PEOPLE • PARTNERS • NETWORKS

CONNECT

Turn relationships into opportunity

01 LEARN

02 PRACTICE

03 ACT

04 REVIEW

A practical guide to turning ideas into measurable action.

CONNECT

Build your community network

Leave with a five-person relationship map, two outreach messages, and a follow-up routine.

WORKED EXAMPLE

Example: A student seeking a trade apprenticeship contacts a school counselor, an American Job Center, a local employer, a training provider, and a trusted community leader. Each contact has a specific question and next step.

YOUR FOUR-STEP METHOD

1 | Define the connection

Specify whether you need information, mentorship, partnership, training, or a referral.

2 | Map five relevant contacts

Include one organization, one experienced professional, one peer, one community connector, and one follow-up contact.

3 | Reach out with a clear request

Introduce yourself briefly, explain the shared interest, and ask for a realistic 15-minute conversation or referral.

4 | Close the loop

Record who responded, thank them, follow through on commitments, and offer useful help in return.

Official starting point

https://www.tn.gov/workforce/jobs-and-education/job-search1/find-local-american-job-center.html

CONNECT | Your action worksheet

Write your plan

My goal for building connections:

_____

Five contacts and why each is relevant:

_____

My outreach message (two to four sentences):

_____

My follow-up date and method:

_____

What value I can offer in return:

_____

CONNECT | 30-day progress tracker

■ Week 1: identify five contacts

Evidence / notes: _____

■ Week 2: send three thoughtful messages

Evidence / notes: _____

■ Week 3: hold or schedule two conversations

Evidence / notes: _____

■ Week 4: thank contacts and act on referrals

Evidence / notes: _____

Decision at day 30

Continue / revise / change direction (circle one). Why?

_____

Next action and date: _____

This guide is educational, not individualized legal, tax, financial, or professional advice. Confirm program requirements with the provider.

CONNECT | Deeper learning

Use this companion section after the core action worksheet. It turns your initial goal into an informed decision.

Decision tool: choose contacts by purpose

For each contact, identify one clear reason to connect, the specific question to ask, what you can offer, and a reasonable follow-up date. Avoid mass messages with no shared context.

Practice: short outreach script

Hello, I am exploring [goal]. I saw your work with [specific program]. Could I ask two questions about getting started, or could you point me to the right person? Thank you for considering it.

Avoid a common mistake

A contact is not a commitment. Do not advertise a partnership or use someone’s name without permission. Track consent and agreed next steps.

Evidence to keep

Contact log, meeting notes, introductions made, agreed actions and a thank-you message.

CONNECT | Apply what you learned

Use complete sentences and actual dates. Keep this page as your record of progress.

What are two realistic options and the tradeoffs of each?

_____

_____

What information do I still need to verify?

_____

_____

What could prevent success and what is my backup plan?

_____

_____

Who can help, and what exactly will I ask?

_____

_____

What evidence will show progress in 30 days?

_____

_____

Decision and next action

I will _____ by _____. I will review it on _____.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

Complete one row at a time. Use real dates and specific evidence.

ACTION / DECISION	NEXT STEP + OWNER	DEADLINE / EVIDENCE
01		
02		
03		
04		

30-DAY OUTCOME

REVIEW DATE: _____ **NEXT ACTION:** _____