



COLLEGE OF HUMAN ECOLOGY

Professional Communications — Networking Guide

What Networking is and is not?

- Developing relationships and building partnerships that will challenge and support you during your career exploration and pursuits.
- Sharing of information so both parties benefit from the mutual relationship.
- It's not just about who you know but who knows you.
- It is not only cold calling and job seeking.

Why Networking?

- To build a base of contacts for future references who will be your career network.
- To open opportunities for both professional and personal growth.
- To broaden your view on the different career options available to you.
- To best learn about job functions, necessary skills, tips, unadvertised jobs, and an insider's perspective on a company or field.

It's More Immediate Than You Think:

- Networking is a prolonged process that starts before your job and internship search. Start now!
- Some possible contacts are not only your friends and relatives, but also your neighbors, former classmates, alumni, faculty, employers, and coworkers.
- Don't be shy about asking people to introduce you to others, just ask in a polite manner.
- You are already networking throughout your daily interactions.

Preparation:

1. Establish your goal:

- Before contacting people, make sure you know what kind of information or assistance you want to receive from them — ex:
 - Information on a specific field or career
 - Referrals
 - Advice on interviews / how to break into a career field
 - Another contact, etc.
- Be ready to discuss your future ambitions, interests and goals with those whom you speak. Also be ready to share your resume.

2. Research:

- Prepare some questions and topics so it can be less stressful, this will also leave the other person with a positive impression of you. However, do allow the conversation to flow freely.
- Research the company and person's background beforehand. This will allow you to come up with some relevant questions to ask, and it will also show that you have put in effort into this meeting.
- Meetings that are more prepared will be more productive.

3. Prepare a business card or a way to write down your contact information:

- For some networking events, it is appropriate to bring your resume with you. Generally, a business card will suffice. This will give the other person a concrete way of remembering who you are and to have your contact information.

During the Networking Event:

1. Dress appropriately:

- First impression is everything so dress to impress.
- Inquire about the appropriate dress for the event.
- May want to try on the clothes ahead of time to assess comfort and fit.

2. Power pose:

- Before you attend the networking event, do a power pose. Extend your arms upwards like a V, or place them on your hips for a short while; by doing so your body will release testosterone which will make you feel more confident and aggressive. However, do remember to do this in a private space and not in public.

3. Show common etiquette at all times:

- You will have to beware of your actions not just when talking to someone, but the entire time. From the moment you walk in to the moment you leave, people are always watching.

4. Taste not eat:

- If it is a food event, always remember that you are not attending the event to be fed.
- Common etiquettes such as handing the plate to the person behind you in line and never putting the food directly into your mouth when picking it up from the buffet table are also important.
- Don't hold a drink in one hand and a plate of food in another as no one will be able to shake your hand.

5. Start with small conversation:

- If it's an event with a lot of people, try to find those who are standing or sitting by themselves to talk to first. They will really appreciate your company, and this will also help you get used to talking for the evening.

6. Make contact:

- Give them a little information about you. Remember: do not start off with your entire elevator pitch — it is a conversation and not a presentation.

7. Firm handshakes:

- Handshakes can tell a lot about a person, so you will want yours to be nice and firm to convey confidence. It is harder than it looks, so practice with a friend.

8. Do let others join your conversation:

- If you see other people hovering around your conversation, do step back a little and let the person join the conversation. This demonstrates good etiquette, and the other person will be very thankful.

9. The glancers:

- If the person is glancing around as you are speaking, it is time to end the conversation. Thank them for their time and politely leave the conversation.

10. How to get out of a conversation:

- If the person you are talking to is going on for too long, there is a way to politely exit the conversation. Let the person finish talking first, then as you are replying, you can interrupt yourself and excuse yourself from the conversation. Never interrupt the other person, and try not to mention leaving right after the other person finishes talking.

11. Exchange contact information:

- Most of the time, it is okay to ask for the other person's business cards. However, for people who hold higher positions, their personal contact information is more valuable so they are less likely to give you their cards. Therefore, it is better in those situations to ask for the best way of contacting them and they may tell you to contact their administrative assistants. Often times, you should not ask for how to contact their administrative assistants, because that can be found through your own research.

After the Networking Event:

1. 1. Send a thank-you note or email:

- Show appreciation.
- Mention/reference something from your conversation. ex:
 - “It was great to talk about how much we both enjoyed Dr. Hazan’s Human Bonding class, and how it informed your decision to become a child psychologist.”
- May include any actions resulting from the meeting, ex:
 - Follow up
 - Another meet-up, etc.

2. Develop a contact database:

- Keep a list of your contacts and note the important information about each.
- Record the information you received from them.

3. Keep your primary contacts up to date:

- If someone referred you to another person, do tell him/her how the meeting went.

4. Always reciprocate:

- When receiving help, be prepared to return the favor.

Successful Networkers Are:

- Open-minded and willing to meet new people.
- Prepared and persistent.
- Informed and up-to-date on current events (i.e. news, industry, etc.).
- Respectful of everyone they meet and thank their contacts for their time.
- Able to set clear, realistic, and achievable goals.
- Not afraid to ask for the information they need.