Networking Guide

What is Networking?
Creating and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with people who could provide you with advice and information about the job search, as well as internship and job opportunities.

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| To expand your network, reach out to: family friends, the parents/family of your friends, alumni, and professors who can connect you with people working in the industry or organization you’re interested in. **Tip:** Don’t ask for a job right off the bat; create a relationship first. | Utilize your “inner circle” network of family and friends. Reach out to them to re-establish the relationship and mention that you are launching a job search.  
- Be specific: share the job title, type of organization, and geographic location.  
- Ask them to: forward relevant job opportunities, introduce you to people in your target fields or organizations, and/or meet with you for an informational interview. |

IN PERSON 60%

**“Elevator Speech”**
- Have a 20-30 second “Elevator Speech” ready at all times. It should communicate who you are and where you want to go, be memorable, and intrigue people.  
- To create your elevator speech, make an appointment to meet with a career counselor in the Career Center.

Create (Networking Events)

**Before Events:**
- Determine who is attending, especially alumni.  
- Select a few people to talk to, research them, and prepare meaningful questions.  
- Wear business to business-casual attire.  

**At Events:**
- Start at the bar or buffet, it gives you the chance to scan the room before diving in.  
- Don’t try to meet everyone.  
- Remember your event goals but reach out beyond your list of people to meet.  
- Make a point of learning people’s name and try to greet them by name before you leave.  
- Take people’s business cards. Immediately after the event, write notes about each person on the back of their card.  
- Try not to use your phone at all, but if you must, limit use to less than a minute so you don’t appear to be checking out at the event.

Approaching People:
- First approach people by themselves, who are not on their phone.  
- You don’t need an excuse to make an introduction. No one will turn you away if you simply introduce yourself.  
- Groups of people standing in open formations, rather than closed circles, are more open to others joining.  
- If you see an opening in a small group, approach them, wait for a pause in the conversation and try to join it. You could introduce yourself or build on their conversation.
**In Conversation:**
- To get the conversation started: ask appropriate and easy questions about others such as their current projects and hobbies and be ready with followup questions.
- To keep the conversation going: to be an active listener (maintain eye contact and respond positively).
- To talk about yourself: use your elevator speech, and be concise. Try not to talk too much about your favorite topics.
- To end a conversation, thank the person you’re talking to for their time and excuse yourself to use the restroom or get a drink, etc.

**Maintain (Informational Interviews)**
Informational Interviews: a low-stress, exploratory conversation to collect information about a job, career field, industry or company. It is not a formal job interview, but you can use it as practice. Take notes, offer to pay for the other person’s coffee, and come prepared with questions.

Your goal for the interview is to:
- Learn about what that person does, how they got to where they are and gain job search advice.
- Request introductions to people at other organizations.
- Ask (without asking for a job) for feedback on your resume to make sure it fits your target field.

**Electronic 30%**

**CREATE**

**Reaching Out:**
- When reaching out to a new contact, make sure your initial message isn’t too long.
- Let them know how you found their contact information, a little about who you are, and then ask if they’re willing to talk with you about career advice. Ask them when they are available, don’t start with what’s best for you.

**MAINTAIN**

**Follow Up Emails:**
- In order to establish connections, you must follow up after meeting someone.
- When you meet someone new, write them an email within 24 hours. If it takes more than 48 hours, apologize for the delay.
- Mention a topic you discussed to remind them who you are, and thank them for any specific advice.
- To further the connection: ask for an informational interview, job shadow, or additional contacts.

**Staying in Touch:**
- Maintain the relationship on an ongoing basis, not just when you are job seeking:
  - Let them know when you contact a person they referred you to or followed one of their suggestions.
  - Occasionally inform them about your job hunt and ask how they are.
  - Consider forwarding them a news article related to your conversation.

**LinkedIn:**
- Connect with your inner circle, and use it to identify people you’d like to meet.
- If you choose to reach out via LinkedIn ALWAYS personalize your message, and try to reach out through mutual contacts or alumni when possible.

**Hand Written 10%**

**MAINTAIN**
- A phone/Skype call or in person meeting deserves a hand written thank you note.
- Thank them for taking the time to speak with you and any advice or connections they offered.