



## **Strategic Suggestions in Approaching a Post Doc Search**

First use your network including professors, practicum and internship supervisors, and ask for their suggestions and support.

Create a list of desirable sites by searching in your ideal locations. Find the director or psychologist in charge and reach out to that person via email or mail.

Network, network, network. Do not be shy about contacting other colleagues or alums who are at or may have been at sites you may be interested in. They may be able to direct you to people at a site other than the named training director with whom you might have an area of common interest.

Join local and national professional associations. They often provide networking opportunities and get together both formally and informally. (See William James College's website "Professional Resources" for a comprehensive list of associations)

Seek out individuals in your field of interest and request an informational interview.

### **Suggestions for Informational meetings to discuss creating a Postdoc:**

1. **Do Your Research:** If you were referred to this site or person by another, talk with the person who made the referral to obtain as much info as possible. Can you reference their name? If so, do that at the beginning of the phone call, email or in the hardcopy letter. Google the person and the site. Find out as much information as you can. This will help with engaging the person in conversation
2. **Request a meeting:** You want a compelling subject line in your email. "Jane Smith suggested I contact you" or "Request for an informational interview or Request for Career Advice" Then, introduce yourself; explain why you are writing to this person or organization....do your homework! Request specifically what you want. Do not send a resume in a request for an informational interview.

#### **Example:**

Dear Dr. Smith,

I am a recent graduate of the Doctoral Program at William James College. Indicate who referred you or how you came to know of or have interest in this organization.

(Continued)

I'm very interested in pursuing my career in the field of... (or the particular venue) and wanted to reach out to you in hopes of finding out how you got started in the field. Would it be possible for us to arrange to speak or meet at a convenient time? I hope that we will have the chance to talk. Thank you for your time and consideration. I will call you soon to follow up.

Sincerely, Cordially, Best Regards,

Dr. XXXXXXX XXXXXXXXX

(Your phone number)

3. **Conduct the Interview:** Bring copies of your resume and give to the person only when asked for or suggested by you. If you have arranged to meet over lunch or at a coffee shop, you buy the beverage or lunch. Remind the person about yourself and what it is you are there for e.g., to learn more about their career and how they got started. Let the person talk about their experience. Do bring a list of questions in case the other person isn't very talkative. For example: "Tell me about your job. How did you come to choose (this area of psychology, population etc...)? Did your training lead you to this career choice? Did you do your postdoctoral training in the field?" Let them know at that time that you are looking for an opportunity to work toward securing your post-doctoral hours. (Have a copy of the postdoctoral requirements handy in case it becomes a discussion topic.) If the interview doesn't look to be leading toward any opportunities as that person "Would you be willing to connect me with someone who might be able to offer me advice or training?"
4. **Closing:** Thank them for spending time with you and confirm the meetings value to you. If the opportunity to share your resume has not occurred ask them if you could give them a copy or email them one. Ask for a business card and if it would be all right to keep in touch.
5. **Thank You:** Send a handwritten thank you within a day or two of the meeting. If this person was referred to you by someone else (professor, personal contact...) send that person an email thanking them as well and telling them about your informational meeting.

Keep records of all your meetings. You might need to refer back to this meeting or have reason to connect with that person or organization again.