

## Module #3

### Networking and Informational Interviews

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### Networking and Informational Interviews

Classified ads will never hire you. Web sites will never hire you. Bulletin boards will never hire you. When you get your next job, it will be a person that hires you. A key strategy for getting hired includes getting to know more people who can hire you.

When carpenters build a house, the foundation – the structure that the house rests upon- is the first thing created. All your job search activities rest on your ability to

- Expand your personal network,
- Conduct informational interviews.

These skills are foundational to any other job search activities.

### Objectives

Here is what you'll be able to do when you have successfully completed this module:

1. Describe an approach to job search that is grounded in self-knowledge, networking, and employer interests.
2. Demonstrate use of networking skills for career advancement.
3. Prepare for an informational interview.

### 1. Before We Get Started...

#### Focus Questions:

What activities can be part of my job search?

How can I practice assertive communication (rather than aggressive or passive)?

Before we get started, there are two things to address briefly.

#### A. Understanding the Job Search Process

Your goal is to get a job that you want. Let's walk the path toward that goal to see some of the steps typically taken in order to arrive at that goal.

1. Research and personal reflection guide you to seek work in a particular industry or particular kind of position.
2. Your research, networking, and informational interviews lead you to send your resume with a cover letter to particular employers.
3. An employer is enticed enough by your **cover letter** that she turns the page to read your resume.
4. An employer learns enough about you from a summary of your goals, skills and personal qualities (**resume**) that she schedules an interview with you.

5. You and an employer have a significant conversation to determine the overlap between your goals, skills and personal qualities and the needs of the employer (**interview**).
6. The employer offers you a job.
7. You accept the job!

This training module will focus on steps 1 (determining your goal) and 2 (research, networking, and informational interviews).

Of course a job search is rarely so neat in the real world - seven direct steps all in the same direction, one following after the other. Take a look at the diagram below. This diagram suggests what activities take place at different points in time in the job search process.

### Organization of Job Search Activities

Activity	Week																							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Thinking, questioning, listening, adjusting	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Identifying abilities and skills	■	■																						
Setting goals	■	■	■																					
Writing resume			■	■																				
Conducting research		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Prospecting, referrals, networking	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Interviewing									■	■			■		■		■	■	■			■		■
Receiving and negotiating job offers											■				■			■	■				■	

[Diagram adapted from *High Impact Resumes and Letters*, Krannich, Ronald L. and William J. Banis, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1998. Impact Publications. Manassas Park, VA. p. 67]

This diagram assumes we know where we are going. Even then the diagram shows some of the activities are repeated as the resume is revised, people give us new information about our target job or industry, and so forth. Most of us have to backtrack a little, or re-orient ourselves and change direction. These course corrections take time and thought, and

while some of us may have the luxury of ample time to conduct our job search, many do not. We advocate an approach of going faster by going slower. We'll be going slower by first building our network of people who can give us insider information about the industries and businesses we are interested in. So first – after these “Before You Begin” matters – we will move toward an extremely practical exercise that will help you build your network.

### B. Practicing Assertive Communication

Networking requires assertiveness. You must have the ability to initiate interaction and state your interests clearly and professionally. It may be that reviewing your past achievements, as you will be doing soon in this module, will increase your self-confidence. More self-confidence can help you be more assertive.

While assertive communication will help you in your job search and on the job, aggressive behavior and passive behavior often will not.

Aggressive	Assertive	Nonassertive
Makes all the decisions: everyone else has no choice	I can make decisions and so can you, we both have the right to an opinion and a choice	Gives everyone else their choice, puts everyone else first, even at own expense

For many people, aggressive or nonassertive communication comes much more “naturally” than assertive communication. Below is a list of activities that can help you practice assertive communication. If your habits lean more to the aggressive side, you may already feel comfortable doing any of these activities, any time with any one. But to practice assertive communication, you can practice these while “wearing the other guy’s shoes.” Your focus must be to perform activities such as these while allowing the other person comfortable “space” for making his or her own choices. For people tending to be nonassertive, here is a list of activities that might pull you way outside of your comfort zone.

