

Career

Development Toolkit



Networking Kick-Start

Networking is essential when building a career. Now more than ever, networking has become a vital component to learning more about your chosen field and opportunities for advancement.

Think of your individual success as a collective effort. Your colleagues, supervisors and other professionals in your desired field are key members of your networking team.

A great way to get started is to have conversations with professionals currently working in your chosen field.

This can be as informal as a casual conversation with faculty or a more formal informational interview with an employer. There may even be an opportunity to shadow a current professional to gain “real world” understanding of the position while still completing your degree.

Your OOD Counselor may provide career exploration services or reach out to your school’s Office of Career Services for assistance.

Making the Right Connections

When creating a professional network, always choose quality over quantity. The relevance of your connections is much more impactful to your career than how many you have. Professional networking should never be confused with building a social media “following”. Your objective in professional networking is to secure strong connections with other professionals in your field that will allow you to learn best practices, field trends, and organizational cultures. This information will be useful in developing your communication styles with co-workers as well as supervisors. It will also help with identifying ways to contribute based on trends and shared data and opportunities for advancement within the organization.

Don’t forget about reciprocity! Consider your own knowledge and expertise and be prepared to offer your assistance as well!

Network without leaving campus

The career services office at your college likely hosts multiple sessions for students to meet and interact with employers throughout the year. Taking advantage of these opportunities can seriously increase your chances of being hired by these employers. Often the person who attends the session at the school is involved in hiring decisions - get to know them before applying!

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Leveraging LinkedIn®

LinkedIn® is one of the only social media platforms directly marketed to professional networking. By design, this platform will do the heavy lifting of building your professional network for you.

Four Easy Steps to Get Started on LinkedIn®

Create Your Profile

This is your professional landing page that tells people who you are and what you do. Include your work experiences and achievements here.

Build Your Network

LinkedIn® will intuitively suggest connections for you based on your school, where you work or live. You can invite members to join your network.

Learn About Companies

Organizations use LinkedIn® to post industry updates, jobs and other information.

Search for Careers

You can search for jobs using the search field on the LinkedIn® homepage or from the Jobs page where you can also apply for jobs.