**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ CLE 10**

**Networking**

“It’s not what you know, it’s who you know.”

**What is networking?**

* Networking is a strategy for career development and exploration.
* Networking is the art of creating a group of acquaintances and associates and keeping it active through regular communication for mutual benefit.

**Who is in your network?**

* Family
* Friends
* Parents of friends
* Friends of friends
* Neighbors
* Teachers
* Bosses
* Co-workers

**When do you network?**

Networking occurs every time you participate in a school or social event, volunteer in the community, visit with members of your religious group, talk with neighbors, strike up a conversation with someone at the store, or connect with friends online.

**Why should you network?**

* Networking is important for career development.
* Most people actually learn about job openings through friends, relatives, or others who are part of their personal network.
* Each person in your network has a network of their own so your potential contacts can grow exponentially.
* Hiring managers would rather talk to a potential candidate who has been recommended by someone they know or already employ.
* Even if a position is not currently available, networking can lead to informational interviews that can help you not only learn about possible career paths, but also be great exposure for you to be thought of as a potential candidate when a job opens up.

**How do you network?**

It takes only a moment’s conscious decision to become a networker, with no interference to one’s daily routine. All it requires is a slight shift in attitude, and adopting one simple rule:

* Greet each new acquaintance with an openness to learn more about that person, a willingness to help, and an offer to stay in touch.

**General rules and tips:**

* Forget your personal agenda. It’s not about selling yourself; it’s about helping other people. Make it a goal to be open, friendly and honest. Generosity is an attractive quality and it’s something that people will remember about you.
* It’s not about becoming popular, it’s about learning and sharing.
* If it’s hard to talk to strangers, make it easy for them to talk to you. Ask good questions (open questions – who, what, when, where, why).
* Be more interested in them than in yourself.
* Look for ways to help them.
* Follow-up meetings with ideas, offers to help, recommendations.
* Make it easy for others to find you (use online tools or business cards).
* **Start networking before you need it.** Start building relationships and a reputation for being generous rather than self-serving.
* **Have a plan.** Before you attend any event, be clear on what talents, strengths, skill sets and connections you can bring to the table. Map out what you want to talk about, particularly how you may be able to help other people, either now or in the future.
* **Never dismiss anyone as unimportant.** Make it your mission to discover the value in each person you talk to. Ask questions and listen with interest. Don’t make the mistake of discounting people due to their titles. Someone you meet may “just” be a clerk, but they may have valuable connections or knowledge you’d never learn about if you’d dismissed them.
* **Learn to listen.** Listening is a skill. Most of us only half listen when we’re engaged in social communication because we’re already planning in our heads what to say next. Try to turn this off and truly listen to what’s being said. You’ll retain more and your attentiveness will be picked up by the speaker, which means they’re more likely to listen to you in return.
* **Use social networks.** If you’re really not comfortable with face-to-face networking there is of course the less-imposing internet, with any number of social networks that will help you get in touch with like-minded people. Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook are all sites you can network with.