1. **Compliment someone.** Tell how you appreciate someone for a quality or skill they have, or an achievement they have made.
2. **Initiate a conversation.** When you are waiting in line at the grocery store, waiting for a bus, at a baseball game.
3. **Express your opinion.** In a conversation, speak your opinion about a matter even though you disagree with those around you.
4. **Initiate a friendship.** Invite someone to lunch or to coffee.
5. **Return faulty merchandise.** If you buy something and then discover it is defective, return it to the store.
6. **Join a professional or service organization.** Be active in the group. Take a position of responsibility in the group.
7. **Speak to someone who has offended you.** Tell them the action that offended you, how it made you feel.

Assertive communication will become your standard practice in your job search. You will be practicing assertive communication in some of the exercises later in this module.

**Comprehension Questions:**

1. Which of these lists best expresses activities involved in a successful job search?

- A. reading classified ads, interviewing, scheduling second interviews
- B. setting goals, writing a resume, networking
- C. talking with your friends, getting additional training, negotiating salary
- D. learning about different careers, meeting people, having good luck

2. Which of these events might be the best example of assertive communication?

- A. The new coffee maker you bought at Starbucks doesn't work, but instead of returning it, you put it in the back of the cupboard.
- B. You overhear a conversation in line at the grocery store. You jump in to "set the man straight."
- C. You strike up a conversation at the neighborhood laundromat while waiting for your clothes to dry.
- D. You join the local chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Answers:

1-B, 2-C. See Discussion of Quiz on p. 23-24.

## 2. Growing Your Network

**Focus Questions:**

Why is building your network so valuable to your job search?

What specific actions help you build your network?

There is not a book in the library that will offer you a job; there is not a website on the on the Internet that will offer you a job. Only people will offer you a job. And, almost always, only after they have interviewed you. But at this point in your job search, one of the most strategic actions you can take is to **interview others**. Informational interviews – interviews in which you ask questions of people who can inform you of an industry or a kind of work – can help you in so many ways:

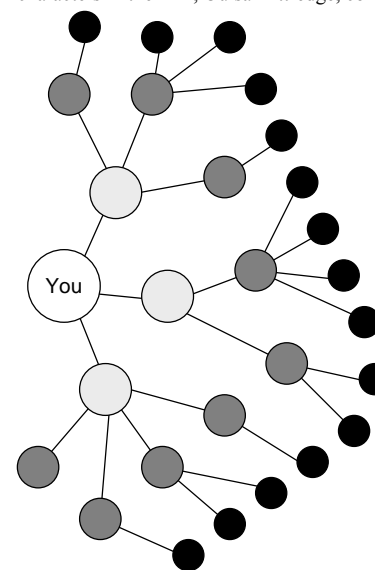
- Give you a “reality check” of what a certain job or industry is really like.
- Give you current information about industry trends.
- Give insight into the practices and priorities of specific employers.
- Give you practice in interviewing for when you are applying for a job.

- Give you an “expert’s” feedback on your resume.
- Give you leads to other people to interview.
- Lead you to your future employer.

You may already know people who will help you in all these ways. Your first task is to use your social network to discover who those helpful people are.

### Opening Doors into Other Worlds

*Six Degrees of Separation* is a 1993 film based on the John Guare play. It explores the premise that everyone in the world is connected to everyone else in the world by a chain of only six acquaintances. One of the characters in the film, Ouisa Kittredge, comments:



*"I read somewhere that everybody on this planet is separated by only six other people. Six degrees of separation between us and everyone else on this planet. The President of the United States, a gondolier in Venice, just fill in the names. I find that extremely comforting, that we're so close, but I also find it like Chinese water torture that we're so close because you have to find the right six people to make the connection. ...It's a profound thought -- ... How everyone is a new door, opening into other worlds."*

Let's apply the "Six Degrees of Separation"

idea to your job search. To find "the right six people" who will give you the information you need and lead you to your next employer, you need to talk to **everyone you know**.

The diagram illustrates what might happen if you talk to three people (the light gray circles). These are people you know right now. Each of the three refers you to others who may be able to help (dark gray circles), who in turn refer you to others (black circles). Already we see that from an initial

network of three acquaintances, you have already amassed a network of 27 people.

Observe in the diagram that some of these people are “dead ends.” They might (or might not) provide you some useful information, but they are unable to put you in contact with others who can help you. But you don’t know this until you talk with the person. On the other hand, some people you meet might be able to give you useful information and also refer you to a number of others who can do the same. And so the chain continues. Your network grows and “everyone is a door opening into new worlds.”

