

Networking

What is Networking? What is it Not?

The emphasis of networking is on developing relationships, having conversations, discovering commonalities, and/or seeking advice/information from others. YOU DO THIS ALREADY!

- You are not asking contacts directly for a job or internship.
- Networking is not just for extroverts.

Networking Basics

1. Determine your goal or plan before entering the event.
2. Say your name, firm handshake, eye contact, smile!
3. Don't speak too softly, have appropriate distance in between (carry mints, check your teeth).
4. Ask informed questions.
5. Find something in common.
6. Be memorable.
7. Create a reason to follow-up and get their contact information.

Note: these sample introductions are more likely to be used in a large company type of event. If it's an employer event or Career Fair you'll want to practice your script meant especially for employers/recruiters

Approaching One Person

"Hi I'm Jennifer, an art history student at Duke. Which department/university/company are you with?"

"I thought speaker/topic A was really informative. What did you think?"

"Hello I'm Jennifer and I just moved here from Los Angeles. I've started compiling a list of great restaurants in the area. Which ones are your favorite?"

Exiting the Conversation

"Excuse me, I see my colleague/advisor/friend and I need to say hello."

"I've really enjoyed speaking with you but don't want to monopolize your time."

Wait for a break in the conversation and say, "It was really nice meeting you and hope to stay in touch. Do you have a business card with you?"

"Please excuse me, I need to use the restroom/get a drink/bite to eat." But be sure to actually go do that.

Joining a Conversation That's Already in Place

Go up to the group, listen for a little bit then make a contribution to the conversation when there is a pause.

Be sure not to cut anyone off mid-sentence.

Or simply introduce yourself at a pause if they seem open, *"Hi, how is everyone doing? I'm Jennifer."*

Seek out someone when they are alone and say, “How are you? I’m Jennifer, an art history student at Duke University. I’d love an introduction to XYZ/your colleagues at some point if you don’t mind.”

Next steps

1. Practice networking more often in everyday situations to get more comfortable.
 - a. Challenge yourself to put away your phone when on the bus, etc. and speak to people.
 - b. Go up and start a conversation with someone in class, your research building or while standing in line to get lunch, groceries, etc. when you normally wouldn’t.
 - c. Utilize employer/alumni/professional development events to continue practicing and getting better. You never know where those conversations may lead.
2. Continue perfecting your introduction.
3. See the section on networking emails below and send a follow-up note to someone you recently met at an event. It can be a request for an informational interview, sending a link to something you spoke about or just thanking them for their time when you spoke at the event.

Networking: Informational Interviews

- **What is informational interviewing?**
 - A chance to ask professionals questions about your field of interest.
 - Ways you can introduce yourself to alums/professionals you wish to meet. They could serve as good mentors and/or contacts for future opportunities.
- Check out tips about Informational Interviewing provided by the Duke Career Center at: <https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/career/online-tools-resources/career-center-skills-guides/informational-interviewing>
- **Don’t know how to locate Duke alums in your industry to interview?** Check out:
 - “How to Connect with Duke Alum’s on LinkedIn” a video produced by the Career Center <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWQXna9dteE&t=3s>
 - The Alumni Network (link) <https://alumni.duke.edu/>
- You can also find alums and other professionals through groups you can join.
Here is suggested list of groups and connections to make on LinkedIn:
 - Suggested Groups to Join:
 - Duke Alumni Network
 - DEMAN Community
 - Duke University Graduate School
 - Linking the Triangle
 - Groups for Duke academic programs, majors, institutions, etc.
 - Identity groups broadly and in your career(s) of interest
 - Alumni groups of past colleges and universities

- Career(s) of interest
 - Companies relevant to your experience
 - Professional association groups
 - Groups in geographical regions of interest
- Suggested Connections:
 - Family members
 - Friends
 - Faculty and staff mentors
 - Colleagues and supervisors from on-campus groups, internships, summer programs, previous jobs
 - Classmates
- **Don't have a strong LinkedIn Profile?** No problem! Check out these guides!
 - LinkedIn is a great modeling tool. If you see language that you see someone else uses, you can follow it as a template for your own profile.
 - "How to Create a Strong Linked In Profile" <https://youtu.be/BZ92m5aKyQA>
 - Guide to Linked In <https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/career/online-tools-resources/career-center-skills-guides/networking>

Networking: Emails and Follow-up

- [LINK TO PDF NETWORKING WORKSHEET](#)
- The most important part about networking **is building relationships. It is easy enough to meet a lot of people, but maintaining relationships require time and effort.**
- **Reasons to reach out to a contact:**
 - Good news about the company
 - Their promotion or change in title
 - Family/personal success
 - Shared hobbies
 - Thanking them for helping you
 - End of a season—school year, internship, holiday
 - To ask if they will also be attending an upcoming event
 - To serve as a reference
 - Seeking connections within the industry
 - To share an opportunity that you have heard about
 - To update them when you followed advice they previously provided
- **How often should you reach out to a contact?**
 - That depends. It is never a bad idea to try and reach out to people in your network about once every few months. This way you are building a relationship. **This way your contact does not only expect to receive communications from you when you need something** (such as a reference or networking contact).