

Networking Basics

As you are looking at the knowledge you've gained through attending career fairs, meeting with employers for informational interviews and job shadowing, or other work experiences, it is important to not let those conversations end. Networking is key to creating strong professional relationships that can help guide your career path if you find a mentor or even land you a job in the future. Here are a few guidelines to keep in mind as you begin this stage of your career path.



Build A Foundation

You may already have a strong start here! Think about employers you have spoken to at on-campus events, through your own work experiences, or even family members. Building a foundation can be as easy as introducing yourself, asking a question, or having a brief conversation.

Be Timely

Recruiters and those attending fairs may be very busy, often visiting multiple campuses each month. Reach out to your initial contacts before the foundation begins to crumble or they forget the conversation you had. It is a good idea to keep in touch over time to stay connected.



Include Details

Continue to develop the relationship through your communications with employers; this can be through email, phone, or websites like LinkedIn. Rather than starting the relationship from scratch, include information from past interactions. Think about what interests you in furthering the discussion as well!

Open Doors

Asking for a job directly can end a conversation very quickly. Think about opening doors and taking the first steps to build the relationship. Plants do not bear fruit the day they were planted. Nurturing a relationship and building trust and learning from your network can all help keep the conversation moving forward.



Be Gracious

Thank employers for their time. The opportunities you have to connect with employers may be taking them away from their primary duties. Although most professionals are happy to connect with those entering the field, it is always appreciated to have their time recognized.