### **Examples**

Specifically, how does this networking work? Let’s say I am curious about working in the banking industry. Here are some sample conversations demonstrating how I might proceed:

*[At the market I shop at regularly the clerk and I recognize each other and have chatted briefly in the past. I say.]* “I’m thinking of looking for work in banking. Do you know anyone who has worked in a bank? I’d like to talk to some people to know what it’s really like.”  
“I have an uncle who used to be a loan officer....”  
“Do you think he’d be open to talking with me?”...

*[I bump into my neighbor at the mailboxes.]* “Hey, I’ve been wanting to ask you something. I’m thinking of changing jobs and I’m thinking about getting into the banking industry. Do you know anyone who works in banking? At this point I’m just interested in learning more about it.”  
“I can’t think of anyone I know who works in a bank. But do you have a bank account somewhere? Maybe you could ask your bank if someone there would talk with you.”

*[On the phone with a relative....]* “Aunt Elsie. You’ve had your janitorial business for a long time, and I know you know a lot of people around town. I’m considering looking for work in banking, and I was wondering if you know anybody who works in the banking industry. I’d like to meet some people who work in banks to know what I might be getting into.”  
“Well, I tell you, we’ve been cleaning Community Bank for quite a while. There’s a gentleman there I talk to, Ward Nelson, who seems nice enough. I don’t know if he’s a banker or just manages the building, though. Tell him you’re my nephew and I’ll bet he’ll talk to you. Now also, sometimes I hire people from EastBayWorks. EastBayWorks seems to be in the business of helping people find jobs; if you get to that point they may be helpful. ...Oh, and now that I think of it, there is someone at church whose daughter is a teller....”

I collect names and contact information from the clerk, my neighbor and my aunt, and thank each one for their help. “I’ll let you know what happens.” I tell them.

I might next follow up the clerk’s referral with a phone call to his uncle:...

“Hello. I’d like to speak to Ronald Jackson. ... My name is Duane Swift. Your nephew Sammy gave me your name.... He told me you used to be a loan officer. I am interested in pursuing a career in the banking industry, and I’m looking for people who know the industry so I can learn more about what I might be getting into. Mr. Jackson, do you think you’d have a few minutes to help me?”

“Well, Mr. Smith, I’ve been retired for nine years. I’d be glad to chat with you, but I think you might be better off talking to some of the people I used to work with who are still in the business....”

...At this point, I am ready to go three directions in the conversation:

- 1) to ask the questions I have prepared, or
- 2) to offer to meet Mr. Jackson face-to-face (at a café, for example) and interview him there, or
- 3) to write down the contact information of the people Mr. Jackson used to work with.

Who knows? Maybe Mr. Jackson will introduce me to my future employer. But that is not what I am asking him to do. I am looking for information about the industry. By meeting people who work in the industry I demonstrate initiative, the desire to learn, and communication skills. These are qualities prized by employers in every industry, for almost every job classification. I make myself memorable to these potential employers, so that when an opportunity comes up, they just might think of me.

### **Face-to-Face vs. Telephone**

A telephone conversation may be all you can get from some busy people. I suggested meeting Mr. Jackson in a café because he is retired and may not have an office. But when I get a chance to meet with those who are working in the industry, I will offer to come to their office for my informational interview. There are advantages to meeting face-to-face:

1. Communication is almost always more complete in person compared to over the phone.
2. Entering the actual work environment gives you opportunity to pick up clues about the culture of the particular workplace.
3. You make yourself more memorable by meeting in person.
4. In person it is very natural to ask at the end of the meeting for the person to briefly review and give input on your resume. (“Is it appropriate for this industry? Is there anything I should highlight more?”)

You are gathering information.

**Comprehension Question:**

**3. Which of these statements is the most accurate characterization of personal networking?**

- A. Networking can put you face-to-face with “insiders” and make you memorable to them.
- B. Networking is only for the extroverted cheerleader type of people.
- C. You can easily waste a lot of time talking to people you barely know.
- D. The telephone is not a good tool for networking.

**Answers:**

3-A. See Discussion of Quiz on p. 23-24.

