Networking in a Nutshell

The Golden Rule: Don’t use the relationship solely as a mechanism for asking for a job.

In fact, don’t “use” the relationship at all—people don’t like to be used, but they do like to make connections and share genuine interests. Yes, the goal of networking is to build ties that will help you as you build your career. You need to build the relationship before you can ask for jobs.

If a person you’ve just met knows about an opening and they think you'd be a good fit, they will mention it. Think about how you would react if someone you just met claimed to be seeking information and then boldly asked for a job. You would likely be put off and feel used—not the way you want someone to feel about you.

This quick guide to networking will help you reframe what you think networking is all about. Don’t think “manipulative and fake.” Think “interested and engaged.” Use these helpful tips to get you started in building relationships for your future career.

Step 1: Make a List of your contacts, legal and non-legal

- Friends (who are lawyers or non-lawyers)
- Relatives
- Colleagues (current & former)
- Every lawyer you know
- Professors
- Classmates (law school & college)
- Members of your church
- Who else?

Step 2: Create your Message

- Your message will depend on your relationship with your contact and your stage in the job search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm starting my job search for after graduation. Do you have any suggestions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>I'm interested in learning more about practicing _____ law? Would you be willing to tell me more?</td>
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<tr>
<td>I'm trying to gain legal experience this school year. Do you have any suggestions?</td>
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- Feel free to combine several messages!

Step 3: Contact your contacts and share your message

- In-person
- Phone
- E-mail
Step 4: Thank them promptly
   ❖ Always send a handwritten thank you or e-mail

Step 5: Keep track of your connections so you can follow-up and stay in touch
   ❖ Create a list of contacts with the dates you connected, who referred you to them, and your follow-up procedure.
   ❖ Re-connect every 6-12 weeks depending on relationship.
   ❖ If they gave advice and you followed it, let them know.
   ❖ If a contact introduced you to someone, thank your original contact after you meet the new person.
   ❖ If you see something that would interest a contact, forward it to him/her.
   ❖ If you read positive news about a contact, congratulate him/her.