

Networking Effectively

Networking is one tool in your job search toolbox. Jobs are often found through multiple strategies, not just a single strategy. Networking allows you to learn more about potential opportunities, learn about an organization's culture, and get insight and advice from professionals in the field you are pursuing.

Defining Your Expectations

Setting goals for career networking can help you stay focused and make the most of your networking efforts. Networking for your job search might include learning about career fields, organizations, or specific position openings, making professional connections, and seeking guidance on your job search.

- Goal 1: _____
- Goal 2: _____
- Goal 3: _____

- Professional Development
- Information Sharing
- Building Relationships
- Support and Guidance

“Everyone you’ll ever
meet knows something
you don’t.”

-Bill Nye

Crafting Your Elevator Pitch

An elevator pitch is a concise and compelling summary to share with new connections, typically delivered in the time it takes to ride an elevator (around 30-60 seconds).

Where are you now?

Share what you are currently doing.

I'm just finishing my fourth year in curriculum design. I love the educational aspect but need a more competitive environment.

Where have you been?

Talk about any skills or experiences in the past that relate to your current career goal.

Before I got my master's degree I worked in sales and I really miss it. I've been exploring how my education and design background might fit into sales.

Where are you going?

Talk about what kinds of opportunities you are seeking.

Right now I'm seeking opportunities in educational technology sales. Do you know anyone in that field who might be helpful for me to talk with?

Covering Where To Network

Identifying places to network allows you to be intentional in your networking, make more targeted connections, and increase your visibility.

Networking Events	Career Fairs & Events	LinkedIn	Family Members
School Alumni	Professional Associations	Church, Clubs, Teams	Friends of Family
Community Service	Affinity/Diversity Groups	Chambers of Commerce events	Family of Friends

Navigating Career Conversations

Having a successful networking conversation involves a combination of preparation, active listening, genuine interest, and effective communication.

- **Begin the conversation** with a friendly greeting and introduction. You can mention something relevant that you have in common to establish rapport.
- **Listen Actively** by paying close attention to what the other person is saying and show genuine interest in their experiences, opinions, and insights. Ask open-ended questions to encourage them to share more and actively listen to their responses without interrupting.

Something like, "That sounds interesting, tell me more about it."

- **Share Your Story** by briefly introducing yourself and sharing relevant aspects of your background, experience, and goals. Focus on highlighting your unique skills, achievements, and interests relevant to the conversation.
- **Find Common Ground** by listening for common interests, experiences, or goals you share with the other person and use them as a basis for further conversation. Finding common ground helps establish a connection and build rapport.
- **Be Authentic** by being yourself and communicating authentically. Avoid trying to impress or oversell yourself, as genuine connections are built on authenticity and mutual respect.
- **Offer Value** by looking for ways to add value to the conversation by sharing relevant insights, resources, or experiences. Offer help or support if you can, and be generous with your knowledge and expertise.
- **Exit Gracefully**, when it's time to end the conversation, thank the other person for their time and insights. Express your appreciation for the opportunity to connect and suggest staying in touch or meet again in the future if appropriate.
- **Reflect and Follow up** by taking time to reflect on what you learned and any potential next steps. Follow up with a personalized message or email to express your gratitude, reinforce the connection, and suggest ways to continue the conversation or collaboration.

Need help creating your networking plan?

authentic career + life design | Laura Kestner-Ricketts, M.Ed. | Authentic Career Coach

laura@authentic-careers.com | [Mail](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Pinterest](#)