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Office of Career Services, Corporate Engagement & Continuing Education

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Alumni Resources

As a Georgian Court graduate, you have access to lifelong career assistance! Schedule an appointment at www.meetme.so/KathleenBrady.

Don't forget to register for our **new and improved** job board, [GCU Link](#).

GEORGIAN COURT UNIVERSITY

McAULEY INSTITUTE

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MILL is a membership-driven program designed for adults 50+ who embrace the joy of learning without the hassle of papers, exams, or grades. Annual membership (July 1–June 30), which is \$25 for the general public and \$20 for GCU alumni, includes:

- free access to select MILL courses
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- special audit rates for regularly scheduled classes
- discount tickets to basketball and volleyball games,
- a 10% discount at the Court Café, and
- a GCU library card for \$50

For a list of upcoming classes, visit: <http://georgian.edu/mill/>. For more information, contact Maureen Ruotolo at 732-987-2292 or MILL2@georgian.edu.

Network Your Way to Career Success

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go with others.”

—African proverb

Relationships are the most valuable resource you have to ensure your job search success. Countless books and articles extol the virtues of networking and outlining techniques and gimmicks to coach new graduates. However, you will *not* be effective with empty techniques and gimmicks. Networking rests on the basic principle that business, jobs, and careers are built on personal relationships; therefore, *it must be genuine and sincere to be successful*.

Follow these five steps to expand your personal network.

1. Reframe how you think about the dreaded “networking.”

The true purpose of networking is to get AIR: advice, information, and referrals. There is nothing manipulative or nefarious about it. It occurs naturally in all areas of life. For example, when meeting a new neighbor, you probably would not hesitate to offer recommendations about dry cleaners, grocery stores, or dentists. When friends or family share their upcoming vacation plans, you would not think twice about recommending hotels and restaurants. But for some reason, we hesitate to tell people we know about the professional expertise we can provide. Rather than thinking about networking as exploiting personal relationships for personal gain, think of it as positioning yourself as a professional resource for family, friends, and colleagues.

2. Identify WHO can help.

Prepare a list of people you believe could be helpful. Think about family members, friends, classmates, coworkers, professors, managers (past/present), service industry professionals (doctors, lawyers, accountants), and professionals in the field. Consider all the people you know: commuter buddies, your parents and their friends and colleagues, and people from your gym or religious institution. Then consider all the people they know. Remember to include the administrative team at your college or university such as the human resources, finance, IT, and alumni offices. Add to the list every day. Keep track of who referred you and how people are connected to each other.

—continued on next page—

Network Your Way to Career Success, continued

3. Consider WHAT you want from people.

You need to have a clear objective about what you are trying to accomplish before you contact anyone on your list. Think through your strategy first. Why have you selected this person to contact? What information do you hope to learn? To whom can they introduce you? There should be no mystery or hidden agenda as to the purpose of the conversation. Consider the following sample approaches to potential contacts:

To a geographic contact: “You have lived in this city for so long and know almost everyone . . .”

To a socially active friend: “You have so many friends, I thought you might know someone who needs [X services] . . .”

To anyone you admire: “You always seem to have good ideas . . .”

To someone you have helped: “We have helped each other in the past, so I am hoping you can help me now . . .”

It is important to understand what you can reasonably expect from your relationships and what is outside of those bounds. If you ask, “can you get me a job?” you will likely make the person uncomfortable. Instead, try: “How would someone with my credentials go about applying for a job at your company?” Posing the question this way allows the person to decide how helpful he or she can be.

4. Be prepared to showcase your gifts and talents.

What do you have to offer an employer? Is it experience? A special knowledge or expertise? Your enthusiasm and interest? How you present yourself to others will determine their response to you. Tell your story well. If you look and act unprofessionally, people will be less likely to respond positively or further your relationship. Your facial expression, posture, and willingness to share information about yourself and ask questions matter. Dress and behave like a professional, be positive and upbeat, and project a proud, confident image. Radiate confidence, and people will happily introduce you to others in their network because you will make them look good.

5. Practice, practice, practice.

It is one thing to understand the concept of networking. It is quite another to do it and do it well. The good news is that networking is a skill you can learn. Start with the easy ones—those friends and colleagues you feel comfortable calling. Invite them to lunch or for coffee and say, “I’m looking for a new job and wanted to bounce some ideas off you,” or “I am looking for a job in X industry where I can use my talents in A, B, and C and thought you might have some ideas” or “I just graduated with a degree in X and am looking for my first job. I thought you might have some ideas how to get started in this field.” During these initial meetings, you will begin to become more comfortable talking about yourself, and, because these are your friends, they will be more forgiving if you stumble slightly as you craft your message.

The best networkers have well-honed communication skills. They put people at ease from the outset, which makes conversation flow naturally. The ability to form and develop relationships is a major strength and yet because those who are naturally good at it are so “other oriented,” they hesitate to impose when job hunting for fear of damaging the relationship. The trick is to remember you are not simply asking for something, you are offering something in the form of your gifts, talents, expertise, and enthusiasm. Networking is about finding and highlighting the “win-win” opportunity in every relationship.

Exercise: Who Can Help How?

- List 10 people who you believe could help you achieve your objectives.
- Identify how they can help you.
- Write down the question you will ask them to get what you want.

Our office has moved!

Come see us in the Music Center, Rooms 202 and 205!