



# Networking & Mingling

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## NETWORKING

Did you know that students graduating today will change jobs at least 9 times in their life? This is why it is so important for you to know about various effective ways to job search.

**There are two types of job markets, formal and informal.**

The **formal job market** consists of jobs that can be seen, are advertised, and are made known to the public. They are also known as “traditional” or “visible” sources of job leads. **The formal job market makes up 25% of the job openings.** These positions are advertised through:

- classifieds
- newspaper ads
- positions posted with the career services office
- private employment agencies
- state employment services
- job search/employer web sites

The **informal job market** consists of jobs that cannot be seen, are not advertised, and are not made known to the public in a formal way. **As many as 75% of jobs are not available through any publicly available process.** In fact, most employers prefer referrals from employees or others since they know these are more reliable and less trouble. These positions are found through:

- personal contacts
- friends
- relatives
- direct contact with employers
- **networking**

**Networking** is a necessary tool to access this informal job market. There are two ways to begin your networking process, through warm and cold contacts.

**Warm contacts** begin by networking with people you know. Examples of warm contacts include:

- parents
- relatives
- friends
- neighbors
- alumni
- present and former co-workers
- teachers
- members of professional organizations
- service clubs
- social groups
- members of labor unions
- religious institutions

**Questions to ask these contacts include:**

1. Do you know of any openings for a person with my skills?
2. Do you know of anyone else who might know of an opening?
3. Do you know someone who has a good network of professional contacts?

**It is important to follow up on this information because it can lead to several other contacts.**

**Cold Contacts** are people you do not know. Good resources for cold contacts are the yellow pages and other directories. It is also helpful to keep a record of all contacts and potential contacts. Information you will want to record is the organization, contact person, phone number, source of the lead, and notes such as dates you contacted the person and what your conversation was about.

## **MUSCAN**

Marquette University Student Career Alumni Network is a premier network connection for Students and Alumni. It can be found on the web at <http://www.marquette.edu/csc/pages/muscan.html>. Contact the Career Services Center for a password. The database is sponsored by Marquette University Alumni Volunteers, Career Services Center, and The Alumni Relations Office.

The whole purpose behind the development of MUSCAN is to provide alumni sources for networking. Since the alumni in this database have given their permission for students and alumni to contact them, please do not feel that you are imposing as these volunteers are willing to assist.

On the other hand, please do not misuse the process; if the MUSCAN volunteers indicate that they would only like to be contacted by letter, then the contactor should respect those wishes and follow the instructions, rather than trying to elicit a phone number and thereby make a pest of themselves. Networking is probably the fastest way to a new career.

**Networking** can be very beneficial in your job search if you are moving to a different region. In this case, develop a list of people who live in that area including:

- Marquette alumni
- religious leaders
- members of related professional associations
- ask locals, friends, and family if they know of someone who lives in that area

**Informational interviewing** is something you can do now to start developing a network of professional contacts. Informational interviewing involves identifying people who are doing what you want to be doing and asking them questions related to their current job. A guide to informational interviewing can be found in the Career Services Center.

## **MINGLING**

- **90% of all people are afraid to walk into a room of people they don't know and mingle.**
- **Definition of a good mingler:**

A person who moves comfortably through a gathering of people—meeting, greeting, and talking with as many of them as he/she wishes. In a spirit of warmth and sincerity, he/she can begin, continue, and exit interesting conversation. (Roane)
- **Reasons you need to be a good mingler:**
  - It makes others feel comfortable
  - It makes you feel comfortable and more confident.
  - You make valuable business and personal contacts.

## **PREPARE TO MINGLE**

- **Develop a PMA (Personal Mingling Activity)**
- **Act like you like to enjoy it and it will happen**
- **Eliminate these negative ways of thinking**
  - Don't talk to strangers... instead decide with whom you would like to begin a conversation.
  - Wait to be properly introduced...instead begin by introducing yourself.
  - Good things come to those who wait....not in this situation.

