

# Networking

**Networking** is establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial connections with people in your field of interest. It is often cited as the #1 way to land a job or internship. 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 will serve you in whatever occupation you choose.

## Tips for Beginners

- Practice conversation starters with people you already know
- Bring a friend along to help you get started
- Request an informational interview with one person at a time
- Attend events with a clear theme or premise for meeting new people
- Set a goal before you enter a networking situation, such as starting three conversations, or making one strong connection

## Ready to take it to the next level?

- Reach out to those who may appear reserved; they will often welcome your help
- Take on a leadership role in clubs or classes and help others learn from your success
- Volunteer for a committee with a networking group or help plan a future event
- Be sure to let others know that you will value their guidance and advice
- Don't forget to follow-up with your new contacts

## Social Settings & Meetings

### Handshakes

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



### During

- Always be on time for meetings. For social settings, do not arrive later than 30 minutes after the start time on the invitation.
- Avoid interruptions of conversation, brainstorming, or presentations if possible. Wait for an appropriate time to interject.
- Avoid drinking alcohol in front of your coworkers, recruiters, or clients if they are not drinking. 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 outermost 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.

### Questions to ask

1. What brings you to this event?
2. What do you like about your current job?
3. What are your career goals and interests?
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?

### Ways the Division of Career Pathways can help you network

- **Career Panels** bring professionals from various industries to campus
- **Career Fairs and Employer Information Sessions** bring professionals from various industries to campus
- **Workshops** (See our quarterly *Navigator* for networking workshops)