

Networking - Building a Professional Network

Networking is creating a system of contacts both for information and support. It connects you with others who can help you during your job search. The hardest part of networking is the fear of rejection. Once you accept the fact that rejection will come, and is part of the process, you will find networking to be very beneficial. Networking is an essential part of your job search now, and you will find it to be essential to obtaining job promotions and securing clients in the future.

Networking Checklist

1. Make a list of all of your friends, family and acquaintances. Let them know you are looking for a job. Ask them if they know of people you should contact. You are asking them for advice and insight, which many people enjoy sharing.
2. Keep track of your contacts and stay in touch with them.
3. Make a list of people you would like to know - “movers and shakers.” Add them to the list mentioned in #1 above.
4. Read legal trade publications to get names.
5. Make a list of alumni who practice in the areas you are interested. Ask them the same questions as in #1 above.
6. Make a list of people with whom you attended undergraduate school who may know lawyers they can recommend to you.
7. Attend alumni and bar association functions in order to network with lawyers.
8. Talk with faculty about your interests.
9. Attend Career Services workshops. The speakers can be excellent networking sources.
10. After you have made these lists, you must contact the individuals. Invite them for coffee or lunch. Set up “telephone informational interviews” if they are too far away to meet in person. Let them know you are looking for a job and want their advice. Ask them how they got their job and if they like it. Ask them if they could suggest anyone else to talk to. Ask if they know of any job openings.
11. Remember, one discussion is not enough. Keep in touch with your contacts!