

NETWORKING: A DEFINITIVE GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AND GRADS TO SUCCEED IN THE JOB SEARCH



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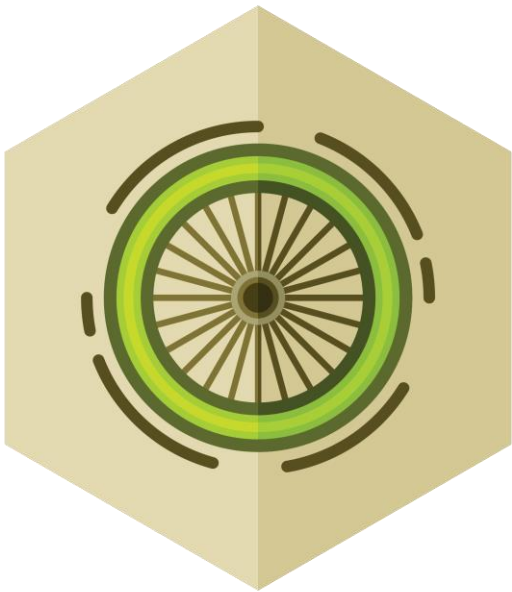
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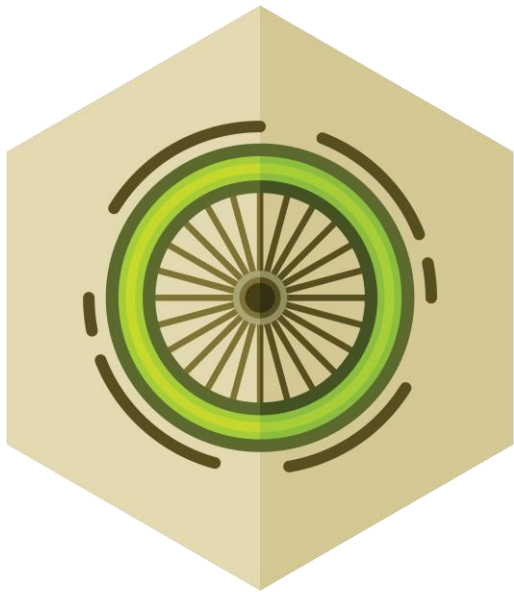
Where to start networking



Think of networking like a wheel. You are at the center of the wheel and there are spokes going out to all of your connections. Now, imagine you have 20 spokes on the wheel. If those 20 connections have spokes of their going out to 20 more connections, you already have 400 people that you can reach out to.

What do you say when you reach out? You can reach out to learn about their own job, send them your resume, tell them your goals, ask for job opportunities or an informational interview.

Where to start networking



Who counts as a connection?

- Your close friends
- Family
- Friends of friends, and friends of family
- Mentors and professors
- Coworkers
- Classmates
- Alumni
- Volunteer coordinators and supervisors

How much time to spend networking



As a student, your goal should be to spend about 10 hours a week networking and job searching. And some of that time needs to be off screen, meaning at events or meeting people at their offices or for coffee. For example, you should spend time on:

- Researching companies
- Applying for jobs
- Preparing for interviews
- Preparing for events by looking at who's going and researching them online
- Planning and updating your resume
- Meeting with people face to face



Your elevator pitch



Be as specific as you can about what you're looking for. Tell a quick story—maybe something you accomplished recently in a class or work—and then conclude with what exactly you hope this person can do for you. (For example, giving your resume to someone.)

Think about who you want to be. How do you want other people to perceive you? You are the best person to control how people perceive you, so get comfortable telling people who you are.

If your future goals are too broad, people won't know how to help you. You don't have to know exactly what you want out of your career, but find some focus, at least to start off with. It helps to write down your strengths, weaknesses and interests.

Your elevator pitch



Your pitch is only the beginning of the conversation. Whoever you're speaking to will ask you questions, but you will have stated who you are, what you're looking for, and something interesting about yourself.

