

Networking

What is networking?

- Making contacts, obtaining a job, an internship, or career information through your network of family members, friends, and past supervisors.
- Using self-promotion to make your skills and goals known to potential employers.
- A way to uncover the “hidden” job market.

The Basics

- Know what type of position you want, the industry or perhaps organization where you want to work.
- Have career goals in mind.
- Assess your interests and skills and write a small introduction about yourself.
- Think about possible contacts - compile names, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, etc.
- (This could include friends, family members, Geneseo alumni, co-workers, neighbors, supervisors, internship contacts, club or organization members, Greek affiliations, Facebook friends or LinkedIn connections).
- Connect on LinkedIn, Facebook, call the person on the phone or e-mail the person to make initial contact. When contacting them, give them your name, your connection to them, phone number or e-mail and the purpose of your contact.
- Let people know you are job searching. Just because you ask them about their field doesn't let them know you are in the job market.
- If you receive a personal invitation to meet with the contact, make sure you are dressed professionally, prepared with questions, and have a copy of your resume in case they inquire.

Making a Strong First Impression

- When meeting another person, extend a confident handshake as you make eye contact.
- Eliminate trendy words from your vocabulary (OK, yeah, like, ya know...)
- Carry materials with you such as your resume, notepad and pencils. It broadcasts that you are prepared and serious about building relationships.
- Use a person's last name unless invited to do otherwise.

Contact Tips

- Have your self-introduction ready; state how you found the person.
- Decide what you need from the person (job search strategy information, company information, additional contacts, etc.).
- Be prepared with questions, know the basics about the organization, and take notes.
- If they are unable to help you at this time, ask if there is someone they can refer you to who might be able to help. One of your goals is to gather more leads and contacts.
- Before you end the conversation, ask for a business card and THANK THEM.

Questions for Contacts

- How did you get started in this line of work?
- How did you prepare for this profession?
- What classes or projects can I do to prepare myself for this career area?
- What is the most valuable thing you learned in college?
- Knowing what you know now, would you take the same job/career path again?
- What do you like most about your work? Like least?
- What do you find most rewarding about your work?
- What do you do in a typical day?
- What type of people do you work with?
- What are other specialties in this area?
- Would you advise others to enter this career area?
- What, in your opinion, is the job outlook in this field/geographic location?
- In other settings and organizations, would I find people involved in this activity?
- What skills are essential in this field?
- Do you know anyone else in this career field that might be willing to talk to me about what they do? Would you allow me to use your name when I contact them?
- Are there any specific skills or qualifications that I need to concentrate on to be marketable in this career field or organization?
- How can I best market myself to potential employers?
- Would you be willing to review my resume?
- How does the hiring process work at your organization?
- Do you know of organizations that are currently hiring?
- Who would be the best person to contact or send a resume to regarding a position with your organization?

The Career Partners Program

This is a program that helps current Geneseo students network with Geneseo alumni and parents who have volunteered to help with career exploration and the job search process. Over 400 partners have signed up and agreed to assist you by providing information about their career fields, organizations, geographic areas, and graduate programs. In addition, some Career Partners are willing to provide contacts with hiring personnel.

In order to take advantage of the Career Partners program you need to:

1. Visit the Office of Career Development web site at <http://careers.geneseo.edu>
2. Click on KnightJobs and log in
3. Click on Career Partners and connect with Career Partners of interest to you
4. Send a thank you note to any Career Partner with whom you connect

In addition to Career Partners, don't forget to create and use your U-Knight connections. Go to <http://www.geneseo.edu/alumni/uknight> to learn about this Geneseo networking site. Facebook and LinkedIn are also networking sites that can be used to make connections.

Networking is a valuable tool in the job search process and accounts for the majority of job search successes. It allows you to get your name out into the world of work whether it's to inquire about the field, the organization, a contact's career path, or to actively job hunt. It also shows others in the field you can take the initiative and it gives them the opportunity to be exposed to your communication skills, which are vital in most career fields. For more information on this topic, please refer to the Career Library in Blake A 104 or pick up your free copy of either Job Choices or the Job Search Handbook for Educators in our office.