**Keeping Records of Your Networking**

Record contact information you collect in a paper directory or in a computer database. Besides recording each person’s name and contact information, it may be helpful for future reference to record who referred you to whom. For example my personal phone book might contain these entries, in alphabetical order:

Giannini, Amedeo  
Bank of America  
550 Montgomery Street  
San Francisco  
Office: 415.345.7654  
Referred by Ronald Jackson  
Referred to Salmon Chase  
...  
Jackson, Ronald  
Home: 925.654.9876  
Referred by Sammy Jones.  
Referred to Amedeo Giannini  
...  
Jones, Sammy  
U & I Market  
Cell: 510.876.4321  
Referred to Ronald Jackson

The “referred to/referred by” notes can be useful if you need to follow up later, or if you would like to ask further questions of someone. Example: [On the phone.] “Hello Mr. Giannini. I met with you about a month ago to discuss the banking industry. Ronald Jackson had referred me to you.” See how this places you “on the relational map” for Mr. Giannini and helps Mr. Giannini remember you.

**Comprehension Question:**

**4. Why is it important to keep records of your contacts when networking?**

- A. So you can remind your contacts of who you are and who referred you to them.
- B. So you can send a thank you note to each person who gave you their time.
- C. The notes may be useful if you need to follow-up later or have more questions.
- D. So you can call the person each day.
- E. All but D

**Answers:**

4-E. See Discussion of Quiz on p. 23-24.

**3. Networking Practice**

Talk to five people about your intended job/career change. At least two of the five should be a new referral you connected to through someone you already knew. For each person, record the name, how you know this person, and the information and referrals gained. You may use the Networking Report worksheet. The table below shows how I would record the conversations in the examples you’ve just read:

Name	Relationship	Info & Referrals
Sammy Jones	U & I Market	Uncle Ronald Jackson, retired loan officer.
Harold Pontolous	Neighbor	“Go to my bank”
Ronald Jackson	Referred by Sammy Jones	Referred to A. Giannini
Amedeo Giannini	Referred by Ronald Jackson	Interview scheduled for 2/16/06
Elsie Wildsmith	Aunt	Community Bank, Ward Nelson. EastBay Works? Daughter of church friend is teller.

## Networking Report

Talk to five people about your intended job/career change. At least one of the five should be a new referral you connected to through someone you already knew. For each person, record the name, how you know this person, and the information and referrals gained.

Name	Relationship	Info & Referrals

## 4. Informational Interviews

### Focus Questions:

How can you get into conversations with “insiders” who know the kind of work you want to pursue?

What important things should you accomplish in an informational interview?

### A Case History

By 1995 I had worked nine satisfying years at an adult school in the San Jose area. However, I felt it was time to support my wife’s education at UC Berkeley by relocating to the East Bay Area. How would I find work in the East Bay? At that time, I wasn’t conscious of the power of intentional networking as I’ve described above. But I did have a hunch that informational interviews were a key part of my strategy.

One of my first conversations was with my boss, Barbara. She and I were on good terms, and I knew she would be supportive of my move. I told her my plans of looking for work in the East Bay. I asked her for her impressions of schools in that area, “good” schools, “strong” schools, schools similar in workplace culture to our own. She gladly offered all she knew. When Barbara reviewed my resume for me, she pointed out some important accomplishments that should be included. Very helpful!

Another early meeting was with a dean of a local community college, Phil. I had gotten to know him over the previous three years through a project both our schools were involved in. I phoned him and told him I was planning to leave my current position. I asked if he could help me understand life in the community colleges better. We met over lunch. Among other things, he reviewed my resume and pointed out features that would be attractive in the community college context. What a gift!

I also got out the directory of adult schools, and I got out a map of BART, a major public transportation system in the area. (Access to public transportation is a high value to me.) I made “cold calls” on the phone to the principals whose schools were reasonably close to public transportation. “I am planning to relocate into the East Bay, and I’d like to get to know some of the adult schools in the area. Would you have some time when we could meet and you could tell me about your school?” This resulted in a half a dozen face-to-face meetings and a couple of phone conversations. In these meetings I asked about the programs of the school, what was working well, and what directions they wanted their programs to grow in. In every conversation, though I didn’t bring it up, the principal asked me about my skills and experience. I left a resume – the resume my previous informational interviews had helped improve – each time.

This resulted in three offers for part-time work. (Part-time work is very common in this sector of education.) I accepted two of them, and found myself happily employed!

### Learning From the Case

This experience illustrates the power of informational interviews, but let me make two additional points. First, of the three jobs I was offered, none of them had been advertised anywhere. And one of them did not even exist before the leaders of the school met me – they created a job to match their plan for growth and my skills. Informational interviews can let you **tap in to the “invisible” job market** of opportunities.

