Networking

**WHAT IS IT?**

Networking is establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial connections with people in your field of interest.

Networking is not something done once and then forgotten. It is an ongoing process that will occur whenever the opportunity presents itself, and it is a lifelong skill that can only serve you in whatever occupation you ultimately choose to pursue. Networking is often cited as the #1 way to land a job or internship.

**Social Settings** (business lunches/dinners, receptions, parties, etc.)

- **Handshakes**
  - Always shake hands at the beginning and end of the conversation.
  - A firm grip is best. Avoid being too relaxed, but do not over do it by squeezing too hard.
  - If you get nervous easily, carry a tissue to wipe your hand.

- **Parties**
  - Do not arrive later than 30 minutes after the start time on the invitation.
  - Avoid drinking alcohol in front of your co-workers, recruiters, clients, etc. You should never feel pressure to drink, but if you do choose to join others and you are 21, limit yourself to one drink.

- **Introductions**
  - Name tags are always placed on your outer most piece of clothing on the right side. When shaking your hand, the other person will have direct sight of your name.
  - If you forget someone’s name, you can sometimes “cover” by introducing a person you do know first; maybe the other person will say their name. Otherwise, apologize and ask politely, before introducing the person to someone else.

**Meetings** (interviews, informational, formal, project, group, etc.)

- **Before the Meeting**
  - When planning a meeting give advance notice of the time, date, and location.
  - When contacting the attendees be sure to include items to be discussed (agenda). If you are being invited to a meeting and are unclear contact the meeting planner.

- **During a meeting**
  - Avoid interruptions of conversation, brainstorming or presentations if possible. Always apologize and wait for an appropriate time to interrupt.

- **After the meeting**
  - Send a follow-up email or print out of the minutes from the meeting with action items and synopsis of what was covered.
  - Thank all members for attending.

**Useful Conversation Topics**

1. What do you like about your current job?
2. What are your career goals and interests?
3. Have you read any good books or magazines lately?
4. How do you spend your free time?
5. Have you seen any movies lately?
6. Do you like to travel? Where have you traveled recently?