**Network: Definition**

net·work  [net-wurk]
--noun: an association of individuals having a common interest, formed to provide mutual assistance, helpful information, or the like

- www.dictionary.com

**GOOD NEWS (for those of you that are shy)**

You already have a network!!!

**Personal Network**
- Friends
- Family
- Class mates
- Sports clubs
- The list goes on...

**Professional Network**

- The Obvious: Professional organizations
- The Observers: Co-workers
- The Influencers: Management, Speakers
- The Connected: Recruiters, Sales
- The not so Obvious: Competition, Peers in similar companies

**Why do I need one?**

- Career change opportunities
- Career development opportunities
- Business development opportunities

Countless studies demonstrating that networking is the most effective means to securing employment.

**Before you focus on growing your network...**

Focus on how to leverage your network.

**Be Prepared!**

**Elevator Speech**
30-60 second explanation of YOU.

**Business Cards**
Always with you (car, wallet, purse)

**Have a plan with specific objectives –**
- Not just chit-chat
- Mutually beneficial conversations

**Be strategic!**

- Don’t just ask for jobs, ask for information that will help you
- Be focused on the other person and how you can help them first – they’ll likely reciprocate
- Follow up and stay in touch
- Utilize LinkedIn
- Don’t forget your objectives

**Networking Events**

- You’re not the only one afraid to talk to strangers
- Pick out the other person who isn’t talking to anyone
- Keep it short but efficient – then move on... it’s about volume of contacts you can follow up with later
- Small dinner date – you’re there to talk and greet, you can’t do that with food in your mouth or both hands.
- Be genuine and enjoy getting to know others
- Ask open ended questions (resist the urge to talk about your agenda first)
- Make introductions and ask for introductions
- Focus on the person you’re talking to – you’ll get to the others later
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