

# Networking



# STEP 2

  
**Careers &  
Employability**  
University of Lincoln





# Networking

'It's not what you know, it's who you know'

Expanding and using your network will give you different avenues to continue your career journey. You can talk to people you know about gaining work experience and learning more about your industry of interest - and get a strong start to your career journey.

## In this guide:

- Introduction to networking
- Your existing network
- Building your network
- When not to network
- Networking on social media



# Introduction to Networking

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Networking refers to the act of building interpersonal connections with people who can help build your career, whether it be helping you get a job or assisting you in your goals with your current career.

As a job-seeker, networking can help to give you a chance to find out about opportunities before they are advertised. This could then be followed up with a speculative application which would put you ahead of other applicants.

Being known to employers through social media or opportunities like recruitment events will also help with your job search. This will help you to overcome the initial barrier and allow you to make an impression outside of an interview situation.

Ensure that you spread the word amongst friends and family that you're looking for an opportunity. Start with people that you know - do you have any friends or family who work in, or know people who work in that field?

## Making a plan

To network effectively, you will need to figure out what you hope to achieve. Knowing the specific kind of information you require, specific sort of leads or if you just want an interview will make your efforts more focused, and easier for the people you build into your network to help you.

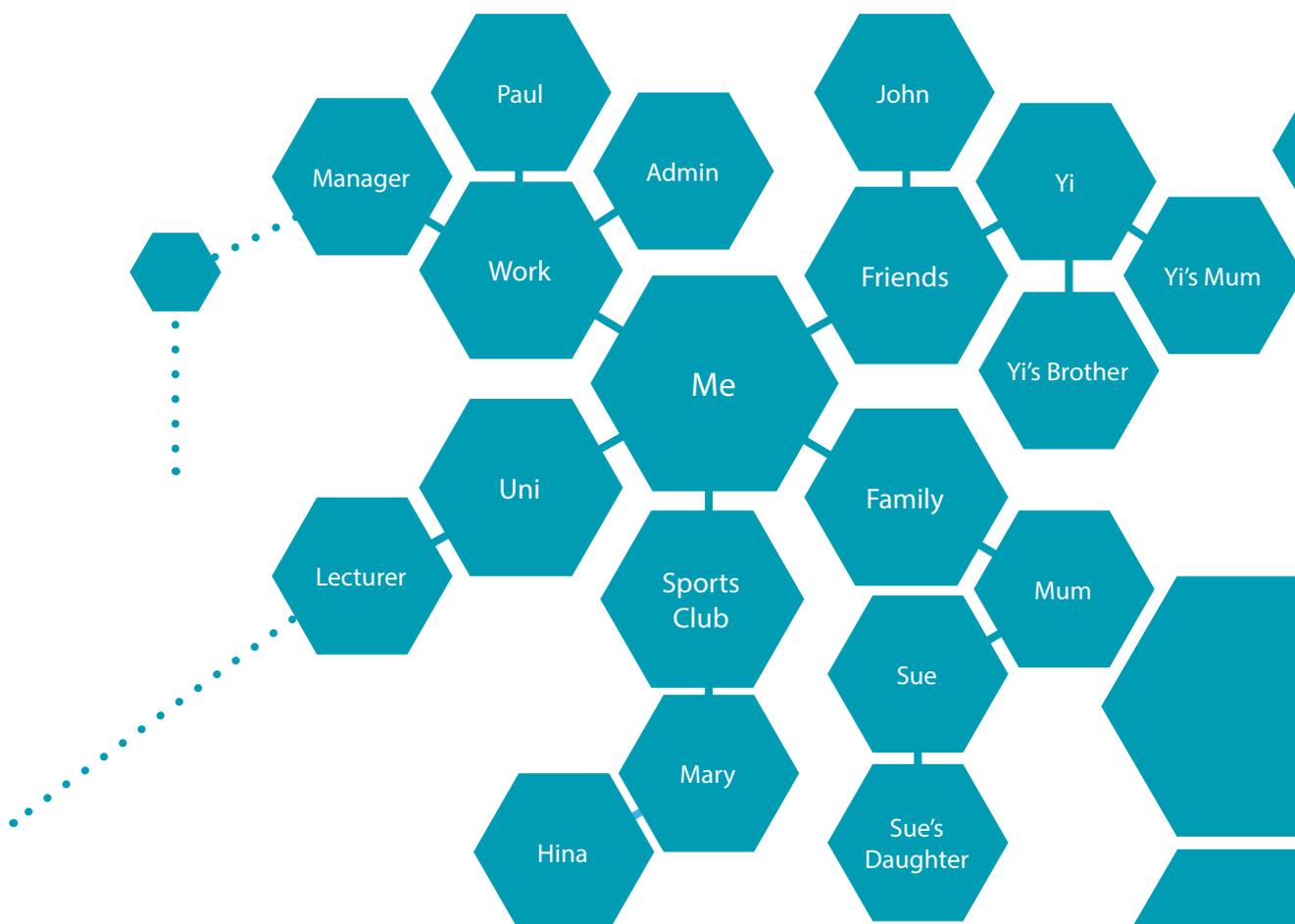
For this reason, it's best to avoid speaking to more distant people in your network beyond family and close friends if you are having trouble focusing your job search. Ensure you have clear goals - for instance, to get a specific role with a specific type of company.

