

Networking

How will networking help me?

Networking is about connecting and building relationships with people or organisations who can support your career, help you learn more about the industry, mentor, or coach you and can assist you in finding opportunities.

Being well informed about roles and industry can help with interviews and talking to new people builds your confidence.

Potential networks consist of everyone you already know and others you've yet to meet!

Getting started: steps to networking

If you feel shy about asking for help or talking to people you don't know, that's quite natural. The more you do this the more comfortable you will feel. Most people are happy to assist and enjoy talking about their work. The most important thing is to just get started! Be brave, bold, and curious!

Make a list of all your contacts, including:

- Friends and family
- People you study with (e.g., lecturers, teachers, students, other people from Unitec)
- People you know through work or volunteer community, church, sports, and other activities.
- People you meet through professional organisations or LinkedIn.
- Attending lectures, conventions, and meetings in your field

Remember, all these people have their own contacts that you can potentially tap into!

- You can email first to introduce yourself (and what you are looking for) to break the ice. If someone has referred you, mention their name.
- Follow up with a phone call. Practice what you want to say before calling! Be to the point about your purpose, include a brief introduction about yourself and the information you need. e.g. *"Hi, my name is... (I'm following up on my email from last week), do you have time to talk? I will be graduating from Unitec with a degree in and want to get into the field of..... I'm wondering if I could meet with you for 20 minutes to get some career advice and insights into the best approach to getting into the job market in this industry"*.
- Note! You are not asking for a job but seeking advice, leads, information, and referrals. Be mindful of not taking up too much of their time.
- If they cannot help you, it is ok to politely ask if they can suggest someone who can.
- Thank them for their time.

Get organised, be prepared

- Research the organisation. Think about what you want to know and write a list of questions.
- Update your CV! You can ask for advice on your CV (a great way to get them to read it!)
- If appropriate, ask for recommendations of other people you could talk to.
- Keep a record of all contacts and conversations.
- ALWAYS send a thank you email to everyone who is helpful.