Second, of the three job offers, two came from school leaders I had known prior to my job search. The third came from a school leader who had worked several days in an intense project with my boss. My boss was able to tell me about this other school and its leadership, and I could use her name in conversations with this school. **The most fruitful informational interviews might come through networking** rather than cold calling.

If I were to “re-live” that job search of spring 1995, I would have been more deliberate about using my networks. For example, rather than making “cold calls” to school in desirable locations, I might have phoned principals saying: “I’m intending to relocate into the East Bay and want to get to know some of the schools in the area. My boss, Barbara M-suggested your school as a strong school I should get to know better. Would you have some time to meet with me and tell me about your school?” Then let the principal of that school direct me to other schools in the area. When I call the other schools, I would have been in a stronger position to say, for example, “Roland B- of San Leandro Adult School suggested I contact you.”

I also wish now that I would have sent thank you cards to each of the school leaders who met with me. Why? In genuine gratitude for taking the time to meet with me. And, sending a card would have made me that much more memorable to the school leaders. And, in the years to follow, I would continue to see them and work with them on various projects. Making a good courteous first impression, with a simple thank you card, may have put those relationships on even firmer ground.

Let’s summarize the actions you take before, during and after an informational interview:

Before the interview:

1. Network to get the name of an “industry insider.” (Cold call from a directory is second best.)
2. Arrange an appointment for the interview.
3. Prepare questions for the interview.

4. Show up on time, dressed professionally.

During the interview:

5. Use professional speech, posture, manners.
6. State your purpose: to learn.
7. Ask questions, and listen carefully to the answers. Take notes.
8. Be ready to adjust your questions during the interview as you learn more.
9. Ask the person to review your resume to give you guidance in creating an effective resume for our target industry/job.
10. Ask the person to refer you to others who would be willing to talk with you.
11. Thank the person for their time.

After the interview:

12. Send a thank you note.
13. Follow up by contacting the people this person referred you to.
14. Contact this person again to thank if one of his referral leads you to a big payoff.

Francis of Assisi had a prayer:

“...Grant that I may seek...  
not so much to be understood as to understand.”

This is the attitude to carry in to the informational interview. Your genuine interest in understanding your interviewee’s business will show itself plainly. Such initiative and curiosity are valued in the workplace. Perhaps just as plainly, your interviewer will notice attempts you make to show off, to ingratiate yourself, to manipulate. All of these detract from your desirability as an employee.

### Comprehension Questions:

**5. Identify the best example(s) of speech that are certainly appropriate to use in informational interviews.**

- A. Thank you for meeting with me, Mr. Gomez. I appreciate you giving me this time to talk with you about the aerospace industry.
- B. Cathy, thanks for the lunch meeting. I’m so full I may have to unbutton my pants!
- C. Ms. Chang, what potential growth do you see for your industry over the next 5 years?
- D. Mrs. Robinson, do you believe your company has a place for a young, talented and ambitious man like myself?
- E. Both A and C

Answers:

5-E. See Discussion of Quiz on p. 23-24.

## Prepare for an Informational Interview

OK, you have scheduled an informational interview. There are a few more things to do to get ready.

### Prepare Questions

Some general questions you asked in library research might still need some fleshing out:

- The training and education needed for particular kind of work
- Typical earnings
- The expected future growth of an industry or demand for a kind of job
- What workers actually do on the job
- Working conditions
- Others willing to talk with you

Each step of research can lead you to refine your questions to be more specific. For example, “I’ve read that the demand for insurance representatives will be somewhat stable for the next several years with little growth. Is that what you expect in your office, or do you have plans for expansion?” This is an excellent kind of question to ask, because it shows that you have already been interested enough to read up on the industry before the interview. You are likely to enjoy a better conversation when you make it clear that you have done a little homework. And, you make yourself more memorable (in a positive way) than someone who clearly knows nothing at all about the business.

You may wish to ask questions such as these:

- How did you get into this line of work?
- What about this work is satisfying to you?

Questions such as these are valuable in two ways. You get a “personal case study” to reflect on, and you build a personal connection with the interviewee.

### Dress the Part

Although you won’t be asking for a job, you want to present yourself as one who could “fit in” to the business you are visiting. Dress as you expect employees at the business site to be dressed. But if you are not sure, err in favor of more formal attire.

### Know How to Get There

Respect the time of the person who is offering you the informational interview. Be sure you have good directions and you allow plenty of time.

