You have heard the word **NETWORKING** many times, especially as it relates to the job search. However, networking isn't always about finding a job. It's about making connections with people who can give you valuable information, give you a different perspective on a problem you have, provide you with new ideas when you find your creative self "stuck", or maybe someday hire you. Networking is a long-term strategy for career development.

- As with any job search, define your values, interests, skills and abilities.
- Know what you want in a job (location, small, large, public or private).
- Know your professional goals, and target them.
- Have realistic expectations. The job fair is for job leads and making contacts with other professionals.
- Have an error-free resume and application materials.
- Be prepared to discuss goals, skills and abilities in an interview.
- Support your discussions with examples. Have samples to share.
- Learn who’s coming ahead of time. Do research on the organizations and the positions. Make use of the Internet and Career Services.
- Have one or two questions in mind for each employer. The questions should reflect the research you have done on the employer and your interest.

**Before**

- Dress professionally. How you look will play a big part in determining employer interest.
- Talk to colleagues about opportunities. Stay in contact with faculty and professionals from your institution. They may have the contacts. Networking is key!
- Expect a great number of candidates to participate.
- Have plenty of resumes, a stapler, note pad, pens and pencils on hand.
- Try to keep notes on the positions you’ve interviewed for. Names, position descriptions, brochures and catalogues are always helpful for future reference. Ask for supporting materials, business cards etc...
- Make conscious decisions about attending socials and receptions. These professional opportunities are also helpful in networking.
- You never know who you are talking with. Be professional and courteous at all times.
- Most professions are small. Never bad-mouth colleagues.

**During**

- Send follow-up letters and resumes after the job fair for positions that interest you.
- Don’t stop your job search after the job fair. Continue to apply for positions using Career Services, CareerTRAK, newsletters, and other sources. The search ends when you accept a position.
- Be patient, yet persistent.