

# WHERE TO

A resource dedicated to student-athletes and their Life after Notre Dame.

# LAND

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## THE POWER OF NETWORKING IN YOUR JOB SEARCH: INSIGHTS FROM A HEAD OF TALENT

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The importance of networking in today's dynamic job market can't be overstated. As Head of Talent for a leading organization, I have witnessed firsthand how networking transforms job searches, propelling individuals toward exciting career opportunities. In this article, I explore the impact networking can have on your search and provide insights on how to harness its potential.

### BUILDING MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

Networking is not merely about collecting business cards or accumulating LinkedIn connections; it's about cultivating relationships built on mutual trust and respect. Whether you are attending industry events, joining professional associations, or engaging in online communities, prioritize quality over quantity.

#### MY TIP

Build a strong professional network by taking time to genuinely connect with people, showing a sincere interest in their work and experiences. Many of the most promising candidates we encounter come through referrals or connections within our network. These personal recommendations carry significant weight and can often fast-track candidates through the hiring process.

### EXPANDING YOUR OPPORTUNITIES

Networking opens doors to opportunities that may not be advertised through traditional channels. By tapping into your network, you gain access to the hidden job market - positions that are filled through internal referrals or created specifically for candidates with the right skillset and cultural fit.

#### MY TIP

Network with professionals from diverse backgrounds to gain invaluable insights into different industries, companies, and roles. You develop a broader perspective to help make informed decisions about your career path as you discover new businesses that align with your interests - or even uncover opportunities you hadn't considered before.

### DEMONSTRATING YOUR VALUE

I can't stress enough how standing out from the crowd is essential, especially in today's competitive job market. Networking provides an opportunity to showcase your skills, expertise, and unique value proposition directly to decision-makers. Whether through informal conversations, industry events, or online platforms, make sure to articulate your strengths and accomplishments effectively.

#### MY TIP

Gain insider knowledge to set yourself apart from other applicants. I am always impressed by candidates who proactively reach out and demonstrate their genuine interest in our organization. By engaging with our team members or attending our events, candidates show their enthusiasm and gain valuable insights into our company culture and values.

### NAVIGATING CAREER TRANSITIONS

Networking becomes especially valuable during periods of career transition, whether you are switching industries, re-entering the workforce, or pursuing a new role. It helps bridge the gap between your experiences and aspirations, opening doors to new opportunities. Reach out to mentors, former colleagues, and industry professionals who can offer advice, mentorship, or even job leads.

#### MY TIP

Leverage your network to help you articulate your transferrable skills. My organization frequently encounters candidates who are transitioning from one industry to another. While their experience may not directly align with the role they are applying for, their ability to clearly present their applicable skills makes them compelling candidates.

### INVESTING IN LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS

Finally, networking is not just a short-term strategy for landing your next job; it's an ongoing investment in your career development. Nurture your professional relationships over time, even when you're not actively seeking new opportunities.

#### MY TIP

Keep in touch with contacts, offer support and assistance when needed, and be generous with your own knowledge and expertise. There are numerous examples of individuals who have built thriving careers through consistent networking efforts - mentorship, collaboration, career advancement - that span decades.

### NETWORKING IS PART OF LAND'S CAREER TRANSITIONS SERVICES

For all the reasons I have described above, networking is a powerful tool that can significantly enhance the job search and career prospects of former student-athletes, managers, and trainers. That's why it's part of Project LAND's Post-Athletics Career Transitions pillar and each candidate's personalized game plan.

If you or someone you know wants to get started on a career transition, here's the first step: an eligible\* former student-athlete, manager, or trainer ("applicant") completes an application via the **Project LAND website**. Applicants to the program receive an email within 48 hours to set up a first meeting with Program Director Brandyn Curry (Harvard Basketball '14) and me.

\*Eligibility: Any former student who has participated in practice or played in a game for a varsity sport at the University of Notre Dame. This also includes any student that served as a manager for a varsity team while enrolled at the University of Notre Dame. The applicant is no longer eligible for sport and graduating.