

## **Networking is not a dirty word.**

STC WorkQuest™ meeting discussion, November 4, 2003

Janis Ramey, [ramey@technical-writing.net](mailto:ramey@technical-writing.net)

### **What is networking?**

- Connecting with people you know and people they know, looking for information about job openings and job search suggestions.
- Networking also means giving back something in return.

### **Why is it so hard for some of us to do it?**

- We're not used to "working the room" or making cold calls.
- We feel we're intruding.
- Our self esteem is low. It's embarrassing.

### **How do you start?**

- Start by deciding what you're looking for and what you're going to say about yourself and your job potential when asked.
- Talk to your most recent co-workers about what you're looking for. Ask if they have any suggestions.
- Talk to family and friends about your job search. Branch out to your neighbors.
- Talk to people at any organizations you belong to – social, political, religious, charity, professional.

### **What do you do next?**

- Follow up immediately on any suggestions, leads, or contacts.
- Ask the contacts if they have any suggestions or other people you should contact.
- Become active in a networking group such as PAPEN or a support group such as STC WorkQuest™.
- Become active in a professional organization (such as STC).
- Talk to EVERYONE you meet about your job search – hair dresser, letter carrier, car pool drivers, kids' soccer coaches, etc.

### **What is followup?**

- Act upon any suggestions, leads, or names given to you by a contact. If someone has gone to the trouble, and even taken a little bit of a risk, to try to help you, you must follow up promptly.
- Call or email a name given you by a contact. Send resume or profile if appropriate.
- Send thank you to anyone who's given you suggestions, leads, or contacts.
- Send progress report to someone who has helped you.

## Networking checklist

The following is extracted from the “Job search Checklist” which can be found on the STC WorkQuest™ website – <http://home.earthlink.net/~workquest/>

### Startup phase

List everyone you know.	Categorize and prioritize list.
Create a record keeping system.	Calls and messages sent Companies and people contacted Responses received Information gathered about companies and contacts Resumes sent Meeting and phone call notes Interviews Thank you notes Other?
Create a personal marketing campaign (job search plan).	What you will do when, how many people you will contact each week, etc.
Contact people who might become references.	Professional and personal. Use them as “advisors” for your job search.  Might need different references for different job search situations.
Practice talking about your capabilities and job desires.	30-second drill: name, job, qualifications, history, etc (sometimes called “elevator talk” – what you can cover in an elevator ride)
Practice your “reason for leaving” statement.	
Decide what you’ll say about your salary history or requirements	

### Active job search phase

Contact everyone you know.	Use the list you created in the startup phase.  Talk to anyone you meet.
Contact people who might know of openings.	Ask them for additional possibilities, names, companies, etc.
Contact people to ask for an information interview.	Ask them for advice about your job search, not for a job.
Attend STC or other professional society meetings.	Tell everyone you meet there about your job search. Pass out your business cards. Collect names of potential contacts.
Attend social, community, or church gatherings.	Tell everyone you meet there about your job search. Pass out your business cards. Collect names of potential contacts.

Join a support group.	PAPEN, WorkQuest™, etc.
Expand list of contacts and potential employers.	Through networking and through research.

**Weekly tasks**

Emails, letters, and thank you notes.	
Phone calls.	
Meetings.	
Other networking activities.	
Update weekly calendar.	Appointments, meetings, tasks, etc.

**Daily tasks**

Respond immediately to any opportunities.	From ads, personal contacts, phone calls, internet postings.
Check email several times a day.	
Make cold calls (phone, in person, or email).	Use the list you created of people to contact. Try to meet goal for number of contacts made.
Check phone answering service.	Several times a day.

See also these documents on the STC WorkQuest website –

**Advice/information Interview**, by Glenn Schillo –  
<http://home.earthlink.net/~workquest/articles/schillohandout.PDF>

**Networking and Your ROI**, by Jim McCarty –  
<http://home.earthlink.net/~workquest/articles/mccarty.PDF>

**Networking Basics**, by Janis Ramey –  
<http://home.earthlink.net/~workquest/articles/janisbasics.PDF>