

NETWORKING TIPS

- Don't be afraid to ask for help. Most people are flattered to be asked for assistance.
- Be specific with the help/advice you need. Describe the career(s), and employers that interest you, as well as your qualifications.
- Listen twice as much as you talk.
- Ask questions. Get people talking about themselves.
- Be a good friend. Take a genuine interest in other people and not just your own needs.
- Follow through quickly and efficiently with new contacts.
- Prepare and practice your self-introduction. Example: "Hello, my name is Jessica Garcia. I'm a junior education major looking to find out what it's like working in a private school setting."
- Communicate with your contacts frequently and update them on your progress.
- Don't forget to thank everyone in your network who has been helpful to you, preferably with a nice thank-you note. Your contacts will remember your good manners.
- Look the part. Dress appropriately when attending networking events.
- Join a professional organization related to your field.
- Keep networking even after you've found a job. You never know when you might need your network contacts again.

Networking Opportunities

- Informational interviews and career shadows.
- Social & professional networking sites.
- Job fairs/on-campus employer events.
- Professional meetings, conferences and seminars; college courses.
- Volunteer experiences. Practicum, student teaching and field experiences.
- Full / Part time or temporary employment.
- Social functions, recreational events, church activities.
- You can find people to add to your network almost anywhere, even standing in line at the store.

SMART ONLINE SOCIAL/PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

The best way to land a job is still by having someone who already works at a school/school district mention your name. The difference today is that a lot more of those recommendations start with connections made through online social/professional networks. These days, savvy job seekers utilize social/professional networking sites such as Facebook™, Twitter™, and LinkedIn™, to help them build their networks and find jobs. For example, through online networking you can send instant job-search updates via messaging feeds like Twitter™, and meet new people who might be able to lend a hand through LinkedIn™ and Facebook™. However, just signing up for an account is not enough. Incomplete profiles reflect poorly on you. Complete your profiles 100 percent.

Online social/professional networks can be excellent resources when used appropriately. However, they can also get you into trouble. Employers use these networks to provide a glimpse of the lives of job candidates. Sometimes what they learn through profiles leads them to reject certain candidates or even rescind a job offer or even release a current employee. Although not a social networking site, YouTube

video postings showing you in an unappealing role may be damaging to your reputation. You may appear in a video posted by someone you do not know or even by a student in a class you are teaching. Also, it is not just employers who view these sites, parents and school board members view as well. This is yet another reason to act professionally at all times, even in your personal life.

Keep it clean! Follow the guidelines below to ensure employers get the right impression of you.

- Always keep in mind who may be reading! Do not post anything on your profile, or on anyone else's that you would not want a potential or current employer to see.
- Google yourself to see what information people can find about you on the Internet.
- Do not post information about drinking, drug use, sexual or any unlawful activity.
- Do not post inappropriate pictures of yourself, or anyone else.
- If others have posted inappropriate pictures of you on their profiles, ask for them to be deleted.
- Use professional communication skills.
- Avoid using foul language and slang.
- Use appropriate grammar and spelling.
- Do not type in all caps or all lower case. Use good keyboarding skills.
- Do not make discriminatory remarks related to race, gender or religion.
- Have a professional screen name.
- Do not lie about your qualifications.
- Do not make negative comments about former employers or coworkers.

COMMUNICATING WITH EMPLOYERS

Not all employers are alike, especially when it comes to how they communicate. While some employers are very e-mail friendly, others prefer phone calls or letters. Find out which mode of contact the employer prefers and use it.

Here are some general guidelines:

- Always be polite, concise, and professional when communicating with employers
- Use an appropriate email address (i.e. nothing silly or unprofessional)
- Keep your outgoing voicemail message brief and professional
- When leaving a voice message for an employer, keep it concise and state your name and contact information clearly. Speak slowly and repeat your name and phone number at end of the message.
- Avoid using slang and other inappropriate language
- Do not send communication (whether print or email) immediately. Save it for a day and then re-read and edit before sending
- Do not use all CAPS, **bold**, *italics*, or font colors other than black
- Use a standard font such as Calibri, Cambria, Arial, Times New Roman
- Do not include attachments (unless requested by employer)
- Make sure your handwriting is neat and legible
- Be patient. Always wait at least five business days before contacting an employer again if you have not heard back from him or her. Make no more than three attempts to contact an employer.

PROFESSIONAL E-MAIL ETIQUETTE

When using e-mail, make sure your e-mail address sounds professional (avoid nicknames, etc.). Also, be sure to follow all professional etiquette rules pertaining to traditional written communications in your e-mail correspondence. Professional e-mail is very different from casual e-mail or instant messaging. Here are some general guidelines:

- In the subject line, make it obvious why you are e-mailing, i.e., Elementary Teacher Application.
- Use a standard business letter format, just as you would with a paper letter.
- Address people as Mr., Ms., or Dr. Last Name.
- Check your spelling and proofread for grammatical errors. Do not just depend on spell check.
- Be polite, concise, and professional. No slang or instant messaging shorthand. No emotions (:o).
- Include your full name and contact information, including phone number.
- Avoid using all CAPS, **bold**, or *italics* or font colors other than black.
- Use a standard font such as Calibri, Cambria, Arial, or Times New Roman.
- Use white screen; no colors and no designs.
- Change contact name and content according to the employer to whom you are sending the message.
- If responding to an e-mail, include the original message in the reply. Respond within two business days.
- Scan your resume for viruses before attaching it to your e-mail message.
- Name your documents using your full name (Carol Dillon resume) (Carol Dillon cover letter)
- Use employer's preference for type of document format: Word, Word compatible, rich text format, PDF.

If you are attaching your cover letter and resume, your email message will be very brief and to the point. For example:

TO: e-mail address of hiring professional
FROM: your professional e-mail address
SUBJECT: Middle School Science Teacher Application
Attached: Carol Dillon cover letter.doc; Carol Dillon resume.doc

Dear Dr. Watson:

I am writing in response to the ad posted on your web site for a middle school science teacher at North Middle School. Please accept the attached cover letter and resume as part of my application for this position.

Thank you,

Your First and Last Name

Street address

City, ST zip code

Area code/Phone number