

Networking, Contacts Can Raise Job Options

Students can increase their chances and identify jobs by networking and tapping family and friends.

By COURTNEY MABEUS
Assistant City Editor

In the business world, some say who

you know really might be just as important as what you know.

But don't drop those books just yet, warns Vergie Taylor, University Career Services assistant director.

"I think (landing a good job) is a combination (of knowledge and networking)," Taylor said.

And one way to find that golden paycheck is by networking, officials say.

Jay Eubank, director of career services

at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, said students should ask around about available jobs. It might be as easy as tapping friends, family members and other sources.

"A lot of jobs aren't widely publicized," Eubank said. "Networking helps to identify jobs (a student) might not think about."

"Make the effort to go introduce yourself, get a business card and follow

up," he said.

Pat Curtin, professor of journalism, said that in some fields, networking might be the only way to go in the quest to land that dream job.

"(Networking) is getting your face seen, getting your name remembered and assuring that (will happen by) listening well and asking intelligent questions," Curtin said.

Another resource for students is University Career Services, which is available to help students prepare for careers and in their search to find jobs and internships, Taylor said.

UCS also hosts Carolina Connection, a Web site database designed to help students and registered alumni network with other UNC alumni, parents and friends who have volunteered to assist potential employees with career and graduate school information.

Taylor said it is important for students to start investigating potential career interests early on in their college years. By doing this, a student will have adequate time to try different paths, she said.

"Starting early - that's the most important thing," Taylor said. "It's like one-stop shopping, then (a student) is back to square one."

Sometimes that little connection needed to spark the beginning of a long, interesting career is only a phone call or handshake away.

"Sometimes an opportunity is available, and it is right in your face," Taylor said.

"Some (students), all they need to do is pick up the telephone. There may be different people (a

student) can let know they are interested. That person may be their network avenue."

Taylor also recommends that students attend career fairs and other panels which often feature employers seeking future employees and interns. Organizations featured in upcoming fall career fairs include IBM Corp., Microsoft Corp., First Union and SAS Institute.

UCS will host its Technology Career Fair from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday in the Smith Center.

Other fairs include the Minority Career Night from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Wednesday in the Student Union and the Carolina Career Fair from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Thursday in the Smith Center.

For more information, contact UCS at 962-6507 or visit www.careers.unc.edu.

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