

# NETWORKING GUIDE



STUDENT  
AFFAIRS

Center for Career &  
Professional Development

# 5 STEPS TO NETWORKING SUCCESS

Networking does not mean asking someone for a job, but it can be extremely helpful in gaining connections, advice, and information on a company, industry, or position – all vital to job search success.

STEP  
1

**PREPARE:** Set goals and guidelines for your networking. What information do you hope to gain? What industries/regions do you want to work in?

STEP  
2

**IDENTIFY:** Make a list of anyone you know who can assist you in reaching your career goals. This can include family, friends, professors, TCU alumni, and former employers. Add to your list with referrals from current contacts and social media sites such as LinkedIn.

STEP  
3

**ORGANIZE:** Create a system to keep you on track. Use spreadsheets, calendar reminders, and notes to record who you talk to and when.

STEP  
4

**REACH OUT:** Connect with your contacts via email, phone call, or LinkedIn to set-up meetings in person, on the phone or via Skype. Remember, your goal is to learn more about them, their work, and gain more connections.

STEP  
5

**FOLLOW UP:** ALWAYS thank your contacts for helping you in your search. Keep your relationship alive by asking for referrals, checking in periodically and congratulating them for any achievements they have made.



## THE ELEVATOR PITCH



How would you promote yourself and your skills if you only had 30-seconds? Crafting an elevator pitch can help you be ready to discuss your skills and experience at any opportunity. You can use this pitch when reaching out to contacts, at networking events and in informational interviews.



What are you working on now? Degree/major, current year in school, work/internships, community service.



What are your skills and interests? How did you come to choose your career path?



Explain your career goals and how your skills can be beneficial to a company.



Ask for information about their current career path, and advice on getting started.

# THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

## Connect and Prepare



You can request an interview from your contacts in your initial introduction.



Research the person and organization to gain basic information about your contact's role and the nature of the work.

## Sample Questions



What skills, attributes, values or personal qualifications do people need for this industry or profession?



Are there professional organizations you'd recommend for me to meet other people and learn more about the field?



What types of extracurricular activities or community service would help me in this career?



What changes do you foresee coming in this field over the next few years?



What part of this job do you find most satisfying? Most challenging?



What general advice would you give an upcoming graduate considering entering this field?

Could you suggest the names of other people you think would be valuable for me to talk with? May I mention your name as the person who referred me?

## Follow Up



Follow up with a thank you note or email within 24 hours of interviewing, and continue the relationship by checking in with your contact and asking any additional questions you may have.



Always ask permission to use a contact's name when speaking to a referral.

# SUCCEED WITH SOCIAL MEDIA



## Facebook

- Be aware of posts and photo tags especially when in an active job search.
- Post pictures and links that reflect your personal brand and values.



## Instagram

- Share photos that correlate with your interests, values, and identity.
- Remember your personal brand.



## Twitter

- Follow aspirational employers and recruiters.
- Tweet based on your values and identity you want to establish.



## LinkedIn

- Create a professional profile, use a good quality photo, and add your URL to your paper resume.
- Join groups, follow companies, search for jobs, and connect with TCU Alumni, recruiters and influencers.



## Glassdoor

- Read company reviews, company salary and benefit information, and review questions asked in past interviews.
- Assess company culture and research the employer.



## ePortfolio/Blog

- Demonstrate expertise, knowledge, and unique talents, accomplishments, and/or viewpoints.
- Consider using Frogfolio, Weebly, Wix, SquareSpace, MyPortfolio, PortfolioBox, Dreamweaver, etc.

## DO

- ✓ Treat all profiles as your professional brochure
- ✓ Dedicate time to updating your profiles
- ✓ Choose keywords to describe your skills and goals
- ✓ Be personal, courteous, and smart when connecting
- ✓ Include meaningful content (images, videos, articles)
- ✓ Choose groups carefully and actively participate in them
- ✓ Vet potential connections before accepting

## DON'T

- ✗ Assume your connections will automatically vouch for you or help you just because you ask
- ✗ Connect to everyone who requests it
- ✗ Spam potential connections if they are slow to respond
- ✗ Ask "Can you get me a job?"
- ✗ Say you want to connect with someone for their resources and connections
- ✗ List your address or phone number on anything uploaded to LinkedIn or other online spaces
- ✗ Use long links when embedding your profiles
- ✗ Let your profiles sit inactive



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