LEARN TO NETWORK

Is your first reaction to a networking event to shy away from the room full of people clamoring to share their resumes and business cards with hiring managers, monopolizing their time? Well, what if, instead, you framed networking differently? Developing and expanding your professional connections is critical to help explore, launch and advance your career.

Intentional networking does not require you to be someone other than yourself. Be authentic and genuine in connecting with others. At its core, networking is action-oriented and a sharing of information and resources. "It is not what you know, not who you know. It is about who knows you." Make a great lasting first impression with these steps.

Imagine this scenario.
The College of Business is hosting the Big Networking Event and you are looking for possibilities to grow your network and be hired for an internship or job.

Things to Consider...

... When Preparing

Research.
Google and search on LinkedIn the organization or networking event. Have a general understanding of their mission, staff and work.

Your Brand.
Think about your career goals and experiences. Consider developing a 30-second elevator pitch to generate conversation.

Practice.
Talk with professors, peers or family about yourself. You want to end with the listener wanting to know more. Practice until you are comfortable.

... In Conversation

Ask Questions.
Come prepared with a few questions about their involvement in the organization, vision for the future and trends in the industry.

Take Notes.
Whether you make a mental note of what people say, or jot down notes in a padfolio, save that information for later.

Make Connections.
Attend the event with a few peers and share knowledge with each other afterwards. Don’t spend the entire event only talking to one person or one group.

... When Following Up

Be Polite.
End conversations with gratitude and well wishes. Ask if they have a business card on hand.

Commit.
Many times we have good intentions and express that we will reach out after the event, but time gets the best of us. Do not just say it - do it! Respond within 72 hours

Strengthen Relationship.
Periodically keep in touch with them and share progress. Consider setting up an informational interview if you are looking to intern or work with them.

Networking is a process - one that is ongoing and lifelong - of building relationships and helping connect individuals. Know that what works well for one event might not work for another - and that is okay! Always look for the next step in to developing your professional connections while learning information and advice.

The Office of Career and Global Engagement exists to cultivate and engage students within the college to become effective leaders, successful graduates, and globally competitive professionals.