

# Networking

(It's not what you know; it's whom you know)

So you've prepared an awesome resume, you have a cheat sheet (a filled-out sample job application), and you know how to dress and behave appropriately. You remembered to ask your references if you could use their names. You've also prepared some intelligent responses to a variety of interview questions as well as prepared some intelligent questions of your own to ask an interviewer. All that's missing is a job opening...



So how does one find a job? First of all, you should realize that between 5 and 10% of people who answer classified ads get jobs. If you have access to the internet, you could use websites such as [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com), [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com), etc. You could visit the websites of specific employers. Don't forget the Michigan Talent Bank at [www.michworks.org](http://www.michworks.org). There are many other internet resources available. But the best way to find out about interesting job openings is through networking. You need to develop a network of people you can keep in touch with. These people will keep their ears open for possible jobs for you. "It sounds good," you say, "but how do I start a network? I don't know anybody." Of course you do. What about your parents? It is mind-boggling how many people found a job through their parents or their parents' friends. What about your friends at school? They have parents and other relatives who might know of a job opening. Perhaps your neighbors, the parents of the children you baby sit, the people whose lawn you mow, the elderly couple whose snow you shovel, people at church, your teachers, your counselor, your coach, your music teacher, the bank teller, the cashier at Meijer/Glenn's/Kohl's, or waitresses at your favorite restaurants/fast food places know of openings. Basically, anyone you talk to is a potential network contact.

If you do meet people at a mock interview event or a job fair, ask them for a business card. On the back of the card write some information such as the person's job duties, as well as some personal information that will help you recognize him and hold a conversation. In a couple of weeks, call this contact person and remind him who you are and how you met. Ask him if he knows of any job openings. If he does, thank him for his leads, and also send him a thank you letter. If he doesn't, ask him if he can give you the names of two or three other people who might serve as contacts. Ask him if it's okay for you to use his name when calling these other people. And don't forget to send him a thank you letter, especially if any of his leads become a job!

