

Don't Be Shy When Conducting a Job Search

Networking is a key activity in a successful job search - meeting new people, initiating conversations, asking people for information or support and calling people you don't know. This does not come easily for job seekers who are shy by nature and for introverts - people who recharge by spending time alone – these can actually be daunting tasks that are extremely difficult and challenging.

Here are some networking tips that will help to make your search a little easier:

1. Meet people individually or in small groups whenever possible.
2. Build confidence by talking with mentors and other people you know personally before speaking with people that you don't know.
3. Read. Read about a variety of things so that you will have something to say. You will find that you have more to contribute, you will be better prepared and you will feel more confident if you're up on the latest news about the industry and companies you are targeting and news in general.
4. Allow yourself time alone in between social occasions or networking events to recharge.
5. At a large event, find another person who is alone. Chances are they are also having difficulty working the room and will welcome your conversation. They could turn out to be a great connection for you.
6. Think of the networking activity as research or work - anything but "networking".
7. Plan what you will say and practice before you say it. This applies to networking events, phone calls and job interviews.
8. Support other people. Often the process of reaching out to help others with a job lead or telling them about a great article you just read is less intimidating and still provides an essential part of networking.
9. People who are introverted and/or shy, have superior listening skills – value those skills. When you're searching for a job and reaching out to others, you are much more effective if you are a good listener.
10. Do the thing you dread the most first - that phone call, that email – promise yourself that you will get it done by 9:00 am. This will help you to build momentum for the tasks that you find easier to accomplish.
11. Acknowledge all of your small successes and build on them. You may not become an expert networker overnight, but every small step helps you increase your confidence and improve your skills.
12. Be yourself. Although you do need to push yourself out of your comfort zone at times, you don't have to pretend to be someone you're not.

Follow these tips and remain sincere, genuine and true to yourself - you will find your job search to be much easier and much less stressful.