

Graduating seniors make contacts and get jobs at the companies represented by the attendees at our annual alumni dinner. The focus of the dinner is “network and use your contacts.” We can cite that this really works.

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Tips For Networking

1. **Maintain a card file or spreadsheet of your contacts.** When you meet someone new, write down his or her name, job title, company address, and phone/fax number, and e-mail address. It helps to make a few notes for each contact for future reference: who the person is, the circumstances in which you met, what next steps you may take next, etc.

In the steps ahead, you must be able to address individuals by name.

No “Dear Sir/Madam” letters.

2. **Join a professional society.** The American Institute of Physics has ten member societies that are all physics related. As a member of one of these societies, you will receive *Physics Today* each month. (See the AIP web page www.aip.org). If possible, attend a national meeting of the society you have joined. These conferences are held in different parts of the country and provide an excellent opportunity to meet people who can be part of your network.

**Most AIP
professional societies offer students
a special student-dues rate.**

3. **Request to be put on mailing lists.** Add your name to mailing lists for organizations associated with industries that interest you. By receiving their various newsletters and publications, you can keep abreast of the conferences and events where you might meet potential contacts. More important, you will begin to link the names of individuals with activities that interest you.

4. **Attend local lectures and paper presentations.** Make it a point to introduce yourself to the speaker and comment on his or her talk. If you have published in the same area, offer to send your work to the person. Be sure to add his or her name to your card computer file. You should also introduce yourself to those sitting near you at the session. Try to find out where they are employed and, if appropriate, tell them you are interested in finding a job.

5. **Read appropriate magazines/journals.** One magazine to look at is *The Industrial Physicist*. This magazine reveals things that are going on in various industries. You will learn where the authors work and, as their e-mail addresses are typically given, you can contact them.

As a senior physics student, I find *The Industrial Physicist* to be a useful and interesting magazine. I think more students should be exposed to *TIP* to help further their understanding of the industrial physics workplace....

Mark Lentz, Northwestern State University

6. **Follow up on all leads.** If a contact tells you to get in touch with him or her or with someone he or she knows, make sure you call or write promptly. Be sure to send a thank you note back to the person who gave you the lead.

7. **Contact people directly.** Even if you are shy, do it. By appointment, your campus career center will often provide a “practice session” to help you prepare. Always address people by name. You will find that people are willing to help.

**Everyone knows people
who know people
who know people...
*ad infinitum.***

The “Nifty Fifty”

Everyone has a network. You know people who know people. Identify these individuals. It is not so tough. Everyone you know is a potential contact. Use a template such as the one below to start identifying your first fifty contacts.

- Immediate family members.
- Extended family members (cousins, aunts, uncles, etc.).
- Close friends.
- Extended friends (friends of friends, neighbors, everyone in your address book.).
- Everyone at the business places and retailers that you visit.
- Everyone in your leisure activity circles.
- Every doctor, medical professional, or other professional you know.
- Every professor, teacher, lecturer, or demonstrator you know, once knew or have worked with.

- Every clergy member you know.
- Every person in your place of religious activity.
- Everyone you come in contact with or are introduced to...EVERYWHERE
Grocery stores, gas stations, postal workers, repair persons...EVERYONE!

**The lesson of the “nifty-fifty” is this:
People you know well are the means
to build a robust network of valuable contacts.**

Action Points II

- _____ 1. Develop a network of contacts both inside and outside your discipline and both on and off campus to help you understand the full range of opportunities available to you.
- _____ 2. Constantly review advertisements in science and physics magazines, journals and newspapers in cities where science and physics employment centers are.
- _____ 3. Know yourself so that when you see an opening, you can market yourself, your education, skills, and attributes.
- _____ 4. Visit your university's career center or library to read some of the many publications that provide guidance in resume preparation and interviewing.

**Action taken early
will avoid frustration later.**