

The importance of using personalized networking cards during your career campaign



We are all accustomed to working professionals passing business cards among themselves at networking meetings or during sales calls. This is a long-standing practice that in this digital age may seem archaic but is still a meaningful, important, and expected vehicle of developing and maintaining relationships in a world that has become increasingly impersonal.

As a business owner I NEVER leave the house without a stack of my business cards. Why? Because I am marketing my business constantly even in unstructured and informal settings like airports, restaurants, summer festivals, school plays, neighborhood get-togethers, or medical appointments. As a job seeker searching for a great employment opportunity, you should view *every event* you attend and *every person* you speak with in the same way. You just never know where that next great opportunity will come from and you want to be ready to respond.

Networking cards are one of the best marketing tools you can have, and you place yourself at a competitive disadvantage without them.

Three reasons networking cards serve as critical tools during your career campaign:

- ✓ They leave a reminder of you behind with whomever you have been speaking. “Out of sight, out of mind” is a reality in this fast-paced world. Help your networking contacts remember you after you leave their presence.
- ✓ A well-designed networking card is a meaningful reflection of your personal brand. Consider the business or industry you are pursuing as well as the value you are offering to a potential employer. Your goal should be to design a card that aligns both of these perspectives to help people get to know you and your unique value offering.
- ✓ Having a networking card to pass demonstrates that you are prepared, care about the impression you make, and are serious about your job search.

Elements of an effective networking card include:

- ✓ Your contact information: Name, Email, Phone #, LinkedIn and Website/Blog/Podcast URLs.
- ✓ Your LinkedIn headline, a memorable tag line, and any other differentiators that set you apart.
- ✓ An easily recognizable graphic that aligns with your brand and value offering.
- ✓ Professional headshot picture (be different---stand out from those who do not make this effort).
- ✓ Your skills, expertise, or years of experience in your field.