

## WHAT TO ASK FOR?

Remember that you aren't approaching people specifically for a job, but to develop contacts and gather information about a particular job field. Be clear what the conversation is about:

- Describe the type of work the student has shown an interest in.
- Do they know of businesses or other people who do similar work?
- What are the challenges of doing this type of work?
- What steps would they recommend for building a career in this job field?

*Sam is enrolled in an animal care certificate program at a local community college. To help him learn about the different jobs in the veterinarian field his coach contacted a friend who worked at an animal medical center who was able to set Sam up with a job tour of the facility.*



## CONTACTING SMALL BUSINESSES

Small businesses rely heavily on word-of-mouth marketing – know somebody who knows somebody – ask your contacts who they might know at various small businesses. Develop a relationship with a small business owner by becoming a customer. Many small businesses may be struggling and can't afford to hire new staff; through getting to know them you may be able to show an employer how hiring your jobseeker can actually improve their bottom line.

## OTHER NETWORKING STRATEGIES

- Develop a 30 second “elevator” pitch explaining who you are and what you do.
- Contact the college career services office for a targeted list of employers in the student's community.
- Attend employer networking events and job fairs sponsored by the college's career services office and the local Chamber of Commerce.
- Join a service club (Rotary) to meet local business leaders.
- Speak to people in the student's community (e.g. people working in city hall).
- Meet with companies that your school or organization does business with to set up job tours and internships.
- Speak with members of the school community (school committee, teachers, school personnel).
- Use Facebook, LinkedIn to identify people in a particular job field or in a specific company.
- Register at [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com) to find out about different business networking events in your area.

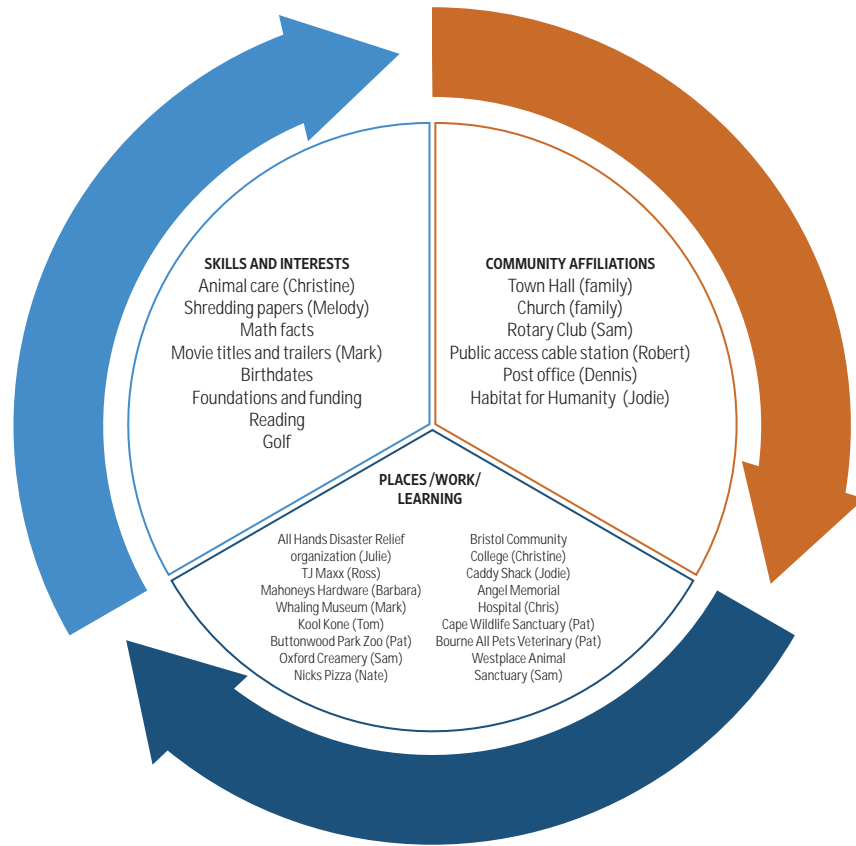
People generally like to talk about their business and the type of work they do. If the conversation at one of these networking events is going well, you may end by saying: “I've never seen your business before. Would you mind if I call you to set up a time for a chat and a tour of your workplace?”

*Rob has taken a variety of acting classes at college. For four summers, he worked full time at a local YMCA camp as an assistant drama counselor, where one of his responsibilities included leading the young campers in drama activities. Rob knew the camp director and approached him for a summer job.*

## CONCLUSION

Developing relationships with potential employers takes time and thoughtful planning. Networking is a highly efficient and successful technique that can be used to expand your employer pool and to help get your foot in the door.

## EXAMPLE RELATIONSHIP MAP



(Kernan, Wetherow, & Wetherow, 2014)

## REFERENCES

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