

## Networking

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### What is networking?

*“Creating a group of acquaintances and associates and keeping it Active through regular communication for mutual benefit.” Business Dictionary*

### Why should I network?

- Increase credibility and visibility
- Reach new circles of people
- Practice communication skills
- Learn new things
- New opportunities
- Grow your resources

### How do I network?

1. Identify the people in your network
2. Reach out
3. Conduct an informational interview
4. Follow-up (and keep in contact)
5. Grow your network

### Who is in my network?

- People You Know
  - Friends, relatives, co-workers, classmates, friends of parents/parents of friends, teachers/professors, university staff
  - Social media platforms
  - LinkedIn
- People you do not know but can create connections to
  - Professional Associations
    - Organizations and local chapters affiliated with your desired industry
  - Job Fairs/Networking Events
    - On and off campus events
  - Online Social Networks - Facebook & LinkedIn
  - Volunteer Work
    - Choose an organization that’s related to your profession or help out doing something that’s career-related
  - Alumni Association Professional Network – LinkedIn
    - Student to Alumni professional networking subgroup

### **How do I grow my network?**

- Referrals
- Job Fairs
- Campus clubs/organizations
- Professional Associations
- Local organizations
- LinkedIn

### **How do I reach out?**

- Consider contacts who seem like the obvious choice
- Who are you comfortable talking to?
- Whose career is interesting to you?
- Who do you want to learn from, and what do you want to learn?
- Reach out via LinkedIn or email
- Write a short note indicating the reason for your message, who you are, and kindly ask for the opportunity to speak with them (informational interview).

### **How do I make small talk?**

- Simply ask open-ended questions
- How did you...? What brought you to...? What do you think about...? Tell me about...
- Topics for conversation
- Movies, music, books, food, sports, weather, hobbies, projects, travel
- Your success stories!
- Avoid talking about
- Money, relationships, politics, religion, family issues, disasters
- Find a similarity
- Establish eye contact and listen!

### **How do I keep in contact?**

- Follow-up after your first communication
- Connect on LinkedIn
- Share an interesting article
- Share a volunteer opportunity
- Did they help you with something? – keep them in the loop!