

NETWORKING GUIDE



Building and sustaining relationships with professionals within and outside of your field is called networking. Networking offers opportunities for career advancement and expanding your industry knowledge. Colleagues, faculty, classmates, friends, family, and members of professional associations are all great people to include in your professional network.

Finding Networking Opportunities

- Opportunities for connection may include networking events, conferences, meet and greets, clubs or professional memberships or just in-person and virtual events.
- Follow organizations and professionals on social media to keep abreast of event opportunities.
- Check your university's website for major-specific events and explore [Handshake](#) for career and networking opportunities.

Develop a Strong Online Presence

Complete your profile on job-seeking websites like [Handshake](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

- Connect with previous contacts, friends, co-workers, faculty, alumni, etc. Be sure to include a personalized message!
- List your education, experiences, a professional photo, and a summary.
- Let recruiters and employers know you are "open to work" utilizing these [tips from LinkedIn](#) to optimize your profiles.

Preparing for Networking Opportunities

- Before the event, research the attending company or organization of interest. What are their values? What opportunities do they provide? What skills/experience/knowledge can you bring to them?
- Be prepared to share your "elevator pitch", showcase your interest by taking notes and making a point to remember names and job titles.
- For virtual networking, be sure to test your tech, turn on your camera, and find a quiet space.
- While culture varies from organization to organization, as a general rule and when meeting a number of companies, [dress professionally](#) in clean, muted colors.

Creating your Professional Introduction/Elevator Pitch

An elevator pitch is a 30-60 second snapshot of who you are professionally. It should be succinct and clearly articulate your career goals. Follow this simple format:

1. **Introduce yourself:** "Hi, my name is Ellie!"
2. **Summarize your education:** "I'm a junior Civil Engineering major."
3. **Summarize relevant experience:** "I have completed xyz engineering courses and have obtained hands-on experience in xyz."
4. **Say what you'd like to do:** "I'm really interested in interning with your organization this upcoming summer to enhance my skills."
5. **Provide a call to action:** "I'd love to talk with you more about this opportunity. What's the best email address to reach you?"

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