**Networking: Key to the Hidden Job Market**

**Why Network?**

Networking is a valuable way of learning about new employment, training, or volunteer opportunities. It is also a valuable way of learning about what skills and knowledge you might need to be able to work in the area you are interested in. It can also be a valuable way of getting guidance and advice from experienced people in your area of interest.

**Who Should be in Your Network?**

Chances are you already have a network. At its centre, are the people closest to you, your family and friends.

Your network should also include your acquaintances, everyone you know socially.

Brainstorm a list of people to consider in your network.

**Tips to Building a Network:**

Good networkers are people who build relationships, who share in the lives of others by giving and receiving information, advice, support and commitment.

* Talk to people regularly to see how they’re doing.
* Assist people if they have a problem.
* Phone people on special occasions such as birthdays.
* Learn how to ask, listen and respond well during conversation.
* Contact people in your network if you hear or see something that would interest them.
* Put yourself in situations where you can meet new people.
* Help people celebrate their accomplishments and successes.

**Tips for Networking over the Phone: Be prepared, you should be able to complete this process in 5 minutes. Here is an example of a script;**

1. Identify yourself.
2. Establish connectivity. Mention the name of the person you both know and whom you have spoken to recently.
3. Tell them why your calling. For example, you may say “It’s time for me to make a move…..Or I just got laid off along with a hundred other people and I’m looking for some guidance in my job search…I am looking at making a change in my career and I waned to find out more information about working in……”

DON’T SAY you are “…looking for a job…..” or anything similar because you run the risk of being interrupted with a no.

4) Ask specifically for a 15-20 minute appointment, either in person or over the phone. (During the appointment, discuss the industry, the areas of opportunity and the people who would be worthwhile to contact.)

**Sample Questions to Ask a Referral or in an Informational Interview**

* How did you get into that field?
* How does your organization differ from others in the field?
* How is it similar to others in the field?
* What trends do you see in this career field? How can I take advantage of them?
* Do you have any ideas how a person with my background and skills might find a job in this field?
* From your point of view, what problems are most important to overcome in this career area?
* THANK YOU’s: Always send a thank-you note. This person has taken the time to spend with you, make sure you send a follow up note. It is not only polite, it also has a practical benefit, since the person who receives it is more likely to remember you and perceive you as being thoughtful and well organized.

Source: Information for this handout was extracted from Service Canada website. Access the Hidden Job Market – Networking Know-How. \* Networking and Approaching Companies – McGill University

Note: These materials have been developed and adapted from a range of sources for the purpose of the Bruce County Job Search Club.