



The Role of Networking in the Modern Job Search

The way people find jobs has changed. Seeing someone with a red pen and the newspaper's classified section is a rarity, and today, online job boards and social media sites are two of the best ways to find work. Networking is still a key way to find a job, but the methods have changed. What role does networking still play in a person's job search, and how has networking evolved in the last decade? Job search experts provide their thoughts about networking below. I'd say that networking in the job search has changed with the birth of LinkedIn. Now someone can target a hiring manager or business owner and find out which of their contacts might know them by a few clicks and keystrokes. Rather than asking around, one can almost instantly target him/her and network their way to an introduction and/or reference.

Darrah Brustein

Partner

Equitable Payments

Merchant Services- Honest and Reliable

Online job boards are not particularly effective resources, especially the way that they are used by many young people. College students and recent graduates simply go through and click on any job that looks remotely interesting or likely, and it is easy to apply for hundreds of jobs in a short time. It is also easy to mistake this as being effective action.

According to a report published by CareerXRoads, the odds of someone getting a job that they apply for is about 1 in 72. If they applied using one of the major online job boards, those odds drop to about 1 in 300. Note also that many larger companies now use software to screen job applications, especially from the job boards, because they receive far too many applications than their human resources can screen effectively. So if your resume doesn't include the desired keywords, it may never get looked at by a person.

That same CareerXRoads study looked at the effect of a personal referral. If someone within the company refers an applicant for a position, that person's chances of getting the job jump to 1 in 10. That's a pretty hefty boost. And while there is considerable disagreement about just how many jobs openings never get publicized, the fact is that many jobs are filled without advertising them anywhere. The only way to find out about them is by knowing someone inside the company. And



you need to build a professional network in order to connect with people in the target companies where you want to work.

These two reasons alone are more than enough to show why networking is more important than ever in the job search process. But there's more.

For example, one of the main complaints from recruiters is that the applicants they interview don't even know enough about the company to ask questions about it. This is a real handicap, because employers are not just looking for applicants with skills; they want to know what the applicant can do to add value to the company. The only way that an applicant can articulate this value is if he or she knows what the company needs and what challenges it is facing. Networking with people in that company or in other companies in the same industry can give applicants an edge because they will know something about the context of the job, and how it fits into what the company is trying to accomplish.

Also, there is the saying in marketing that customers only buy from people that they "know, like, and trust." The same goes for hiring an employee. If you have a network of people in the industry that know, like, and trust you, their recommendations and testimonials will be much more effective.

You ask how "networking has evolved." Many people think that having lots of LinkedIn contacts is the way to build a network, but this is of little value if these people don't actually know you. Digital communications makes it easy to think you're building an effective network, just as the online job boards make it easy to think that you are applying for lots of jobs. The fact is that effective networking has not changed; while digital services such as LinkedIn make it easier to identify potential contacts, there is no substitute for direct personal communication. People need to get to know each other in order for a network connection to be useful.

Alfred Poor, Ph.D.

America's Success Mentor for Young Employees

Every day I deal with people going through this difficult process. Networking has never been more important in your job search. Experts agree that 80% of jobs aren't listed on a job board or in the



classifieds ads and never will be. You will only find out about them through and insider, either by researching the company or knowing someone who works there already. Networking is a great way to find out who's hiring and meet the decision-makers.

Networking is no longer about going to the a mixer and passing out cards willy-nilly. Networking begins before you get to an event. It's using social media like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter to gather info about people you want to meet. It's reading company blogs to get a feel for their culture. By the time you arrive at a networking event, you should have some goals in mind as far as who you want to meet and want you want to accomplish.

Rasheen Carbin
Director of Business Development
<http://www.mbaprojectsearch.com>

Only 20 percent of your time should be spent on ads and headhunters. The rest should be spent on networking and on contacting people whom you don't know directly.

Robert Hellmann
NYU School of Continuing and Professional Studies (NYU-SCPS)
<http://www.hellmannconsulting.com/book.php>
http://scps.nyu.edu/academics/course_detail.html?id=CELP2-CS9318



Networking is not just a part of the job search, it is the job search.

I attended multiple sessions at SxSW Interactive Conference in 2011 on recruiting. The room was full of recruiters and they were basically stating that they do not post jobs anymore. Well, public companies are required by law to post but when they post the position it may already be filled and nothing says for how long it has to be posted.

85-90% get filled through referrals. Referral bonus programs are huge. I am currently working with three IBMers who were recently laid off and I am having them build their network first through LinkedIn and then through face to face meetings.

Networking, both on-line and off-line, is critical.

Marc Miller

Author

Repurpose Your Career A Practical Guide for Baby Boomers

<http://careerpivot.com/repurpose-your-career>