



The benefits of networking.

Like the old saying goes, “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know.”

Networking is crucial in order to add to your list of “who you know” and therefore help you make personal and professional progress. The amount of people you connect with can help you on your way to a new job or promotion. Networking may lead to exclusive information, better opportunities, and additional resources. The more quality people you know, the better your chances of advancing your career.

Where to start.

Networking opportunities are all around you. Take a second to think about all of the people you know – family, friends, professors, mentors, counselors, former employers, community organizations, religious groups, volunteer societies. Chances are, someone you know is aware of a new opportunity for you or knows someone who does. Class reunions, lectures, career fairs or conferences, cultural events, conventions, and even cocktail parties can offer great networking opportunities.

The Career Services and Employer Relations Office on campus is a great place for networking tips and strategies. Even after graduation, they have information on potential job openings, job fairs, and other employment opportunities.

Linkedin.com is also a helpful tool to connect with alumni. By using this website, you can keep in touch with

other professionals you come across at some point. It is also a great tool in finding the right people to help achieve your career goals.

Networking like a pro.

Like any face-to-face interaction, networking involves being polite, aware, and professional.

Networking is different from interviewing, so the focus should not be on you. Instead, networking is more rewarding when knowledge, resources, and experiences are shared.

Here are some basic rules when attending a networking function:

- Figure out what you hope to achieve and with whom you’d like to interact.
- Make sure your attire is appropriate for the function in order to make the best impression.
- Arrive early – you’ll have more time to connect with others.
- Turn off your cell phone.
- Maintain eye contact, smile, and introduce yourself.
- Shake hands firmly – no limp handshakes or bone crushers.
- Ask questions, stay interested, be positive, and don’t criticize.
- Make use of your 30-second elevator speech – be specific and intriguing (See: “Elevator Speech – Personal Infomercials”).
- Listen rather than talk and never interrupt or control a conversation.
- Devoting 8 to 10 minutes per

Networking: The Basics

It’s all about quality versus quantity in the game of networking.

Simply put:

Networking helps develop your career, so follow these tips:

- Determine your goals. Act professionally when interacting with others.
- Listen attentively and give honest answers.
- Ask questions – your objective is to learn and make contacts.
- Ask for and give referrals.
- If you’re timid, start with a friendly smile and small talk.
- Don’t apologize – people attend functions to network, so it’s not impolite to ask.
- Always follow up with new leads immediately.

person is acceptable and a good way to mingle.

- Create and carry professional-looking business cards to swap with others.
- Be genuine, sincere, and respectful.
- Remember to follow up on your leads and new acquaintances immediately – a “thank you” can go a long way.

Six degrees of separation.

It’s a small world. A friend of a friend can lead you to that next step in your career. You never know who you might meet.

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