

# Networking: What, Why and How

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## What is it?

- **PURPOSEFULLY** interacting with others to develop professional or social contacts.
- Seeking help and helping others.
- Building mutually beneficial relationships and connections.

## Why should I network?

- Because it works!
- Did you ever get a job because you knew someone who worked there already?
- Employees at a company want other good people at their company/business.
- Their employers reward them for good referrals.

## How an Informational Interview can help you

- Learn more about the realities of working in a particular career
- Discover what skills or experience are required for certain jobs so that you know what you need to develop or gain
- Develop, narrow, or broaden your focus
- Discover careers that you never knew existed
- Build your network of contacts

## How to Connect with people that you know

- Make a list of connections that you **ALREADY** have!
- Friends
- Family
- Alumni
- Co-workers and Supervisors
- Neighbors
- Church Contacts
- Faculty and staff
- Coaches
- Reach out to your contacts!

### **How: Connect with people that you don't know YET**

- Develop goals and build your network for specific purposes.
- Your goal will determine who you need to talk to!
- Start finding people in your area of interest.
- Every connection we make connects us with other people and with new opportunities.
- Find professional associations for your field of interest and join them.
- Attend professional conferences, workshops, and meetings.
- Attend **career fairs** to meet professionals and find companies.
- **Volunteer:** It's a great way to serve and build your network.
- Build a **LinkedIn** page and start connecting with me, your contacts, other Crown students, Crown faculty and staff, and Crown Alumni.
- Send an introductory email after you've connected thru LinkedIn. Let them know what you are seeking and set up time to meet.
- Connect with people at companies that you would like to work at.
- On your **social media accounts**, post about your job search and be as clear as you can about what you're looking for.

### **How: Always be ready to introduce yourself**

- Pretend you're meeting for the first time. This person is a helpful alum, a prospective employer, someone working where you want to work, or an HR rep at a career fair.
- What do you do? What do you say?
- Develop a personal statement.
- Summarize who you are in 1 or 2 sentences. (Who, What, Hope)
- Include your major, experience, and career goals etc.

### **Remember that this is to be a mutually beneficial relationship**

- Prepare questions to start a conversation.
- Ask them about themselves.
- It's a conversation – don't monopolize it. Listen!
- Ask what you can do for them.
- Stay in touch.

### **Utilize Informational Interviews**

- Learn about careers by meeting with people and asking questions!
- You're seeking them out because of your interest in their type of work or company.
- An informational interview can last 20 – 60 minutes.

- Be flexible around their schedule and time.
- You are asking them for a favor.

## How to prepare for and conduct an Informational Interview

- Identify people to interview.
- Make contact and request an Informational Interview. Interviews can be by phone, online or face to face. Be flexible and make it easy for them.
- Be on time and dressed professionally.
- Treat this as you would a job interview. Smile and make good eye contact.
- Be prepared to talk about your education, skills, experience and ask for their help with your job search.
- Prepare questions to ask.
- Don't ask questions about their company that you can learn the answers to from their website.
- These are good examples of questions:
- Career Path: Can you tell me about your career path?
- Typical Day: Tell me about your day to day? What does your typical day look like? Could you walk me through a typical day or week in your job?
- Best and Worst: What is the best part of your job? What are some of the challenges of this job?
- Their Start: How did you get started? What is an entry level job in this field?
- Advice, Skills and Tips: What advice would you have for someone starting out? Are there any skills you really think I need to know? Tips for getting ahead.
- Wisdom: If you could do it again, what would you do differently to get to where you are now?
- Networking: Do you belong to any professional organizations? Which ones would you recommend?
- A QUESTION YOU HAVE TO ASK: Is there anyone else that you think I should talk to? Can you suggest 2 or 3 other people that I might contact for more information? May I use your name when contacting them?
- Always send a thank you. Email or handwritten. "Thank you for meeting with me." Then write about something they said that resonated with you or about helpful advice that you received. If they gave you something to do next, talk about following up on that.
- Stay in contact to build the relationship.