- **Review the benefits of the event**
- **Plan your self-introduction**
- **Take business cards**
- **Focus on other people**
- **Think of yourself as the “host” not as the “guest”**

## **LET THE GAMES BEGIN**

### *Getting into a conversation*

- **Create a mental fantasy that makes entering easier**
  - Naked Room—they can't be too proud
  - Invisible You—you don't care
  - Invisible Buddy—silent encourager
  - Family Reunion—howdy Grandma
- **Choose your first chit-chat buddy/buddies**
  - Begin with someone who is already alone
  - Select someone who may have something in common with you (age, race, attire, physical characteristics)
  - Join a group
- **Master basic entrance techniques**
  - Hello my name is...(Grip and Grin)
  - Speak the truth
  - Fade in
  - Compliment
  - Go with a friend, but don't be twins forever
  - Position yourself between the entrance and the refreshment table
- **Prepare and use opening lines that work for you**
  - Keep the conversation “lite”
  - Stay away from discussing politics
  - Remember to compliment
  - Phrase your statement to require a response
  - Topics: food, facility, weather, traffic/parking, organization/charity, host/guest of honor

### **Sample Opening Lines**

- Hello, my name is....
- How do you know the host/guest of honor?
- How long have you known the host/guest of honor?
- How did you get here?
- Have I missed anything (if you know you're a few minutes late)?
- This is a beautiful/small/spacious comfortable room?
- This weather is a breath of fresh air!
- Did you have a tough time finding a parking place? It took me ### minutes to get here!
- Wasn't the traffic horrible/wonderful?
- How long have you been associated with this organization?
- Isn't the banquet table wonderful?
- Have you tasted the ravioli? It's really great.
- This is a really great hors d'oeuvre? Do you know what it is? Do you know what's in it?

## **KEEP THE BALL ROLLING**

### *Continuing the conversation*

#### **· Prepare and use continuing lines that work for you**

- The conversation should become deeper
- Discuss careers? Yes or no? In a networking situation, yes.
- Discuss current events
- Talk shop (conferences, meeting and work-related gatherings only)
- Read and comment on name tags
- Make a toast
- Recycle the conversation
- Delegate assignments (for experienced minglers only)
- Topics: interests/hobbies, personal/professional information, vacations, travel, funny stories or experiences, play games, surroundings

#### **· Sample continuing lines**

- Did you take a vacation this year/summer?
- When you're not mingling at events like this, what do you do for fun?
  - Really! That is so interesting. Tell me more.
  - Wow! How did everyone respond to that...
- What color would you say the carpet is? It is absolutely beautiful!
- Tell me three things about your hometown and I'll guess where you're from.
- Tell me two things about yourself—one truth and one lie—and I'll pick out the lie.
- What is your favorite word in the English language?
- What was the most special gift you've ever given? Received?
- Your last name, Zwick, is so interesting. What is the ethnic origin of that name? German?

## **SEE YA LATER ALLIGATOR**

### *Exiting a conversation*

#### **· Know when to move on**

- If you're bored
- If you messed up
- If the group is dwindling (you don't want to be the last one standing there)

#### **· Know where you're headed**

#### **· Master some basic exiting techniques**

- Honesty is the best policy
- Ease on down the road
- Grip, grin, go
- Agree to part
- What's your excuse (drink, restroom, telephone call, find someone, get a breath of fresh air, too cold/hot/stuffy/smoky in here)

## THUMBS UP BEHAVIORS

- Plan, plan, plan (and plan some more)
- Learn from experience
- Smile and maintain good eye contact
- Develop a good handshake
- Use new words
- Listen actively
- Mind your manners and rules of etiquette
- Be creative with your nametag; wear interesting accessories
- Remember names; be honest if you've forgotten a name
- Use humor appropriately
- Thank the host/hostess

## THUMBS DOWN BEHAVIORS

- Drink too much; smoke
- Dress inappropriately
- Camp out at the food table
- Eat, drink and talk in any combination
- Talk loudly; argue
- Allow eyes to roam around the room searching for your next victim; concentrate on powerful names, job titles, etc.
- Complain about anything
- Go into too much detail
- Finish someone's sentences
- Flaunt your vocabulary
- Correct/humiliate others
- Sit with people you know

## Resources

- *How to Work a Room*, Susan Roane
- *The Art of Mingling*, Jeanne Martinet
- *The Art of Conversation*, James Morris
- *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, Dale Carnegie
- *How to Say Practically Anything to Practically Anybody*, Barbara Walters

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