# Your Existing Network

## You already have a network

The University of Lincoln will have introduced you to people who know people who may be able to help you on your career journey. Family, friends, colleagues, neighbours, and even casual acquaintances are a part of it. Each contact in your network has a network of its own - if someone you know isn't aware of an opportunity that might help you, they may know someone who does.

Try making a diagram of your network. Start with yourself, then things you are involved with (your studies, your family and friends, your hobbies, your part-time work). From there list out people you know - then list out people you think they know who could help you. From there, you can identify gaps and opportunities in your network, and work to build it.



# Building your network

## Where to look

1

### Your existing network

Ask your friends if they can put you in touch with their employers - or their parents if they work in a relevant industry. Talk to your Lecturers and see how they can help. Don't forget any friends and family overseas - your big break could be in an international opportunity.

2

### Networking Events

These events are often industry or employer specific, and a great opportunity. Ensure you have some business cards printed with your name, email, contact number, details of your course and that you study at University of Lincoln. This will make you look organised and prepared. Do your research on attending companies beforehand, and follow up on contacts you make with an email or phone call.

3

### Professional Associations

Your industry of interest may have a professional body associated with it. These associations will run courses, tell of opportunities with the industry as well as inform you of networking or recruitment events.

4

### Volunteering

As well as giving you work experience, volunteering puts you in contact with people from all walks of life. Volunteering for a role relevant to your career goals could put you in touch with a great network.

5

### Find Your Feet Careers Fair

Any careers fair is going to be helpful to network and learn more about companies in your sector of interest. The Careers & Employability Centre run the Find Your Feet Fair every year, meaning you can build your network on campus with a range of employers. Find out more at: [www.uolcareers.co.uk/fyf](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk/fyf)

University of Lincoln's Careers & Employability Service can help you find even more opportunities. Come see us on the Ground Floor of the Library, or visit our website: [www.uolcareers.co.uk](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk)

# When not to network

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## Pick your moments

If your aim is to gain a place in a graduate scheme, a public sector job or any other work with a large organisation, you'll likely have to go through a defined recruitment process. While some organisations may list contact details that will allow you to learn more about a role's specifics, it can be considered unprofessional to attempt to circumvent established systems to apply for these roles.

Don't be afraid to make conversation with insiders at these organisations. You can gain a better understanding of the organisation and improve your application. However, don't rely on them to help you with the success of your application.

Networking is a powerful tool for jobseekers, but not something to stress about if you are having trouble. Sometimes a good CV or well prepared application form is all that is necessary to get you a first job or an internship.

A decorative graphic consisting of several teal hexagons arranged in a honeycomb pattern, located in the bottom right corner of the page.



# Networking on Social Media

Social media - when used professionally - can be a great tool for networking. Start off by looking at your current profiles. According to research by ACAS\*, 45% of HR decision makers said they already used social media in recruitment, with 16% saying they planned to and CareerBuilder suggests as many as 60% were using social media in 2016\*\*. New data privacy laws may change this activity in the UK, but would you be happy with what an employer would see of you if they tried to find you online?

## Facebook

Facebook can be more than a way to keep up with your friends. Many organisations have Facebook pages, and some larger companies even have pages specifically for graduate and general recruitment. These are fantastic ways for you to learn about their products/services, news and culture. It also opens up opportunities for you to engage with the business, and have them knowing your name.

## Twitter

On Twitter, you can analyse topics and trends within your industry of interest. You can passively observe these by simply following relevant organisations, or build on your network by replying, re-tweeting and generally getting involved with conversations that are started by organisations and professionals. Putting thought into what you engage with can increase your network connections.

