

## Networking Techniques via Email

In this day and age, individuals can be intimidated about asking for help in finding a job and communicating via email often feels like a safer place start to the process.

Below are two articles on how to use email to start networking, with your intent to be:

- getting in front of people that are not in your immediate sphere of contacts
- asking others to help you network for a job

### ***Composing an effective Networking email***

**by Kelly J. Brown**

[http://www.syracuse.com/job-advice/index.ssf/2012/02/post\\_5.html](http://www.syracuse.com/job-advice/index.ssf/2012/02/post_5.html)

If you decided to turn over a new leaf in 2012 and take the job advice bloggers' advice to start networking, your first hurdle will be to actually reach out to a potential contact. I recommend reaching out to new contacts via email, rather than a phone call, because it gives you the chance to really craft your message, but that blinking cursor in the body of your email can be quite intimidating! Follow this checklist to make sure your message is on point.

#### **-Keep it short!**

A networking email should not be your life story (more what you should include in the next steps) and should only consist of a few sentences. If I received an email that was paragraph upon paragraph, I'm less inclined to read the whole thing. Instead, get right to the point.

#### **-Establish a connection immediately: Use the subject line.**

The first place to do this is in the subject line. Did you and your contact attend the same college? If so, make sure you include the name of the school in your subject line. Were you referred to this person by a mutual friend? Put the name of that person in the subject line.

#### **-Reinforce the connection in your first line or two and give a quick introduction of who you are.**

Let's use the mutual friend example: Your first line or two should mention how you know the person you both know, then give a short introduction of who you are (your current position and company, your year in school and major, your professional area of interest). This should *not* be a pitch, nor should you attach your resume to this email. Both of those actions may be perceived as presumptuous and will rub your contact the wrong way!

#### **-Get right to the point.**

A good networking email only asks for advice. As I stated before, you are not pitching yourself and you shouldn't be asking about job leads. The pure fact that you're reaching out is indicative that you're probably on the hunt for your next job. Ask only for advice and/or a few minutes of a contact's time. You might also mention that you have a few questions about the company or what the person's job is like. You could give a couple examples of those questions, but again, be brief.

### **-State the next steps.**

Make sure you're clear whose court the ball is in. Will you be following up later in the week? Are you waiting to hear from the contact? Of course, stating your appreciation is a must, and acknowledging the fact that you know the contact is likely very busy is never a bad idea. Showing that you understand that the contact has other priorities will reflect positively on you.

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## **Networking Letters 101**

By Kim Isaacs, Monster Resume Expert

<http://career-advice.monster.com/job-search/professional-networking/networking-letter-samples/article.aspx>

No matter what field you're in, a successful career is built on human relationships. Your job search will be much more effective if you connect with and expand your network of contacts rather than just respond to job ads. Thousands of positions are created and filled without ever being advertised. A networking letter will help you uncover these hidden job opportunities.

### **What Is a Networking Letter?**

This job-hunting tool lets you reach out to friends, friends of friends and professional contacts, asking for job leads, career advice, referrals and introductions. The letter's focus is not to ask your contacts for a job, but to request their assistance in your job search by connecting you with people or opportunities.

### **Who to Target?**

To tap into your network and create job leads, consider all these sources: friends, your spouse or significant other's friends, current or former coworkers and supervisors, professionals you have met through online networking sites, associations (alumni, civic and professional organizations), clergy, nonprofit organizations, customers/clients, vendors, teachers and classmates.

You may even consider distant acquaintances as part of your networking campaign -- someone you met at a lecture, trade show or seminar might be willing to assist you. Or someone you have met online through professional networking sites.

### **The Fundamentals**

**Be Friendly:** The tone of a networking letter is casual and professional.

If you don't know the person well or it's been awhile since you last spoke, refresh his memory in the first paragraph:

Dear Mr. Jones:

I attended your "Effective Merchandising Techniques" presentation last Friday and introduced myself to you following your lecture. Your speech was very informative, and your examples were extremely enlightening; I left with a number of new ideas.

If you know the person you are writing to well, you should punctuate your opening with a comma instead of a colon for a warmer, less formal tone:

Dear Ginger,

I am in the process of a job change following my former employer's Chapter 11 filing. I am writing to college friends whose opinions, insights and advice I value.

**Have a Message:** To be effective, a networking letter must do more than communicate that you are job searching. It needs to provide a brief summary of key strengths you bring to the table and include a few examples of ways you benefited your employers -- such as saving money, generating revenue, increasing efficiency and improving service.

**Respect the Reader's Time:** Be concise. Your reader is busy and doing you a favor -- don't drone on and on. Whether you are looking for job leads or seeking professional advice, be positive and upbeat in your letter. Ask for the reader's help, showcase your strengths and express your thanks.

**Ask for Leads and Information:** Don't be afraid to ask for help. Here's an example:

I would be very grateful for your review of my enclosed resume. If you know of anyone who might be looking for someone with my background, please contact me at (555) 555-5555. Or if you have any suggestions as to where I should direct my search, I would appreciate your input and advice.

**Keep Networking:** Keep in touch with your network of contacts, even when you are not searching for a job. If someone has helped you, express your gratitude and return the favor if possible. Your diligence in using networking letters will pay off in your current and future job search.