Get Experience

Activity 3 — Reach Out

When you reach out to make professional contacts, you want to have just the right shake. When you shake hands with those you meet, people are two times more likely to remember you than if you didn't shake hands. The handshake is used universally in business, so knowing when and how to confidently shake hands is important to career success.

Rate Your Shake

The following are qualities of a good handshake. When you shake hands do you...

- Stand and step or lean forward?  Yes  No
- Engage the full hand?  Yes  No
- Pause and make eye contact?  Yes  No
- Shake a couple of times?  Yes  No
- Greet the other person and repeat his or her name?  Yes  No

How would you rate your handshake? ________________________

Who do you know that has a great handshake?
____________________

What is one thing that you will work on this week to improve your handshake?
____________________

This week shake hands with at least 5 people each day. Evaluate each handshake and improve as you go.

When to Shake

A proper handshake is more than just a greeting. A handshake sends a clear message about your self-confidence and ability level. Here are four basic opportunities to shake hands:

- ✓ When you are introduced to someone and when you say good-bye.
- ✓ When you run into someone you haven't seen in a long time.
- ✓ When you enter a meeting and are introduced to participants.
- ✓ When you begin and end a job interview.