

IDENTIFY CONTACTS BY NETWORKING INTO TARGETED COMPANIES

To remain successful in today's competitive job market, it is important for you to actively manage your connections. The contacts you are currently establishing during your job search must become part of your lifetime professional and personal network.

The internet has dramatically changed the way job seekers find job leads and the way employers find talent to hire. Most jobs are filled as a result of referrals not through job boards, job fairs, classified ads, campus recruiting or other resources.

Internet job boards, employment page postings and social networking have dramatically changed the recruiting and hiring process. It is relatively simple to announce positions utilizing online connections.

The following are some simple ways to identify contacts that could help you gain access to jobs that are not advertised:

1. Search the company website or LinkedIn for the names of employees who hold positions that interest you. Look for individuals with the job title you are targeting, individuals who supervise those positions and individuals who might know either of these people. Do not focus on Human Resource contacts unless you are seeking an Human Resource position.
2. Search for contact names on networks.
3. Search for names through your college or graduate school alumni database.
4. Like the target company fan page on Facebook and start a dialogue with the page manager.
5. Follow the target company's official Twitter Account.
6. Browse for blogs using the target company name to find employees and comment on their articles to promote a dialogue.

Social media resources are readily accessible online for today's job seeker. If you do not use the tools that are available, chances are your competition will position themselves better with company insiders and will be the first to learn about potential openings.

You must take charge of your career by understanding your personal brand and the importance of maintaining the right contacts. Close relationships with decision makers at target employers is the best way to be among the first to learn about restructuring, a new project, an acquisition or other circumstances that impact hiring. In this competitive job market, being among the first to discuss a potential opportunity provides you with a great advantage.

STAY ON THE RADAR OF DECISION MAKERS

When you network purposefully, you will establish yourself as someone who is capable, talented and skilled with a history of over-achievement. The best case scenario is for an employer to initiate a recruiting call or when a trusted contact recommends an individual to a hiring authority, before the new position is advertised. In this example, the candidate can often help define the scope of responsibility for the position.

Establishing good relationships with hiring authorities is the best way to shorten a job search and provides you with a great competitive advantage over other candidates. Your primary networking goal moving forward should be to make a positive impression on appropriate hiring authorities at each of your targeted companies.

NETWORK PURPOSEFULLY

Effective networking that produces leads requires finding and engaging with employees at target companies and highlighting your accomplishments with specific examples of the impact and measurable results. To promote your credibility over time, you must be likable, trustworthy and able to demonstrate your capabilities. Your contacts should recognize your potential value to their company and regard you as an expert in your field.

Look for ways to help your contacts, providing information and sharing your contacts with them. Networking purposefully requires you to establish connections you nurture throughout your entire career, not just when you are involved in an active job search.

EMAIL ADDRESS FOR KEY CONTACTS

It is important to use all means of communication including email. A simple way to obtain their email address is to enter the company's email suffix in a search engine. For example, if you are looking to contact a manager at ABC Corporation, type in "@ABCCorporation.com" or "@ABCCorp.com" in a search engine. You will obtain a full email address for someone in the company and can now use that to identify the company's format for all of their email addresses.

For example: first initial, last name@ABCCorp.com. You can now email your targets using their correct email address.

To locate employees in a specific department, add the department to the company's suffix and then search. For Example: "@ABCCorp.com engineering" to locate individuals in the Engineering Department.

Another way to identify email addresses is to review Press and Media pages on your target company's website. Often, the Press Release contact's email address will be listed showing you the email format.

Consistent relevant networking with individuals at your targeted companies shows your effort, initiative and interest level. As the relationship is nurtured, these contacts will probably review your dynamic LinkedIn profile to learn more about you. This process will create Top of Mind Awareness with your contacts which can lead to great opportunities throughout your entire career.