

Networking Worksheet

Networking is a rewarding, lifelong activity that should always be part of your professional development. You want to approach networking as more than just a request for a job; you want to build relationships with others.

Step 1

List out all of your contacts; this list can include friends, family, faculty, peers, alumni, co-workers, acquaintances, fellow organization members, dentist or neighbors

Step 2

Categorize the list into professional (faculty, acquaintances made at professional events, referrals) or personal (family, close friends of the family, friends, or close co-workers) contacts; use this list to determine how formal or informal your contact with each person should be; contact your professional network through LinkedIn, formal networking events, scheduled phone calls, meetings/lunch meetings, etc.; contact your personal network through means such as Facebook, texting, phone calls, and casual conversations; maintain your list in a spreadsheet or through an electronic contact list or address book

Professional	Personal

Step 3

Define your style of networking by considering what you excel at or when you may feel most comfortable; identify the best way for you to build your network, both in person or online

- *Do you get completely overwhelmed in any social setting?* Take advantage of online networking in groups such as LinkedIn, Twitter, or MyWorkster; you can also network one-on-one by scheduling informational interviews (<http://careers.embry-riddle.com/land-offer/interviewing/networking/index.html>).
- *Are you shy?* Volunteer for a professional organization or your local community; sometimes having a task to complete helps you feel at ease as you network
- *Do you get overwhelmed by large crowds but like to work in smaller groups?* Identify a smaller organization where you can mingle, or identify groups that could use your expertise and give presentations relevant to your field
- *Are you outgoing and ready to talk to everyone?* Use online networking tools and network in person to prevent losing out on contacts that may prefer online social networking

Step 4

Plan what you want to convey to your network by using the methods that work best for you

- *In-person networking:* have your elevator speech (http://interview.monster.ca/8890_en-CA_p1.asp), a 30-second commercial about you, ready to present at all times
- *Online networking:* ensure that your email address, LinkedIn, and/or Facebook accounts are professional and do not present you in an unprofessional manner; also have your resume and cover letter ready to share at any time

Step 5

Take action – after working out who you can contact, what approach you will take and what you will convey to your group, take the next step and start networking; don't limit yourself to just one style or one group of people

- Attempt to complete one networking activity per week, and take advantage of more opportunities if you are actively searching for a job
- Think outside of box and consider local Chamber of Commerce meetings, volunteering at your local airport, blogging on a subject matter that you are experienced in, using your hobby to identify new connections, and any other method that could open the door to a new opportunity for you

Step 6

General etiquette rules apply to networking: always be polite and appreciative of what people do for you

- Make a good first impression – always be appropriate depending on the event and/or method of networking; remember that your physical appearance contributes to your overall impression
- Always be genuine when networking and avoid “using” people for their connections
- Do as much preparation and research as possible before talking with your connections
- Maintain your contacts and always be willing to help another person – it is a reciprocal relationship
- Thank a contact if he or she directly or indirectly assists you with making a connection; do something to thank the person even if it is a simple note of appreciation
- Keep commitments and promises made
- Never burn bridges - it can hurt your career progression or job search