

## **NETWORKING: THE PATH FROM A JOB SEARCH TARGET TO A NEW JOB**

What follows is an outline of the steps to get from “I need a job” to “I have a new job” as quickly as possible. It’s easier said than done, which is where career professionals can help.

### **Target Statement:**

A target statement is simply a description of the job you are looking for. It should be one sentence, but no longer than two.

### **Target List**

A target list consists of 50-100 companies or organizations where you are likely to find your target job. Type the list of company names. Organize them by appropriate categories to make the list easier to read. Carry a printed version of this list with you, and keep a copy on your phone or tablet.

### **Target List Script**

Share your target statement with people close to you. Show them the target list and ask the following questions:

1. Who am I missing?
2. What do you know about any of these places?
3. Do you know anyone at any of these places, or someone who might know someone?

Those conversations should yield a list of people at your target list of companies, supplemented, of course, by your own contacts.

***Important note:*** You must use this script in-person or over the phone. Do not send the list and questions to your contacts. Typing these responses is time-consuming, and most of your contacts won’t take the time. If they do, they are going to feel pretty resentful. You may email the list itself, so that they can look at the list while you ask the questions and make note of their responses.

### **Networking Script**

The next step is to have conversations with people inside each of your target list

companies. Initially, those conversations can be with anyone inside the company, but your goal is to get the names of people working in the areas you are targeting.

Suggested email to set up the call. This is just a bare bones draft; feel free to spruce it up with personal touches:

Subject Line: \_\_\_\_\_ suggested I call you

Hi,

\_\_\_\_\_ suggested that you would be an excellent person to speak to about XYZ company. Would you have 20 minutes for coffee or a phone/zoom call? I would appreciate getting your insights.

Thank you.

Do not attach a resume, and do not go into a lot of detail at this point. Your goal is to secure the call/meeting.

### **Networking Script (For either a Call or Meeting)**

This is the broad outline of a script for your sessions. Modify and customize as needed.

—Thanks for taking the time to speak with me. My background is in \_\_\_\_\_ (insert brief overview of your expertise here). I'm currently at/doing\_\_\_\_, and am looking to eventually move on. It has been a great role, but I'm running out of room to grow. So I'm doing research on the companies that I would be interested in working for next. Your company is on the list, so I'd appreciate any information and insight you can provide.

*(They may say "We aren't hiring." Reply "Oh, I didn't expect you to have a job, I'm just doing some preliminary research.")*

—Tell me how you came to be in this role.

*(This question gets them talking, and may reveal that they worked at other companies of interest. In which case, ask if they have someone at that organization that they would suggest you speak with.)*

—Walk me through the organizational chart for this organization.

*(This is a valuable question. It provides insight into how the company is organized, and if your contact is in a different part of the company you are targeting, you can point to the unit that is of interest and ask if they know anyone down in that unit.)*

—Tell me about the hiring practices here. What skills do you look for? Where do you

post jobs? What recruiters do you use? Have you liked them? Would you be willing to share their names?

--What's the interview process like?

—How would you describe the culture here?

—What's the salary range for the roles I am targeting?

*(They will say they don't know. Don't accept this. Say "Just give me a ballpark." They may still say they don't know. So say "Is it 25K-50K, 50K-75K, & 5K-100K....? They will likely stop you and give you a range. By itself, that one piece of data won't tell you much, but asking this question any time you talk with someone will give you valuable data on where the market is, and you can use that information to increase your leverage when you get an offer.)*

—Do you know anyone who might be in the market for my skills?

*(If appropriate, you can insert the target list script into this conversation. "These are some of the other companies I am researching. Am I missing anyone? What do you know about any of these places? Do you know anyone at any of these places?")*

—Would you take a look at my resume? If you were hiring, would this grab your attention? If so, why? If not, why not?

*(This lets you get the resume into their hands—email it if the conversation is by phone. And it gives you some very valuable feedback on the resume. Don't take the resume back—let them keep it)*

*(Ask any other specific questions you have about the company and its needs. Finish with the following two questions.)*

—Is there any other advice you would have for me?

—Is there anyone else you think I should talk to?

## **The Objectives**

There are a number of goals you are serving by these conversations.

1. You are getting new people to talk to who are in or near your target organizations. Ideally, each person will give you at least two names. The script is designed to give you as many chances as possible at surfacing a contact—at a company where the person used to work, in another unit inside the organization, at a company they think might be hiring, and finally, by asking straight out at the end. Not everyone will give you two, some will give you more, but that is the most important

goal—continuing to build contacts near or in the organizations you are targeting.

2. You sometimes find a job—it hasn't been posted yet, it's only a half-formed idea and your presence spurs them to create a new role.

3. You have the inside track on any job that does get posted—people will mention your name to the hiring manager.

4. Recruiters will hear about you from their network. Recruiters are constantly “sourcing” for jobs they are trying to fill. They contact people in the field to get names. If you have impressed your contact, they may pass your name along to a recruiter.

### **The Metrics**

--A full-time job search is 25-25 hours a week. If you are working, you need to spend 5-10 hours a week on the search. Track your time.

--Your goal is to talk with 20 new people each week. Track new contacts.

--On average, job seekers will have 38 interactions with a hiring manager before they get a job. Interactions aren't necessarily interviews—it could be a networking conversation. But the most valuable conversations are with people at or just above your level, because they can influence the decision to hire you.

### **Thank You Notes Are Your Best Friend**

Every time you speak with someone about your job search, send a thank-you note. This is your re-admission ticket if you discover you need to contact this person again.

Follow-up thank you notes get you bonus points. For example: “Thanks again for taking the time to speak with me and for your suggestions to speak with Mary and Bob. I wanted to let you know that I have spoken to both of them. Mary was incredibly helpful, and put me in touch with several additional people, and Bob gave me a lead on a job. I'll let you know how it goes. Thanks again.”

“I've landed” thank you notes solidify your networks: “I wanted to thank you again for all your help during my recent job search. I have just accepted a position with XYZ company. Here's my contact information. Please let me know if there is anything I can do for you.”

### **Send a LinkedIn Invitation**

In addition to a thank you note, send every contact a LinkedIn invitation. This will add to your LI network and theirs with a high-quality contact. When you land a job, an posting to your network will reach most of the people you spoke with in your job search: “I want to thank everyone for their help and support during my recent job search. I am delighted

to announce that I will be starting at XYZ company next week as Global Head of HR. Please reach out if there is anything I can do for you.”