Networking

What is networking?

Networking is a tool you can use to develop your contacts in the industry you want to work in. It can be very effective in helping you achieve your Career Dreams. It can also be a really interesting way to learn about your Career Dreams – hearing other people's career stories can be inspiring! By developing a network you can learn more about your own Career Dreams and where these might lead.

Why is networking so important?

Developing and maintaining a network is important as it can provide you with new opportunities, industry knowledge, and the ability to work with other professionals that are interested in the same subject matter that you are.

Knowing the right people, sharing industry information, and ensuring we are up to date with industry trends are key steps for career development. It can help you reach your Career Dreams faster, and show you new paths as to where they might lead.

So what is a network?

A network is a group or a number of individuals you are in contact with either within your own industry, or within a related one. It can be developed through attending industry events, having coffee with like-minded people or attending group meetings.

How do I network?

There are some really easy things you can do to start your network. Try the following:

- Attend University events including employer events
- Attend Career Expo's
- Think of friends of your parents or other adults
- Attend industry events
- Join relevant associations (see our Association list for ideas)
- Get a mentor in the industry you work in
- Use social networking sites

Staying in touch:

A network will work if you stay in touch with others. You don't just want to be contacting people when you need something. Going out for coffee or even just exchanging an email from time to time can be a great way to do this. It may sound simple, but it works, and can help keep you in touch and up to date with what is going on in your industry.

Social networking is also a tool that enables you to stay in touch without necessarily meeting with others. Try professional social networking sites like Linked-In to help build your professional reputation and connect with others in your industry.

Internal Networking

When you do get a job it is important that you focus on who else works at your company. Are there other departments you need to learn more about, or different managers you need to make contact with for future career options? Think about who you need to talk to in order to learn more about the business and how the company works. To keep up with your internal networking try the following:

- Attend company events
- Attend training opportunities
- Talk to other departments rather than just emailing them
- Actively talk to colleagues in the lift, coffee room or during breaks
- Ensure you understand the company structure

Ready to network? Go to it!

Dream today, dream tomorrow, dream everyday