People love talking about themselves, so ask them how they got started in their career. Find something you have in common (either beforehand by researching them online, or during the conversation). This will help them remember you. Make sure to offer to help them as well. People like to reciprocate, so if you see your networking as a two-way street, they're more likely to help.

After you meet a new connection, don't forget to follow up. Connect with them on LinkedIn or send them an email.

Informational interviews



During the informational interview, you're not asking your connection for a job. Think of it as gathering data. You're doing research and you may come back to them a month later and knock on their door. Ask them questions, and engage in conversation. That makes it easier for them to help you.

Informational interviews



Meet your connection at their office or take them out for coffee. Ask about themselves first, so they know you're interested in their field and aren't pressured to hand you a job immediately. You can ask these questions:

- “How did you get started in your career?”
- “What is the typical week like in the entry level job here?”
- “What is the work culture is like?”
- “What does success look like if you come into the job?”
- “What outcomes have you achieved in your career?”
- “What are the key skills, knowledge and interests that this employer looks for on a resume?”



Read more about where to start and elevator pitches at:

www.collegerecruiter.com/blog/2017/08/28/tips-from-expert-recruiters-the-best-elevator-pitch-and-how-much-time-to-spend-networking/

www.collegerecruiter.com/blog/2017/08/21/brand-yourself-sounds-intimidating-two-recruiting-experts-discuss-how-and-why-job-seekers-should-care/

Tips for college seniors to find a job by graduation

Most large companies will have filled their positions by spring. Don't wait.

Here are 6 things to do your last year of college.



1. Understand what's important to you. Do a self-inventory of your interests, values, personality traits, and strengths. This exercise will help you determine the companies and types of career paths that may be right for you.
2. Use your resources. Career centers can help you in your job search by doing mock interviews, resume critiques, and informing you of when employers are coming to campus to recruit. Your fellow students can help you by connecting you with their current or former employers.

Tips for college seniors to find a job by graduation

6 things to do your last year of college



3. Grow your network but don't go overboard. Focus on quality over quantity. Focus your networking strategy on a short list of companies that are an ideal fit for you.
4. Before you meet with someone, take the time to learn about who they are, and try to find common ground so you can connect on a personal level.
5. Always follow-up with an email or phone call to keep the conversation going.
6. Before you go to career fairs, apply for jobs, or network in other ways, make sure to update your resume, your LinkedIn profile, and practice what you say about yourself when you introduce yourself.

Tips for college seniors to find a job by graduation

Little networking things to do every day



- Request to connect on LinkedIn with people you meet
- Attend discussions happening on campus.
- Join a new club or organization
- Collaborate with new peers on group projects
- Ask professors to help you do a self-inventory of your skills and interests, and ask if they have connections in the professional world.
- Visit your career center. Not utilizing those resources would be flying blind.
- Connect with alumni who work at companies you're interested in.
- Ask the president of your college or university for a quick meeting—he or she will likely be impressed by your initiative.

Tips for college seniors to find a job by graduation

Little networking things to do every day



One meeting or email is never enough to assume that your network will find you a job. Always follow up with a thank-you, as well as occasional check-ins to give them any updates about yourself or ask about their own work and lives.

Don't stress about finding the perfect job that's going to map out the rest of your career. You may have your life planned out and you may not, but life throws a lot of curveballs along the way.



Read more tips for college seniors at:

www.collegerecruiter.com/blog/2017/08/22/recent-graduate-jobs-are-harder-to-find-at-the-last-minute-job-search-tips-for-seniors-interview/

www.collegerecruiter.com/blog/2017/08/29/tips-from-ey-s-campus-recruiting-team-to-find-jobs-for-new-graduates/

Number one networking tip for introverts

To succeed in networking as an introvert, try volunteering at a networking event or conference.



BUILT-IN OPPORTUNITY

Volunteering at a conference provides the built-in opportunity to make connections with many professionals, while focusing on your task and purpose at hand.



WORK A BOOTH

When working at a table or booth, most who approach you will start the conversation.



