

GUIDE TO NETWORKING

Networking is the process of building and maintaining mutually positive relationships with family, friends, alumni, and other professionals to gain information, learn about opportunities, and connect with others for professional growth. Networking gives you an advantage in a job or internship search by connecting you to contacts within specific companies and industries who can support your learning, growth, and ideally your candidacy.

WHY NETWORK?

Networking connects you with individuals who share common interests and experiences. In fact, nearly 80% of all jobs are filled through networking! Communicating your story with potential contacts and growing your network can help you grow in your current role and uncover new opportunities that you may not be aware of.

WHO SHOULD I CONNECT WITH?

- **Start with family and friends.** Leverage the people you already know through work, school, etc.
- **Connect with your peers.** Talk with people you know through sports, clubs, honor societies, etc.
- **Reach out to Alumni.** There are multiple ways to connect with U of R Alumni through The Meliora Collective, LinkedIn, Handshake, CareerShift, or Social Media!
- **Contact industry-specific professionals.** Reach out to people from previous jobs, internships, or research, or connect to them through industry associations, conferences, or work groups.
- **Attend recruiting events and career fairs.** Meet with potential employers and start gathering names or referrals.

PREPARATION

In order to effectively network you first need to **know yourself**. First, identify your skills, interests, and qualifications as they relate to any potential careers or industries. Set specific short-term goals that are attainable and related to your internship or job search, then research potential careers and individuals who work in the industries you are targeting. You can then begin the process of networking by talking with people you know so that they can reach out to people within their circles. Once you've laid the groundwork you can begin to create your "elevator pitch". Think about what you want from the individual or group, what advice you're seeking, what information about the organization or industry is important to you, and who you might contacts.

BASIC STEPS FOR AN ELEVATOR PITCH

- Introduce yourself (name, major, career goals, why you're talking with them).
- Make a connection to them and their career, industry, profession, or organization.
- Ask for consideration, advice, or information on where to go next - have a call to action!

TIPS/REMINDERS

Keep an updated document of individuals and interactions so that you can stay in touch with important contacts. Remember that networking is an ongoing process and that patience and persistence eventually pay off! Start to get comfortable hearing "no" while fighting for the "yes" and understand that rejection doesn't necessarily mean the end of a relationship. Always remain polite and professional and be sure to thank your contact(s) after your conversation/meeting within 24 hours, no later.

Networking Note Examples

Referral from professor → phone call informational interview

Hello Ms. Smith,

I hope you are doing well. I am a sophomore at the University of Rochester and recently met Professor Jones during a data science information session. They suggested I contact you to learn more about your experience transitioning from a programmer to a data analyst. I'm currently a dual math and computer science major and am interested in using my passion of numbers to explore positions within data science.

Would you be willing to answer a few of my questions about your career path during a brief phone call? I'm excited about the opportunity to chat with you and am available to accommodate your schedule. You can reach me at 585.123.4567 or at this email address. Thank you for your time, I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,
Scott Jones

BS: Math and Computer Science: Hajim School of Engineering & Applied Sciences
University of Rochester
Expected Graduation Spring 2020
LinkedIn profile link

The Meliora Collective → phone call informational interview

Hello Mr. Smith,

I hope this email finds you well. I noticed your profile on The Meliora Collective and your research as an engineer at Medical Company caught my attention. As a current junior in the biomedical engineer program at the University of Rochester, I am interested in pursuing a career in medical product design. Would you be open to a 15-minute phone call to discuss any career advice you may have? I look forward to speaking with you and appreciate your time.

Thank you,
Stephanie Hernandez
585-123-4567

BS - Biomedical Engineering, expected Spring 2019, University of Rochester
Vice President, Engineers without Borders

Alumni Event → Meet in person informational interview

Hello Casey Johnson,

I hope you had a good weekend. Recently, I attended the University of Rochester finance alumni panel and we briefly talked after the event about your internship experience with Business Services Company. I am a sophomore majoring in business at the U of R and am interested in learning more about your transition from intern to staff member.

I will be in NYC during the month of June working on a community service project. Would you be willing to meet to discuss more of your insights regarding your career path? My project is flexible and I am able to accommodate your schedule preferences. I look forward to meeting with you again and appreciate your time.

Thanks again,
Alex Zhang
585-123-4567

University of Rochester, BS Business, expected May 2020
Community Service Chair, Circle K International