



Eight Types of People to Ask For a Meeting

Your purpose for networking is to learn about your desired career, the market place, and spread the word about your qualifications.

You accomplish this by meeting with a variety of people. You do want to be strategic about who you ask to meet with because your time is at a premium.

Be methodical in creating your network. Start by documenting the names of people you already know so you don't overlook someone then continue to add names to your list using the categories listed below.

Keep in mind, it's easier and more successful to get an introduction to someone than reaching out to a complete stranger. For this reason, you'll want to begin networking with the people you already know and hope they will be able to introduce you to other valuable contacts.

The truth is, you never know who can help you. But the only way you'll find out is to meet these seven types of new people.

1. People You Worked With

Your past work colleagues have seen you perform in the job and know your strengths and work ethic. These people make an excellent source of information to find out what changes are going on in the business and industry. Secondly, you want to let them know you will be looking for a new opportunity after you finish business school. Informing people you used to work with of your future plans will help them understand your goals. They can watch for opportunities that might be a match for you. Your colleagues also have connections with people so be sure to ask if they know of anyone they think might be helpful for you to meet.

2. Friends

People you know are most likely to want to help you if they can. Your friends have a vast network of contacts you don't know about. Start by meeting with the people you know and inform them of your new career aspirations and ask if they know anyone who may be helpful in speaking with. Even if your friends don't understand what you want to do next, they may be able to help you meet people inside companies you are targeting. Be sure you mention some of the companies you are interested in working for. When they do provide you with a name, find out some background on the person and how they know each other. It's important you take immediate action and reach out as soon as possible. This shows professionalism and that you are serious about your career. When you reach out to the person recommended, via phone or email, you will absolutely want to mention that your friend referred you and why you believe they would be a helpful person to speak with.

3. Your Old Bosses

Assuming you and your previous manager or supervisor got along, it's a good idea to reach out to them. Your past boss may know of upcoming opportunities at your old company or elsewhere. If you performed well in your role, then it would be easy for your boss to want to help you and introduce you to other people you should know.

4. New People You Meet

Let's say you are attending a networking event or conference or even a baseball game and you meet someone who has ►



a background in your field of interest. If there's enough synergy and common interests and you feel like continuing the conversation, ask for a meeting. How? If you haven't already, exchange business cards and ask if you can connect on LinkedIn. Then ask about continuing the conversation over coffee. Do everything in your power to set a firm date and time and location right then and there. You don't want your new potential lead to slip through the cracks as can happen once people have left the venue.

5. People Working at Your Target Company

Is there a company you would love to work for? Talking with people who work inside a company allows you to learn what it is really like to work there. You may already have connections to people who work inside your dream company and companies on your target list. Research the company on LinkedIn and see who you know. If you do not have any connections, look for someone you know who has a connection in the company. These are called second degree connections. Also ask everyone in your network if they know the person and could introduce you. Or, as a last resort, you could make a cold call and introduce yourself. It's best to get an introduction to someone so you can use their name when you reach out. This increases the odds that the person will respond to your request.

6. Alumni

Tapping into your school's alumni is pool for potential conversations. There are alumni from both your undergraduate school and your current business school. In most cases you can contact the school's Advancement or Alumni office to access a database. LinkedIn also has a powerful resource on the University's page called "See Alumni." This allows you to sort alumni by city, company and the type of work they do. Search for alumni who work for companies you are interested in and alumni who hold a role you aspire to be in.

7. Classmates

The people you attend B-School with have diverse backgrounds. Take the time to meet classmates and learn about their previous work experience. Reach beyond the people you see in class every day. If you belong to a club or take part in other activities, learn about the people in these organizations.

8. Professors and Other B-School Staff

Professors often have connections to the business world and are not only great sources of information but may also have job leads passed on to them from their contacts. Sitting down with a professor to talk about your career will help you both. And don't overlook the other staff members who work at your business school such as people in the career center, alumni office, student services and even admissions. All these people have relationships with past students and business. Additionally, everyone wants to see you succeed.

Productivity Tips

- Reach out using the method that is most likely to get a response. It may be using email, phone, LinkedIn, Facebook or some other social network. The method you choose depends on the preference of the individual you are reaching out to. And if you don't get a response, switch it up.
- Some people may want to help make connections for you, however, it is always a good idea to maintain control of the request for a meeting or conversation. In many cases, it is better if you offer to do the legwork or make the call, with their permission and endorsement, of course. Your well-meaning friend just doesn't have the same set of priorities or sense of urgency as you. It may take them days or weeks to get around to making the introduction. Offer to de-burden them of that responsibility and you will also eliminate the potential of feeling like a pest when you have to call them in two weeks to remind them.

Create Your List

Create a list of everyone you know using the categories below. Your goal should be to list at least 100 people. Use contacts ►



from your phone, email, LinkedIn, and even Facebook to help remind yourself of all the people you know. Consider this a brainstorming session and don't eliminate people, just list their names.

This list varies from the seven categories mentioned above. Obviously you can't list people you've just met if you haven't been networking. But there may be people you met awhile ago and never followed up with. Add their name to your list.

Build your list of names using Excel or Word. You will use this list to track who you've contacted, the conversation topics, new names acquired and dates for follow-up.

Checklist for Documenting Your Network

Co-workers/Former co-workers/Customers/Vendors

Name	Company	Phone	Email

Relatives/Friends/Neighbors

Name	Company	Phone	Email

Alumni

Name	Company	Phone	Email

Target Company Contacts

Name	Company	Phone	Email





Classmates/Professors/B-School Contacts

Name	Company	Phone	Email

Business Contacts (Doctors, Lawyers, Dentists, Accountants, etc.)

Name	Company	Phone	Email

Past Networking Contacts

Name	Company	Phone	Email