



Networking Overview

WHAT IS NETWORKING?

Networking is the process of **building relationships** and connections with the goal of **receiving information and advice** while creating a **meaningful bond** with the person. It is an opportunity to learn more about a specific industries and career paths, receive advice for getting jobs/internships, and to hear about their experiences and thoughts when they were in your shoes.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

You can use networking to explore and hone in on your interests, **meet new people**, and **gain exposure to new fields**. It's never too early to start networking! Stronger relationships naturally build over time as you find valuable mentors and navigate the opportunities to come.

WHO IS A PART OF MY NETWORK?

Although it may feel like you're starting off with no network as a first-generation student, you actually already have a small network! **Anyone and everyone can be part of your network** & this is your opportunity to build it! Here are some great places to start:

- Faculty (teachers, professors)
- School alumni
- Family, Family friends & co-workers
- Clubs / Organizations
- Cold emailing (Linkedin, Instagram, etc.)

HOW DO I START?

VIRTUALLY

A simple email typically does the trick! Find their email and send them a message making sure to **introduce yourself**, asking politely if they would be **willing to chat** with you, and **what you hope to learn**.

IN-PERSON

Strike up a conversation! Taking that first step and **showing initiative** go a long way.

*Make sure to **get their contact/business card** so that you can reach out afterwards!

WHAT DO I SAY DURING NETWORKING?

1. Introduce yourself!

See the worksheet for an example.

2. Come prepared with questions!

The interaction should flow naturally like any conversation but it does help to **come prepared** with questions. Ask about their current career, what steps and thought processes they went through to get to where they are now, and any advice they have for those interested in pursuing a similar path.

3. Make a connection!

Get to know them not only professionally but as a person as well. Find a similarity, engage in small talk, and **be as conversational as possible**. Don't forget to get their contact to create an avenue for future conversations.

TIPS FOR NETWORKING

- **It's okay to be nervous!** Networking is an extremely common process in the professional world but can be super intimidating at first. Every interaction is practice and over time it will feel more natural.
- **Bring your energy & curiosity!** Really take this conversation as an opportunity to get a glimpse into someone else's life! Be open-minded and willing to learn.
- **Send a thank you message!** After the interaction, make sure to send your appreciation and what you took away from them. This will also help to create a long-term bond.

Networking Worksheet

A quick guide to get you started on approaching the networking process!

1) WHO AM I?

Name:
Grade level:
School:
Major (college):

HOBBIES

What do you like to do for fun? This can be anything from sports to crocheting scarves.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

CAREER INTERESTS

What kinds of industries/career paths sound interesting to you? What are your favorite subjects in school? Jot down any that come to mind (you can know nothing about a field and still be interested!)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Use the above to create an introduction for yourself!

"Hi! I'm __[name]__ and I currently a __[grade level]__ at __[school]__. I'm studying __[major/interests]__ and in my free time enjoy __[hobbies]__. I wanted to reach out to learn more about __[xyz]__. Thank you so much for being willing to speak with me today!"

2) WHO IS CURRENTLY IN MY NETWORK?

Use this space to list the people who are already a part of your network! This can include your favorite teachers, family members, family friends, & more!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

3) WHAT QUESTIONS DO I HAVE?

Use this space to brainstorm a starting list of questions that you want to ask!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.