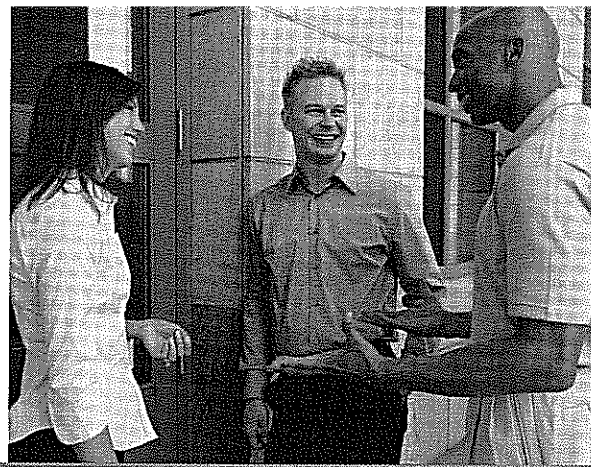


# How to NETWORK YOUR WAY TO A JOB

BY DR. JOHN BOYD



**Networking is one of the most powerful tools of job searching – and it should begin now.**

## What is Networking?

Networking can be defined in many ways, but when reduced to its lowest common denominator, it is really just connecting with others. This connection can be on a professional, personal, or social level. It is a mutually beneficial process. It is connections that can make or break a job hunt. It has been said that, "It can often be a case of networking or NOT working."

### Networking Myths

There are many myths floating around relating to networking. A few of the most common ones are:

- Networking is only for the well-connected
- Networking is only for extroverts
- Networking is bothering people
- Networking is not asking for a job

The purpose of networking is to gather information and obtain advice. It can be beneficial to all parties involved in the process. It is not a matter of your personality or how well connected you are. Networking can help you:

- Obtain advice about your job search
- Validate your choices
- Uncover job opportunities
- Gain employer information

### How to Network Effectively

What should you do to make optimum use of this powerful tool? Here is a short checklist for effectively using your network and making the connection:

- Develop a list of contacts
- Clarify in your mind the purpose of using your contacts
- Research yourself ("Know thyself")
- Create a simple short self-introduction

With the completion of this checklist you are ready to implement a winning networking strategy; one that will maximize the probability of finding that job you are seeking.

### DO:

- Tell everyone you are job hunting
- Tell them what you are specifically looking for
- Ask for help in your search
- Make yourself worth endorsing though self-marketing
- Be open to everyone you meet
- Maintain a positive attitude and enjoy each moment
- Follow up

### DON'T

- Keep your job searching to yourself
- Be vague when talking about your job hunt
- Be afraid to seek help
- Shy away from opening up to others
- Have a negative attitude
- Be afraid to follow up

### Practice Makes Perfect

Needless to say, the art of networking does not always come naturally. It takes a conscious effort and practice to ensure you maximize its benefits. You can practice at career fairs, with alumni, with professors, or at social events.

While not every networking effort will be successful, the more you network and the better you become at it, the more opportunities you will uncover, and the more likely it is that one of your networking connections will help you land a great job. **TD**

*Dr. John Boyd is Director of Career Services at Baylor University.*