

Learn how to network

In this resource we encourage you to rethink networking as something that benefits other people as much as ourselves. Not only is this an effective self-promotion tool, it also seems to alleviate much of the embarrassment we feel when we first approach networking.

Angela's post

U.S. career coach Angela Beeching has been a long-time member of the Developing Employability community. Her post described how her friend, composer/bassoonist John Steinmetz, observed someone networking at a conference. John realised the person “wasn't promoting his own work so much as connecting people with each other. As a result, everybody stopped by to say hello to him.” John observed that helping other people to connect increases one's value 'to the ecosystem.'

This is a great way of thinking about your entire career. If you focus on yourself, you may view other people as competitors rather than colleagues; however,

If on the other hand you see your mission as being a partner in building the creative life of your community, you may become not just a better collaborator and citizen but a happier person! Not only that, you may also find more opportunities. By focusing on the needs of others, you will naturally notice in what ways you can be of service - both as a person and as a professional.

Let's remember that the measurable value of our work lies in its perceived value by others. As John reminds us, we are part of an ecosystem. Our quality of life is all about our relationships within our interwoven communities: our web of family, friends, colleagues, business contacts, customers, and clients.

Make it count!

Turn your attention from yourself and your own career goals to the needs of those around you – your professional community. Over the next two weeks, every time you have a conversation with someone about work, career or other opportunities, think about whether anyone in your professional map network might be able to meet those needs or offer advice. In every conversation, mention the work of someone else. This might be someone who could update a website, take some casual work or contribute to a new opportunity. Make sure you have the contact details for your network with you at all times – if you don't have this organised already, work through the: How to build effective networks resources before you start.

This resource was contributed by [Angela Beeching](#) and Dawn Bennett (Bond University).