CHECK PEOPLE IN

Checking people in to an event provides an opportunity to break the ice and already meet every person attending the event.



JOIN A COMMITTEE

Pre-event meetings let you meet key members of the event, and it looks great on a resume. Ask to help plan guest speakers, which gives you direct access to key movers and shakers in the industry.

Joining a professional association



Joining an industry-related association or trade organization is a great way for students and grads to network, meet other like-minded professionals, and learn.

Meeting people is only one reason why joining industry associations are highly recommended for college students and recent college grads.

Joining a professional association



Joining professional associations allows you to stay on top of industry trends, learn about volunteer or leadership opportunities, and enables project collaboration.

Further, employers like candidates for their jobs who step outside their comfort zone. Joining an association shows employers that you are serious about developing ongoing skills, advancing in your profession, and can take initiative to learn on your own.



Joining a professional association



How to get the most out of your professional association:

- Approach and be approachable: Approach others from a humanistic point of view. Remember that the goal of networking is to build relationships, not ask immediately for an interview or a job.
- Be present: Attending the association events will help you reinforce connections you've made – making you a better professional for the long run.
- Be responsive: Networking success relies on how frequently you get in touch with people you've met. Even a simple “congratulations on your promotion” message on social media is impactful.





Read more tips for joining professional associations:

<https://www.collegerecruiter.com/blog/2016/11/18/recent-college-grads-benefit-joining-professional-associations/>

Networking mistakes

Employers won't automatically tell you about job opportunities.

Avoid these mistakes when networking.



- Don't ask people immediately if they know of any open jobs. It's good to be clear that you're looking for work, but no one will recommend you if they don't know anything about you first.
- Don't blindly reaching out without knowing basic information about the person. You can find basic details on their LinkedIn profiles or company websites.
- Don't expect your connections to tell you exactly what to do. Before reaching out, know what kind of information you'd like from them.

Networking mistakes

Employers won't automatically tell you about job opportunities.

Avoid these mistakes when networking.



- Don't think that the *number* of connections matters. Networking is about building helpful relationships, not about how many people you know. Target your outreach to people who work at companies or in fields that interest you.
- Don't be too informal. Treat networking opportunities as professional conversations. It's easier to move from formal to casual than vice-versa.
- Don't think that networking is all about you. If you talk only about your interests and what other people can do for you, you'll quickly find that few people will help. Always offer to do something in return, even if that is just forwarding an article you think they'd enjoy.



Read more about networking mistakes at:

www.collegerecruiter.com/blog/2016/08/26/biggest-networking-mistake-you-can-make/

www.collegerecruiter.com/blog/2016/08/09/common-networking-mistakes-avoid/

How to engage authentically



Because you're so focused on landing an internship or a job, it's easy to think that networking is all about you. That perspective is a mistake; networking is a two-way street.

Networking is about communicating with professionals or other job seekers and building relationships with them. If you pause from talking about your own interests, and listen to what people have to say about themselves, you will learn valuable information that can benefit your career.

It all comes down to authenticity. Are you joining professional groups and meeting people to only serve your career and to be the loudest, most talkative person in the room? If so, you will get nowhere fast.

How to engage authentically



Show a genuine interest in new people, sharing ideas, asking questions, and developing relationships. Nobody wants to help a selfish person who tries controlling every conversation.

Being authentic also requires gratitude. Don't forget to thank whoever takes time to talk to you. Express how much you appreciate each person's time and energy.

Be proactive, connect online and schedule follow-ups with a simple email or a request for a lunch meeting. Take action, be humble, and maintain a level of professionalism.



Read more about engaging authentically at:

www.collegerecruiter.com/blog/2016/08/19/networking-isnt-all-about-you/

More resources at CollegeRecruiter.com



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We also have hundreds of blog pages with resources and advice about writing your resume and cover letter, preparing for your interview, engaging as a new employee, and more.
Visit www.collegerecruiter.com/blog today!