Networking for information and exploration involves enhancing knowledge of career fields and job functions as well as the nature of graduate study. This identifies and prioritizes post-commencement options empowering you to articulate, act upon, and, ultimately, attain goals. Networking for consideration involves requests for assistance with internship, research and shadowing search efforts. Most begin with networking for information to explore, prioritize and express field, function and firm options. After, with goals clear, they network for consideration.

While initial communiqués are important, contacts should constantly be updated regarding your efforts and status. Networking involves stating goals, and then seeking consideration, advice, referrals, education (information) and support. Simply, it involves “stating goals,” then finding someone who CARES! The Career and Internship Center’s website contains detailed information on networking, links to resources, as well as sample networking notes. Annual on- and off-campus Networking Night Events and Food for Thought networking conversations are sponsored and promoted by the Center. Most important, we offer introductory and advanced seminars on networking. You are encouraged to attend a seminar and work effectively long-term with a counselor to maximize your use of the Rochester Career Advisory Network (RCAN), CareerShift, LinkedIn and other web-based tools; and effectively conduct “internetworking” and, eventually, “inter-personal networking” undertakings. Initiate networking by e-mail, and then follow with phone calls and more emails. Be courteous and clear regarding reasons for initial contacts, and do leave voice-mail messages when following up. Also, remember basic Latin: alumnus=singular male; alumna=singular female; alumni=plural males or both genders; and alumnai=plural female. Introductory email “networking notes” include phrases like those below.

I was happy to meet a Rochester alumnus who works within NAME FIELD during the recent Networking Night. Now, I would like to continue our conversation via email. As a sophomore, I am interested in learning more about your career field as well as your professional biography. While I have conducted some research and focused interests on NAME FIELD, the more information I gather, the better. Could I conduct an “information conversation,” by asking you a few questions, and gaining internship search advice and referrals? Should we communicate by email, or would it be appropriate to speak over the phone or, someday, in person? Your response to this note would be so very, very much appreciated. Thank you.

Conversations with NAME PERSON revealed you as an alumnus (alumna) who might offer advice regarding how I can find a summer internship with your firm or refer me to others within NAME FIRM or in your industry. Attached a copy of my field targeted resume that reveals the qualifications I possess and specific experiences most relevant to my goal. After you review the resume I hope you determine I am worthy of your consideration, referrals and advice. If it is more convenient to communicate via e-mail, let’s continue to do so. But, I do make internship search trips to NAME CITY, so perhaps we can someday meet in person. Your email response to this note would be most welcomed. In advance, thank you.

I learned through conversations with NAME FACULTY that you work within NAME FIELD AND FUNCTION. After you read my resume and we have the chance to speak by phone, would you assist me with my efforts to find a NAME FUNCTION internship or shadowing experience? Any contacts within your firm or other firms in the city would be appreciated. Of course, I would send a detailed cover letter with my resume to anyone you recommend. While I do hope your firm might consider my candidacy, any referrals to other firms would be welcomed. In advance, thank you for your assistance.

Thank you for connecting via LinkedIn. At present I am conducting career research in order to clarify potential post-commencement options in NAME FIELD. Ideally, you might assist me with my efforts. Through a brief telephone information conversation or a few quick emails, I would like to learn about your career biography and identify typical entry-level positions in NAME FIELD generally. Attached is a copy of my resume that clearly projects basic qualifications. Of course, after I gain focus, I would send a more detailed cover letter with a targeted resume seeking consideration for summer internships. Any assistance you might provide with my internship search as well would be much appreciated.

I was excited to learn an alumnus (alumna) works for NAME COMPANY. Currently, I am actively seeking consideration for internship options or, perhaps better stated “project opportunities” in NAME FIELD. Ideally, you would assist me with my efforts. Through a brief telephone conversation or a few quick emails, I would like to learn about your career biography, share my field, function and firm goals, and seek your assistance with my internship efforts. Would you be receptive to helping me? Should I wait for your email response, or simply give you a call? Your reactions to this request would be most appreciated. Meliora!

These “excerpts” are not complete emails, so refer to www.rochester.edu/careercenter Networking pull-down window for additional samples. Have initial drafts critiqued and approved by a counselor!
In person, email, or phone “information conversations” or “networking communications” are field, firm and function focused queries. The more in person or email based information conversations, the better. You are seeking to identify “career role models,” then to nurture relationships so these individuals become “mentors” and, after, “advocates,” supporting your efforts. Lists of questions should be prepared prior to calls, emails, or meetings.

They might include:

* What is your job title and the nature of your position?
* What would a typical entry-level position in the field be today?
* What skills or talents would be required to succeed within the field and how can I nurture these?
* Are special credentials, degrees, or licenses required?
* Did you attend graduate or professional school, or any specialized skills-building programs?
* What employers hire undergraduate interns or bachelor degree holders seeking to enter the fields?
* If I am interested in seeking an internship, finding a post graduation position, or applying to graduate school related to your field, what specific advice would you give?
* If I could take one or two courses during my next semester or during the summer, to enhance my chances of obtaining internship interviews and, ultimately offers, what ones should I take?

**Is there a project or two I could complete for you over the next 2-4 weeks, 2-4 months or after commencement?**
* Can I shadow you for a day in order to learn more about the field and your day-to-day activities?
* Can you suggest other individuals (ideally 3) I could contact regarding career information, or who could offer internship, shadowing, or project focused consideration?

The bolded question is the best way to transform an information gathering exercise into a request for consideration for a project based experience or what some might call “an internship.” End all communiqués with a sense of what you should do next, who you should contact and, of course, with a resounding “thank you!” Follow with an e-mailed thank you note and regularly inform your network member of how all progresses. When appropriate, follow up to request additional information, advice, support or, quite often, employment or internship consideration.

It is critical that you are clear regarding whether you are seeking consideration or information and that honest, strategic and well expressed actions follow.

**To conduct Interpersonal and Internetworking. . .**

* Learn about networking for information and exploration as well networking for consideration strategies and techniques via Career and Internship Center seminars and individual counseling before taking action.
* Attend Career and Internship Center sponsored on and off campus alumni(ae) presentations and special events.
* Be a frequent communicator with alumni(ae) who you access via RCAN and counselors referrals.
* Identify websites including LinkedIn, and those for professional associations related to areas of interest.
* Conduct information conversations with alumni (ae) and, too often forgotten, with faculty members.
* Identify specific faculty who might be “special advisors” for particular options.
* Talk to faculty and administrators about their academic and career biographies.
* Conduct strategic and goal focused networking, not simply “social networking” or general outreach.
* State your goals, then find and communicate effectively (via networking note and resume) with someone who CARES (who offers Consideration, Advice, Referrals, Education or Support).