

MAKING NETWORKING CALLS TO PERSONAL CONTACTS

CALL PLANNING AND OBJECTIVES

1st Objective: Get referrals to contacts in your targeted industry.

2nd Objective: Gather additional intelligence that advances your campaign.

3rd Objective: Renew your relationship with this Personal Contact in order to start them thinking about you and of ways to help you.

USE AN APPROPRIATE INTRODUCTORY APPROACH

It is important that you spend time renewing your relationship with your Personal Contacts because their willingness to help you is motivated by that relationship. Don't be in a hurry to move onto the questions you have prepared. Spend time updating them on the changes in your life and show an interest in the new events in their lives.

POSITIONING

Make some statement to ease their concern that you expect them to offer you a job or know of a job opening. The focus here should be on developing contacts, not looking for jobs (i.e., "I want you to know that I don't expect you to offer me a job, or even know of any job openings.")

Tell them what you expect of them (i.e. "I am calling to ask for your help in finding contacts in the fields that interest me.

GIVE YOUR COMPLETE POWER GREETING

Followed immediately by asking them to review your cover letter with you (i.e., "I recently sent you a copy of my resume and a cover letter. Do you have that letter handy, I'd like to go over it with you?")

ASK FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE FIELD

Start by reviewing the functions and fields that interest you mentioned in your Personal Contacts Cover Letter. Follow with a general question asking about their knowledge of this industry. (i.e., "What can you tell me about these fields that might advance my job campaign?")

ASK FOR REFERRALS

There are three levels of questioning: industry, specific companies, and contacts close to the industry. ALWAYS ask for contacts at ALL THREE LEVELS. Remember, you don't know who your Personal Contacts know, so don't get too specific too quick.

Ask first for referrals to the industry (i.e., "If you were me, who would you contact to begin exploring opportunities in these fields?")

Ask second for contacts at specific companies (i.e., "Some of the companies I'm interested in include: Monsanto, Anheuser Busch, Ralston Purina, or Pet Foods. Do you know anyone who works for any of those companies?")

Ask for contacts who might know someone in the companies that interest you (i.e., "If you were trying to generate a contact at Old Vienna, who would you call who might know someone there?")

DON'T GIVE UP CONTROL OF THE REFERRAL PROCESS

Since you are asking for help from your friends, it is common that they may want to make the calls, or pass out your resume for you. Unfortunately, when that happens, you have no way to control what is said about you, and no way to know if the contact is made. Instead of giving up control, tell your Personal Contacts you appreciate the help, but it would be easier to make the calls yourself so that you could control the pace of your campaign.

However, DO ask permission to use their name when making contact with the referrals (i.e., "Would it be alright if I used your name when contacting them?")

DON'T FORGET TO ASK FOR ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS

Asking Personal Contacts for the names and addresses of referrals saves you time and effort and will often tell you something about the type of relationship that exists between your Personal Contact and the referral. That information will make it easier to develop rapport with the referrals.

LET THEM KNOW YOU WILL STAY IN TOUCH THROUGHOUT YOUR CAMPAIGN

You will probably want to contact your Personal Contacts at several points throughout your campaign. You will feel less self-conscious about calling them several times if you get their permission to do so from the very beginning (i.e. "Would it be alright with you if I kept you informed throughout my campaign on how things were going?")