



Networking and personal presentation

The Facts

Often people you know and meet can help you with your job search in a variety of ways. For example, they may help you find work experience, connect you with employers or help you with your job applications and interview practise. It's important to learn how to network and make the most of the support available to you.

Personal presentation is also an important part of finding a job and will help you make the right impression on employers. Personal presentation includes:

- your clothing, grooming, hygiene and body language
- how you speak to and get along with others
- how you present yourself on social media sites.

Checklist



I want to:

- get better at networking
- figure out what I want to get out of networking
- understand who is in my network and how they can help me
- get tips on discussing jobs and careers with employers, friends, family and other contacts
- understand how to improve my digital profile

Who can help?



Industry and professional bodies often host networking events, including events for young members.



Get **family, friends and community contacts** involved. Talk to them about your job search goals and how they may be able to help you achieve them.



Online industry forums, job boards and professional networking platforms (like LinkedIn) can get you connected.



Helpful tips

- 1 Identify your goals.** Networking is most effective when you target specific employers and have identified career goals. This will help you communicate your plans to others and help them to provide you with the advice and support you need.
- 2 Learn to make small talk.** Small talk helps you to identify if the person you are speaking with can help you with your job search. Don't expect everyone to be interested but be ready to connect with those who are.
- 3 Prepare responses to difficult questions.** There are times when you'll need to acknowledge gaps in your skills. Perhaps it's a lack of experience, period of unemployment or a poor school attendance record. Prepare for difficult questions so you can respond appropriately if asked.
- 4 Be a good listener.** Listen carefully and be open to other people's advice.
 - Focus on the person you are speaking with and their body language.
 - Show interest in what's being said. Nod occasionally, smile and avoid interrupting the person speaking.
 - Always thank the person for their time.
- 5 Keep your online profile professional.** Employers may look you up online and make a judgement about you based on the information they find. Always think carefully about the image you portray online and consider your professional reputation when posting on social media.

Did you know?

If you are a graduate or student, there are professional associations that have specialised career services for student and graduate members. Talk to your Career Adviser to find out more.

Online professional networking sites may also help you find a job. Take time to research ways that you can get the most out of different networking platforms. For example, if you join LinkedIn, you can get some good advice by typing 'LinkedIn profile tips' in your search engine. LinkedIn is a professional networking platform, not a social media site.

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