



# NETWORKING

## JOB SMART SERIES

It is estimated that around 70% of jobs are not advertised. Networking is one of the most important and powerful strategies to help you find non-advertised jobs. By using your contacts you can effectively find jobs that are in the “hidden” job market.

Networking involves identifying and making contact with people and organisations to assist you with your job search. By letting people in your network know that you are looking for a job you can increase your job opportunities. Networking is a two-way process – you can help others while they help you.

### Starting a Network

#### Who to network with

- Friends, family, neighbours, fellow students, teachers, members of clubs or groups you belong to, former colleagues or employers, colleagues at casual or part time jobs
- Start with people you know well and who you are comfortable with growing your network
- Once you have your main list, each new person you meet is a potential valuable contact
- Ask your new contacts to suggest any leads to other contacts that may be able to assist you if they cannot help directly
- Attend group events, breakfast meetings, conferences, workshops and exhibitions relevant to your industry or career area
- Join professional organisations as a student member, attend professional development seminars or discussion forums
- Join your alumni and maintain contact with your fellow students
- Do voluntary work where you will meet new people.

### Developing your networking skills

#### Present yourself well

- Work on a two-minute talk about your skills, experience and work interests
- Practice small-talk skills such as talking about the weather, sport, local news or current affairs
- Make a personal business card. Make it professional with name, contact details, qualifications and area of study on one side and then list key skills on the other side
- Always be positive when talking to contacts.

### Overcoming networking barriers

- Make a point of introducing yourself regularly to new people you don't know
- Learn to feel comfortable with talking about everyday issues like the weather, the news, and current events to start conversations
- Don't give up, be persistent, follow up leads, be enthusiastic and be determined to succeed.

## Don't wait for an introduction

- Initiate introductions and practice self-introduction
- Practice talking to a friend and ask for feedback
- Practice what you will say and share about yourself
- Practice a good handshake, a friendly smile and eye contact
- Take a chance, offer a business card and don't take it personally if you get little response.

## Networking via the Internet

The Internet is increasingly offering great opportunities to market yourself or meet new people who can assist you with finding employment. Join groups that you are interested in or those that are in your career area.

Sites such as LinkedIn offer professional networking opportunities. Set up a professional profile listing your skills, achievements and qualifications. LinkedIn provides help for “**Building a Great Student Profile**”. You can also use Twitter or Facebook.

Remain professional at all times on Social Media sites as employers and recruiters view these sites to find and form impressions of potential employees and cross check resume information. Only provide information that you can substantiate and that enhances your skills.