. Well in the next 3 minutes, I will address both of those issues.

Imagine you are sitting in your dorm or apartment one day and you get a call from a kid who is a senior from the high school you went to. He asks for 30 minutes of your time to find a little bit about what it's like to be a student at where you go to college. Now what are you going to tell that guy, go ahead and get lost? Of course not, you'd be happy to talk to him especially because you have a connection. That's what networking is. And the crazy thing is, that's exactly what it's like when you network with professionals. Most people love to talk about themselves and mentor younger folks especially when they have that connection. Heck, I bet they're excited to be talking to you.

So now that you're not intimidated, how do you go about doing it? The first step is getting some contacts. You have more contacts than you think. Remember, you're not asking anyone for a job, you're just trying to find out more information about a company. You just want to connect with someone, anyone in that organization or in the field you want to pursue. A great place to start is in the career center. They have tons of resources and lots of contacts of alums that will be more than happy to talk to you. Trust me; you'll be very happy you went.

Two, talk to anyone you know, talk to everyone you know; your friend's parents, your parent's friends, I don't know, your dentist, your hairdresser, even your bookie. The fact of the matter is, you just want to collect some contacts. Then, once you have the contacts, you want to get in touch with these folks. Send them an email, call them on the phone, and just like from that example from that high school kid that called you, mention your connection up front. "Hi my name is Brad Karsh and I got your name from our University Career Center as an alum who's interested in mentoring students on the job search." Then you simply want to ask them for 30 minutes of their time; when you can talk about their job and their career path. Remember, you're not asking anyone for a job. If you do meet with them, it's called an informational interview. And even though you're not technically interviewing for a job, remember they are evaluating you. Be on your best behavior, dress professionally, and be prepared. You want to come in armed with questions, but not basic information that you can find out on the website. You want to have about 10, 15, 20 legitimate, well-thought-out questions that you're trying to find out from them. After you meet with them, follow up. Send them a thank you note and stay connected. They may not have a job for you now, but they may down the road. Make sure you shoot them an email every month or so to stay in the loop. Now get out there and meet some folks, heck you may even land a job. Good luck!