

## NETWORKING ... OR NOT WORKING IT'S UP TO YOU

We know that the majority of all jobs (70-80%) are found through networking. Yet, how many people in *career flux* 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? Nevertheless, networking is still the most avoided of all job search strategies. Why?

There are 3 prevailing misconceptions that once dispelled or overcome, can free job changers to use and develop their network and, by doing so, tap into the "*hidden*" job market. If you don't tap into this market, you'll be missing out on at least half of all jobs that are available - opportunities that could be available to you!

Here are the misconceptions that you MUST AVOID and strategies that will help them overcome those unfounded concerns.

### **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, lawyers, hairdressers, babysitters and mechanics, yet when it comes to tapping into the unlimited resources of the people you know (& the people they know) for contacts in the working world, job changers often freeze. They say that they feel tongue-tied & unprepared. Definitely try this:

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: (1) your professional identity, (2) areas of expertise, (3) industry experience and *most importantly*, (4) where you want to go with your 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 and I'm looking for opportunities working with small to large firms in sales or human resources."

Once you've memorized your "commercial", you will have innumerable 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 people, 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 20+ years, it is hard to think of people who have not changed jobs or careers several times. {Current trends show that the average person changes jobs / careers 5 to 7 times during his / her working lifetime} This is a time of company downsizing, rightsizing, and reduction in force. So *let go* of the idea that you may be perceived a failure because you're in transition or you're working but looking for a different job. The stigma that you imagine just isn't there, so adopt a new perspective on this issue.

Remind yourself that most people want to help! It's an automatic reflex. Picture this: You're 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 in your own head? Most likely, your brain goes into overdrive thinking of who you know who could be helpful for this friend during this transition. It's natural - so take advantage of human nature!

### **Misconception # 3 – “I don't want to be a bother to 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, you should have an agenda prepared that includes questions that you would 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 these contacts. While working, most job changers just don't 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 their own networking purposes. When you are making your initial contacts, remember to ask for recommendations of other people you can contact, i.e. tap into their network. This is the most important part of networking - never leave without some names and preferably with permission to use the initial 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 you will receive during this informational interview.

### **KEY STRATEGY-- THE ONE MOST JOB SEEKERS NEGLECT TO DO:**

#### ***Give feedback to your advisors!***

This single action conveys to the advisor that you are an intelligent person who followed his/her advice. And having reconnected with them, they will most likely provide you with some additional contacts. When you share with your advisor what the contact(s) told you, the following scenario may very well play out: Advisor: “*You're telling me that Fred Smith told you X, Y, and Z? Well, I don't know if that's your best course of action. I think you should speak to Nancy Jones and Dave Painter to gain some additional perspective.*” So just by giving your advisor some feedback on what they have told you, you have now been giving a number of additional referral / contacts ... all without having to ask for them. ***Now you find your intelligence gathering network growing exponentially.*** Keep in mind that the more people that you speak with, sharing with them what your accomplishments, skill set and ambitions are; the more

opportunities you will hear about, which translate into the more interviews you'll be granted and even landing you in the enviable position of having to choose which new job offer you'll accept.

By repeating this process of obtaining multiple referrals, your network will grow exponentially and the chances are good that they will not run out of contacts. It's very 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!

Keep this in mind:

**Effective networkers; those that establish and then MAINTAIN their networks rarely have to look for that next new job.**

**The majority find that the  
NEW OPPORTUNITIES  
COME LOOKING FOR THEM!**

If you feel that you're *not* up to the task and could benefit from some coaching, see how Career Development Resources can put our expertise and 35+ years of experience to the task of helping you build a powerful network to turbocharge your career advancement campaign by contacting us at: [cardevres1@gmail.com](mailto:cardevres1@gmail.com) or calling us at: **(910) 833-5013**

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.

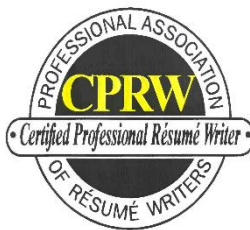
- Highly regarded with résumés, cover letters, and interview strategies showcased in nearly two dozen books.

• 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*” 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.*”



You can contact him at 1+ (910) 833-5013 or [cardevres1@gmail.com](mailto:cardevres1@gmail.com) to find out how he can assist you in launching your career into a higher orbit.

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