## What to Bring

Bring into your meeting a professional-looking binder or note pad for taking notes. Also carry in the folder your resume so you can show it and ask for input on your resume.

### Comprehension Questions:

#### 6. What actions are appropriate in an informational interview?

- I. Take notes.
- II. Ask about pay for particular kinds of work.
- III. Get feedback on your resume.
- IV. Ask for names of others to interview.
- V. Ask for a job.

- A. I and II.
- B. I, II, and III.
- C. I, II, III, and IV.
- D. All of them are appropriate.

#### 7: How should you prepare for an informational interview?

- A. Write your questions down ahead of time.
- B. Make sure you know directions to your meeting place.
- C. Dress to make you look much better than the other people at the workplace.
- D. Dress in a manner that is professional and makes you look like you belong in the workplace where you are meeting.
- E. A and B and C.
- F. A and B and D.

#### Answers:

6-C, 7-F. See Discussion of Quiz on p. 23-24.

## Summary

This module has addressed some of the skills that are foundational for any career transition. If you have worked diligently,

- You have done at least a little networking to advance your career.
- You are ready to benefit for informational interviews.

Congratulations on the progress you have made toward a satisfying work life!

## Review Questions

### 1. Which of these lists best expresses activities involved in a successful job search?

- A. reading classified ads, interviewing, scheduling second interviews
- B. setting goals, writing a resume, networking
- C. talking with your friends, getting additional training, negotiating salary
- D. learning about different careers, meeting people, having good luck

### 2. Which of these events might be the best example of assertive communication?

- A. The new coffee maker you bought at Starbucks doesn't work, but instead of returning it, you put it in the back of the cupboard.
- B. You overhear a conversation in line at the grocery store. You jump in to "set the man straight."
- C. You strike up a conversation at the neighborhood laundromat while waiting for your clothes to dry.
- D. You become join the local chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

### 3. Which of these statements is the most accurate characterization of personal networking?

- A. Networking can put you face-to-face with "insiders" and make you memorable to them.
- B. Networking is only for the extroverted cheerleader type of people.
- C. You can easily waste a lot of time talking to people you barely know.
- D. The telephone is not a good tool for networking.

### 4. Why is it important to keep records of your contacts when networking?

- A. So you can remind your contacts of who you are and who referred you to them.
- B. So you can send a thank you note to each person who gave you their time.

- C. The notes may be useful if you need to follow-up later or have more questions.
- D. So you can call the person each day.
- E. All but D

### 5. Identify the best example(s) of speech that are certainly appropriate to use in informational interviews.

- A. Thank you for meeting with me, Mr. Gomez. I appreciate you giving me this time to talk with you about the aerospace industry.
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- C. Ms. Chang, what potential growth do you see for your industry over the next 5 years?
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- E. Both A and C

### 6. What actions are appropriate in an informational interview?

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  - II. Ask about pay for particular kinds of work.
  - III. Get feedback on your resume.
  - IV. Ask for names of others to interview.
  - V. Ask for a job.
- A. I and II.
  - B. I, II, and III.
  - C. I, II, III, and IV.
  - D. All of them are appropriate.

### 7: How should you prepare for an informational interview?

- A. Write your questions down ahead of time.
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- D. Dress in a manner that is professional and makes you look like you belong in the workplace where you are meeting.
- E. A and B and C.
- F. A and B and D

## Discussion of Review Questions

### 1. Which of these lists best expresses activities involved in a successful job search?

- A. reading classified ads, interviewing, scheduling second interviews  
Incorrect. Though some jobs are still advertised in newspaper classified ads, most people do not find their jobs that way.
- B. setting goals, writing a resume, networking  
Correct. These three are discussed at length in this training.
- C. talking with your friends, getting additional training, negotiating salary  
Incorrect. Networking is clearly part of the job search process, but training and salary negotiations are events at other points on the career advancement path.
- D. learning about different careers, meeting people, having good luck  
Incorrect. Do not rely on good luck to find a job. Good luck is most likely to happen to those who implement an effective strategy.

