

NETWORKING

TAPPING INTO THE 'HIDDEN' JOB MARKET

We know that the majority of all jobs (70-80%) are found through networking. Yet, how many job searchers / career changers spend 70% of their job search time networking? Look back at your own career . . . how many times have you found out about a job from someone you know? Most of my favorite opportunities came from leads that came my way via colleagues, students, and friends. Nevertheless, networking is still the most avoided of all job search strategies. Why?

There are 3 predominant fallacies that once dispelled or overcome, can free ourselves to use and develop our networks and, by doing so, tap into the "hidden" job market. If we don't tap into this market, we're going to be missing out on at least half of all jobs that need filling - opportunities that could be available for us! After all, there are just so many leads that we can track down by ourselves. The more contacts that are aware of our background, talent, and aspirations for the future, the more 'intel' will be directed our way.

Here are the misconceptions that you **MUST AVOID** and strategies that will help you overcome your hang-ups.

Misconception #1 - ***"I don't know how to network."***

Every day is a networking opportunity. We all know how to network for information and referrals when it comes to restaurants, movies, doctors, hairdressers, babysitters and mechanics. Yet almost all of my new clients just freeze when it comes to tapping into the unlimited resources of the people they know (& the people they know) for contacts in the working world. They feel tongue-tied & unprepared. Here is where you need to start:

Develop a "2-Minute Commercial". Use conversational/casual language to introduce yourself professionally and answer the often-asked question "Tell me about yourself". Begin the statement with "I am" and include their professional identity, areas of expertise, industry experience and most importantly, where you want to go with their career - NOW & WHY! For example:

"I am a human resource professional with expertise in career management, training and team-building. My background is in corporate sales and marketing, working with a broad range of industries. My greatest strength is my ability to establish rapport quickly with people from all walks of life. I am looking for opportunities working with small to large firms in sales or human resources."

Once you've memorized your "commercial", you're going to have countless opportunities to get off to the right start in interviews (both phone screenings and in-person). What's more, your commercial is an

outstanding networking tool. Whenever and wherever you meet someone, from elevators to coffee shops, you'll be prepared to answer the often-asked, "What do you do?".

Misconception # 2 - ***"People may think I'm a failure because I need help getting a job."***

During the last 10 years, it is hard to think of people who have not changed jobs or careers several times. So let go of the idea that you may be perceived as a failure because you are in transition or... working and looking for a different job. The stigma that you imagine just isn't there, so adopt a new perspective on this issue.

Remember that people want to help! It's an automatic reflex. Picture this: You are on a monthly bike ride with a friend who informs you that his/her position has been recently eliminated due to a merger. What happens with you internally? Most likely, your brain goes into overdrive thinking of who you know who could be helpful for your friend during this transition. It's natural - so take advantage of human nature!

Misconception # 3 - ***"I don't want to bother people who may not want to waste their time by trying to help me."***

You have to conduct your networking with dignity and a purpose. Before calling a contact, you should have an agenda prepared that includes questions that you'd like to have answered. They could be regarding your target list of companies, industry trends, professional advice or information regarding the contact's specific company. You never know if the person you are calling will actually answer the phone and say, "Well, I have a few minutes, now". *Never waste a networking opportunity!*

Remember, "What goes around, comes around". You should be prepared to share information that you have gathered during your search that would interest your contacts. While working, most clients do not have time to keep up with competitive information, industry trends, career management techniques and other information that is often compiled during the job search. Networking is a 2-way street. Remember that the people you meet with, as part of your own networking, will learn from you just as you will learn from them.

Many of my clients have told me that people they had networked with would at some time in the future use them for networking purposes. When you are making your initial contacts, remember to ask for recommendations of other people that you can contact, i.e. tap into their network. This is the most important part of networking - never leave without two or three names and preferably with permission to use your contact's name as a third-party referral. This way, when you call Tom Smith, you can say, "Jerry White from X,Y,Z company suggested I give you a call". A third-party endorsement substantially increases the value and quantity of the information your clients receive during informational interview.

By repeating this process of obtaining multiple referrals, your network will grow exponentially and the chances are good that you won't run out of contacts. It's vitally important to be creative, try taking your contacts out to lunch or for a cup of coffee, or engage them in a social or athletic activity. Mix it up and, most importantly, have some fun with the process!

Mark Berkowitz is the owner and President of [CAREER DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES](#), LLC. Changing lives and revolutionizing careers since 1985, Mark provides one-on-one career consulting services, résumé building assistance and guidance to help each client achieve not only job advancement, but lasting and meaningful success in their career path as well. A distinguished figure in his field, Berkowitz is one of the

top career builders in the country and has been quoted in nearly two dozen books and publications on the topic of career advancement.

Passionate about empowering others to realize their dreams, Mark served as an executive board member of the PROFESSIONAL ASSN. OF RÉSUMÉ WRITERS & CAREER COACHES. He has been helping clients successfully advance in, and/or change their careers for over 36 years. With a Master's Degree in Career Development and four specialized certifications ([National Certified Career Counselor](#), [Certified Professional Résumé Writer](#), [Int'l Certified Job & Career Transition Coach](#), and [Certified Employment Interview Professional](#)), he is uniquely qualified to help you improve your career situation. A recognized expert in the field, he had not only taught in Graduate Schools and led workshops and seminars, but also trained other counselors. Mark served as chairman of the Certification Board for the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches and was a founding member of the Career Management Alliance (fkn Career Masters Institute). Additionally, he has shared his expertise in effectively utilizing career assessment tools with graduate counseling students from nearby Fordham University, helping to prepare them for their future counseling careers.

Mark connects with clients locally as well as international clients via the internet. He also provides outreach to high school and college students, presenting career planning and job search strategy workshops.

- Highly regarded with résumés, cover letters, and interview strategies showcased in nearly two dozen books.
- Enjoys an INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION as a “Résumé Guru” by members of the Professional Assn. of Résumé Writers and Career Coaches.

His work appears in nearly two dozen books on résumé /cover letter writing and winning interview strategies. He has been spotlighted on WCBS television in “*Acing The Interview*” and has been named as the “*Professional of the Year 2024*” by the [PODCAST BUSINESS NEWS NETWORK](#).



Berkowitz has been recognized as “... *one of the leading résumé writers in the U.S. today*” in Professional Résumés for Executives, Managers, and Other Administrators. Wendy Enelow, President of the Career Masters Institute has acknowledged Mark as “... *one of the most talented career counselors I have ever met.*”



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See how you can benefit from professional expertise instead of suffering from your career mistakes.