Nurturing your Network

Amongst the most important tasks when you are preparing for a job interview or a Job Fair is to start planning on how you will nurture your network.

Sure, you will prepare your Elevator Pitch, customize your Resume, and even research companies you are interested in ahead of time. Here are some things you might do:

1. Create an Elevator Pitch that tells a story. Remember, using the STAR Method will help make you tell memorable stories when you are asked a Behavioral style question. This is what will make you stand out from the other applicants.
2. Shake hands when you are leaving and always make and maintain good eye contact. Try to ask for a business card.
3. Immediately after your meeting, make sure to take notes that will help you remember the big points you discussed. Maybe the Interviewer stated how they were looking for an employee with a certain set of skills, or they discussed a new project they have planned for the next quarter.
4. Follow up with a Thank You note or email after the meeting. This is critical. It makes you more relevant when you send a thank you note that is meaningful and effectively reminds them of your meeting. Thank them for their time.

By reminding them how you discussed a certain point – and how you might help with that element of their business, helps you stand out from the crowd. You could say, “I appreciated our discussion of your plans to open a new Facilities Department in Burlington. I have experience establishing Facilities Departments and building an infrastructure to quickly contribute to an organization.”

1. Use LinkedIn to locate them and begin a formal networking with them via this platform. Ask them to be a “Connection.” Here you can offer to connect them with other people in the field. This is a give-and-take scenario. You are asking them to remember you and how you might fit in with their organization – but you are also offering to introduce them to network with your connections within LinkedIn.
2. Periodically, follow up with them or chat with them through LinkedIn. This keeps the nurturing process going. This disarms the relationship and you begin to feel more comfortable with one another.
3. This affords you the opportunity to ask for an Informational Interview. They are more likely to do this for someone whom they now have a connection.
4. If they can help you, they are more likely to do so. They would also be more likely to introduce you to someone you can more directly help you.

So, nurture the contacts you meet at a Job Fair or even at a Job Interview. Even when you do not get the job, you stay on the company’s radar and might get considered for another opportunity.

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