### 2. Which of these events might be the best example of assertive communication?

- A. The new coffee maker you bought at Starbucks doesn't work, but instead of returning it, you put it in the back of the cupboard.  
Incorrect. This is non-assertive. An assertive action would be to return the defective product to the store, respectfully explaining the product's deficiencies.
- B. You overhear a conversation in line at the grocery store. You jump in to "set the man straight."  
Incorrect. Assertive communicators recognize their own personal boundaries as well as the boundaries of others. By interrupting and "setting the man straight," you are likely crossing the boundaries of the other.
- C. You strike up a conversation at the neighborhood laundromat while waiting for your clothes to dry.  
Correct. The ability to initiate is a sign of assertiveness.
- D. You become join the local chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.  
Incorrect. Joining an organization might be an exercise in assertiveness for some people. But the best answer is C.

### 3. Which of these statements is the most accurate characterization of personal networking?

- A. Networking can put you face-to-face with "insiders" and make you memorable to them.  
Correct.
- B. Networking is only for the extroverted cheerleader type of people.  
Incorrect. Networking is the way to find jobs that are not otherwise advertised, and to hone assertive communications skills that will help you succeed in almost any job.
- C. You can easily waste a lot of time talking to people you barely know.  
Incorrect. If you keep focused on your mission of meeting people who can give you information and introduce you to others who know more, you will not be wasting time.
- D. The telephone is not a good tool for networking.  
Incorrect. Picking up the phone is much quicker than traveling to see every person you wish to talk to, and is always useful at least for making an initial introduction.

### 4. Why is it important to keep records of your contacts when networking?

- A. So you can remind your contacts of who you are and who referred you to them.  
Incorrect. This is true, but there is more....
- B. So you can send a thank you note to each person who gave you their time.  
Incorrect. This is true, but there is more....
- C. The notes may be useful if you need to follow-up later or have more questions.  
Incorrect. This is true, but there is more....
- D. So you can call the person each day.  
Incorrect. You should not call all of your networking contacts each day.
- E. All but D

Correct.

**5. Identify the best example(s) of speech that are certainly appropriate to use in informational interviews.**

A. Thank you for meeting with me, Mr. Gomez. I appreciate you giving me this time to talk with you about the aerospace industry.

Incorrect. This is a respectfully delivered message about an appropriate topic. But there are others....

B. Cathy, thanks for the lunch meeting. I'm so full I may have to unbutton my pants!

Incorrect. The person you met with for lunch *may* have invited you to address her by her first name. But it would be quite rare for a professional relationship to advance to such a personal degree in a first meeting to make this remark appropriate in its context.

C. Ms. Chang, what potential growth do you see for your industry over the next 5 years?

Incorrect. Like A, This is a respectfully delivered message about an appropriate topic. But there are others....

D. Mrs. Robinson, do you believe your company has a place for a young, talented and ambitious man like myself?

Incorrect. This question is pushing toward asking for a job, which is inappropriate in an informational interview.

E. Both A and C

Correct. Both messages are relevant and respectfully delivered.

**6. What actions are appropriate in an informational interview?**

I. Take notes.

This is appropriate in an informational interview.

II. Ask about pay for particular kinds of work.

This is appropriate in an informational interview.

III. Get feedback on your resume.

This is appropriate in an informational interview.

IV. Ask for names of others to interview.

This is appropriate in an informational interview.

V. Ask for a job.

This is not appropriate in an informational interview.

A. I and II.

B. I, II, and III.

C. I, II, III, and IV.

D. All of them are appropriate.

C is correct. See above

**7: How should you prepare for an informational interview?**

A. Write your questions down ahead of time.

Incorrect. You should do this, and more....

B. Make sure you know directions to your meeting place.

Incorrect. You should do this and more....

C. Dress to make you look much better than the other people at the workplace.

Incorrect. You should attempt to dress so that you appear to fit in at the workplace.

D. Dress in a manner that is professional and makes you look like you belong in the workplace where you are meeting.

Incorrect. You should do this and more....

E. A and B and C.

Incorrect. You should write questions, know directions, but not "overdress".

F. A and B and D.

Correct. You should write questions, know the directions, and dress to match the workplace you will be visiting.

## Prepare to Meet Your Coach

**Student**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Bring these items completed when you meet with your instructor or coach.

Reflective Writing: What idea or activity in this module has been the most helpful to you? Why?

What questions do you still have?

**Instructor**

Record student performance in right column of the table.

Item	%age of Module	Standard	Student Performance
Networking Report	50	Records of speaking with 4 people minimum. Two people should be "newly networked," unknown previous to this assignment.	
Quiz	50	6 of 7 correct	
<b>Total:</b>			

**Instructor**

Date Module Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

Next Assignment & Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_