

Networking Tips

Networking involves making connections for information exchange and support. Connections can provide job leads, advice and information about your industry. Start with your family and friends. Once you are comfortable, network with colleagues, employers, professors and professionals in your field.

NETWORKING TIPS

- Smile, make eye contact and dress the part
- Use a 30 second elevator pitch, listen and ask relevant questions (see Elevator Pitch Tipsheet)
- Attend and volunteer at professional events

COMMUNICATION AT A NETWORKING EVENT

STARTING OUT THE CONVERSATION

- "I was looking forward to meeting you and learning more about your company."
- "I see you work for...; I've read a lot about your latest (product, research, process, etc.)."

1

ELEVATOR PITCH (SEE ELEVATOR PITCH TIP SHEET)

- Short and direct – highlight your education, related experience, skills, accomplishments and goals

2

KEEPING THE CONVERSATION GOING

- "Tell me more about..."
- "What is your main area of business?"
- "What advice do you have for graduates entering the field?"
- "What do you look for in new hires?"

3

MOVING ON

- "I appreciated the opportunity to talk to you. Do you have a business card so that I can keep in touch?"

4

Networking Tips

MAKING CONNECTIONS

- **Networking Events:** Prepare for events by researching the attendees and companies that will be present. This will help you make meaningful connections.
- **Volunteer:** Consider volunteering for events, organizations, or causes related to your field of interest. This can help you meet like-minded individuals.
- **Join Clubs and Organizations:** Get involved in student clubs, organizations, and professional associations related to your major or career aspirations.
- **Use Social Media:** Build and maintain a professional online presence, especially on LinkedIn (see Using LinkedIn effectively Tip sheet)
- **Informational Interviews:** Conduct informational interviews with professionals in your field of interest. This can provide valuable insights and expand your network.

TYPES OF CONTACTS IN NETWORKING

No network is complete without many types of contacts such as:

- **Strategists** help you plot a course toward your goals
- **Targets** are linked to your career goals (ex. Employers)
- **Allied Forces** are professionals who provide expertise to strengthen your network
- **Role Models** are mentors who set good examples and offer advice and wisdom
- **Supporters** are people who provide emotional support to you along the way

BUILDING AND NURTURING YOUR NETWORK

- **Stay Organized:** Use a networking spreadsheet or contact management tool to keep track of your connections, their details, and your interactions.
- **Regularly Connect:** Don't let your network grow cold. Reach out to your contacts periodically to check in, share updates, or offer assistance.
- **Mentorship:** Seek out mentors and advisors who can provide guidance and support in your professional development.
- **Leverage Alumni:** Utilize your college's alumni network. Alumni often have a strong interest in helping current students succeed.