\* ACAS 'Is social media changing how employers recruit new talent?' [www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4478](http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4478)

\*\*CareerBuilder 'Number of Employers Using Social Media to Screen Candidates Has Increased 500 Percent over the Last Decade' [www.careerbuilder.co.uk/share/aboutus/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?sd=4%2F28%2F2016&id=pr945&ed=12%2F31%2F2016](http://www.careerbuilder.co.uk/share/aboutus/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?sd=4%2F28%2F2016&id=pr945&ed=12%2F31%2F2016)

# Networking on Social Media

## LinkedIn

This is a business orientated social network which can provide opportunities to network online with professionals from all kinds of industries. It can also put you in touch with University of Lincoln Alumni. Treat your profile here as part CV, part cover letter. Get involved with groups relevant to your career path or degree, and engage with others in your desired industry of work to build your network.

There are four primary ways to develop your network in LinkedIn.

- Reach out: Look for contacts you know.
- Accept: Connection requests but do check them out before clicking accept.
- Connect: To people suggested by LinkedIn. LinkedIn has an algorithm that helps identify 'people you may know'.
- Groups: These are fellow professionals discussing topics of interest to them. LinkedIn allows you to join up to 100 groups.

Maybe start by adding everyone in your professional life.

## Nurture Your LinkedIn Network

Adding people will not help you build a relationship with them. You need to engage with them regularly. You can do this by providing status updates regularly, 'like' and comment on LinkedIn posts and acknowledge when a contact has a new job or birthday.



# Notes

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# Get support from your Careers & Employability Service

## What we offer

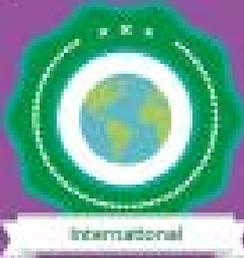
- **Careers Clinic**  
Our Skills Advisers are available to support you with all aspects of job search or the recruitment process for any role; part-time, placement, work experience or graduate. Careers Clinic runs Monday-Friday 1-4 pm and is a drop-in session.
- **Careers Guidance**  
Our Careers & Employability Advisers offer 1:1 appointments to support you exploring your Career options and planning.
- **Career Events**  
We have daily events running to provide information and support your development; some are run by our expert Adviser team and others by employers. All events are advertised here; [www.uolcareers.co.uk/events](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk/events)
- **Lincoln Award**  
Our employability award is designed to support you in developing and learning how to demonstrate your employability skills. At the end of the award you get the chance to put your learning to the test in our Assessment Centre Experience! Each one is partnered with an employer and students find the opportunity to practise and the feedback they receive invaluable. Full details can be seen here; [www.uolcareers.co.uk/lincolnaward](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk/lincolnaward)
- **Vacancies**  
CareerLinc is our online portal where all vacancies are advertised; part- time, placement, work experience and graduate roles. All students are already set up on the system so simply use your University log-in to get started! <https://careers.lincoln.ac.uk>
- **Campus Jobs**  
Our Student Employment Agency which advertises all jobs for the University on campus; from admin to retail, one off roles to ongoing part-time jobs, find out more here; <https://uolcareers.co.uk/students-graduates/jobs-employment-options/campus-jobs/>
- **Online Resources**  
We have our own Careers & Employability online learning pathways on LinkedIn Learning. Full details can be found here; <https://uolcareers.co.uk/students-graduates/onlinelearning/> . We also provide many other online Career Tools. More information can be seen here; <https://uolcareers.co.uk/students-graduates/career-tools/>



Careers & Employability Centre  
Ground Floor, Library  
Mon-Fri: 09:00-16:30  
T: +44 (0) 1522 83 7828  
E: [careers@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:careers@lincoln.ac.uk)

[www.uolcareers.co.uk](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/UOLCareers](https://www.facebook.com/UOLCareers)  
[www.twitter.com/UOLCareers](https://www.twitter.com/UOLCareers)

# WHAT WE OFFER



International



Careers Information



CareerLink



Careers Clinic



Careers Jobs



The Lincoln Award



Graduate Jobs



Group Advice Sessions



Careers Guidance

The Careers & Employability Centre is open

09:00 - 16:30, Mon - Fri

Telephone: 01522 837828

Email: [careers@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:careers@lincoln.ac.uk)

Web: [www.uolcareers.co.uk](http://www.uolcareers.co.uk)