

## Tips on Using Your Warm Contact List When Networking

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When you are searching for a job, aside from checking the ads in newspapers, internet and bulletin boards, it is also very helpful to ask for information from the people on your warm contact list.

They can provide you with up-to-date information on the company and position vacancies that are not posted on job ads. At times when they cannot provide you information about the job that you are looking for, they may be able to refer you to a person that they know who might be able to tell you something about the job.

This is called networking. Networking is when you start using your warm list to get information or referrals to their other contacts. Many people are repelled by the thought of networking. Some believe that it is not a reliable source of information about the job. Others say networking is more difficult than following the leads on the ads that are posted in the newspaper, internet or ad boards.

Contrary to such beliefs, networking is not that difficult to do. You may just have to contact or meet some people, and you can get valuable information that can help in your career search. Also, since the people you meet belong to the same industry, they can provide you information about hiring that isn't advertised and first-hand facts about the company.

You are already networking and you just don't know it. When you have seen an ad in the paper posted by a company you know little of, you ask your friends if they know somebody who works for the company. So even if you are not attracted by the idea of networking, it is still essential when seeking a job. To make networking easier and more productive for you, here are a few tips.

### \* Prepare your warm contact list

When you have prepared your warm contact list, it will be easier to select the people who you prefer to call first. These are the people who you think have some information about the job. They may be former employers, colleagues and members of the professional organization belonging to the same industry. They usually have first-hand, up-to-date and reliable information.

### \* Calling a warm contact

When you call a warm contact, inform them that you are actively seeking a job. Ask them to let you know if they heard of job openings you might be interested in. It is better to inform them what type of job you are looking for. And don't forget to leave your contact number with them, so they can get in touch with you if they hear of anything. It is also better if you can leave a copy of your resume with them so they can show or submit it to someone who will be able to help you in your job search.

### \* Assess yourself before calling your contact

You warm contact may ask about your skills, experiences, abilities, interests, expectations and career goals. You should be able to talk about these sincerely and you should be able to describe what information you would like to have from your contact.

To help you prepare, you can practice by drafting a script on what to say. That way, you can articulate what you would like to communicate to your warm contact.

Anticipate questions about yourself, so you should also practice answering questions about your previous job and what you can contribute to the company.

\* Ask for referrals

If your warm contact was not able to provide you information that will be helpful to your job search, ask for the names of at least two people who they think will be able to help you. Ask for their contact number, and if possible, the time which they will be free to talk over the phone.

\* Contact referrals immediately

When your warm contact gives you referrals, they may even call this person to inform them that you will be asking for more information. Sometimes, the person you were referred to will be calling your warm contact. Therefore, it is better to call your referrals within a few days after you have spoken with your warm contact.

When you make a call, introduce yourself and inform the person who referred you to him/her and how you are related with the person who referred you. Be polite, but straightforward, in informing the person what information you are seeking.

Networking really isn't a difficult thing to do. With enough practice and experience, you can maximize the benefits that you can get from networking.