



Networking is just a formal term for meeting new people and talking about various interests including work and personal goals. Networking allows you to learn more about the industry and jobs/internships you may be interested in. It is also a way to learn about opportunities that may not be public knowledge. Additionally, connections can serve as great advocates for you during the hiring process, including writing recommendations letters, referring your resume along to a hiring manager, or putting in a good word for you. Did you know 70-80% of people find jobs and internships through their connections?

□ **When to network**

It's never too early to begin networking. Building a network of connections can take time. You should begin networking as soon as you determine which career field you want to pursue. Even if you have not yet decided on a field, you could begin to network as soon as you meet people in a field that has grabbed your attention.

□ **Where to network**

Networking can happen anywhere! You can network with employers, alumni, and peers at formal events such as career fairs, information sessions, and student organization events. You can also arrange individual meetings, called informational interviews, to learn more about a specific industry, company, or career path. Additionally, networking may happen spontaneously in a classroom, on the bus, or at a party. It's important to think about your self-introduction in order to be prepared for these networking opportunities.

□ **Define your network**

Your network is probably larger than you think. In order to define your network, ask yourself: Who do you know and who knows you? You may be surprised when you begin to consider all the people who are in your life. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Family	Friends	Neighbors	Faculty
Advisors	Career Center Staff	Classmates	Coaches
Recruiters	Coworkers	Supervisors	Professional Organizations
Social Media Groups	Alumni	Mentors	Greek Life Members

Utilize LinkedIn, the CMU Alumni Directory, and CareerShift to gather contact information for your connections. Check out our [website](#) for more information on how to access these resources.

□ **Assess your goals**

Before you begin, it's important to determine your purpose and goals for networking. Do you want to learn more about an industry or job function? Do you want to meet new people in a professional field? Are you following-up on an application you submitted? Answering these questions will help give you focus to your networking strategy and help you to identify the right people to connect with.

□ **Reach out to your connections**

To set-up an informational interview or networking meeting, email or send a message on LinkedIn to your connections. In the message, introduce yourself, define where you got their contact information, the purpose for the meeting, as well as suggest logistics for a meeting time and date. Review the sample below.



Dear Mr. Gilmore,

Greetings from your alma mater, Carnegie Mellon! I am currently a sophomore at Carnegie Mellon University, majoring in Global Studies with a minor in Russian Studies. Currently, I am spending the semester in Washington D.C. through the Washington Semester Program at CMU. As I was reviewing the CMU Alumni Database, I noticed that you reside in the D.C. area, and have an extensive career in international relations and political advocacy. Both of these areas are a passion of mine, which I hope to learn more about during my time here in Washington. If you have some availability, I would love to set up a meeting with you, via phone or in person, to discuss your background and current role. Please let me know what days and times work best for you. Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,  
Thomas L. Jones

### Prep for your informational interview

Before your informational interview, conduct some preliminary research to ask thoughtful questions. It's important to have 7-8 questions prepare, because you are leading the meeting. There are three types of questions you can ask:

- **Advice-based:** "Based on my resume and current goals, what are some things I should work on this year?"
- **Trait-based:** "What are 3 traits you find successful (insert job function here) possess?"
- **Job function-based:** "Could you share with me your career path?"

Remember to dress professionally for the interview. Listen and be gracious of the person's time and advice. Additionally, you can always ask if they might suggest additional people you could talk to in order to learn more or who might know of opportunities in this field.

### □ Prepare for networking events

If you are attending a career fair, information session, or networking event, you will want to prepare your self-introduction/elevator pitch. Your elevator pitch is a great way to introduce yourself and express your goals and interests to new connections. In preparing your elevator pitch, consider the following outline:

- Who I am: Begin by stating your name, year in school, university, and major. List anything unique about your course of study.
- What I can offer: Next, discuss your accomplishments/skills most relevant to company or job. Include 'evidence' through projects, classes, internships, research, on-campus jobs, service, leadership and activities
- Why I am here: When discussing why you are here, you're telling the connection what it is you are seeking. 'Here' can be job fair, networking event or online application.
- What I hope happens in the future: Lastly, indicate how this company/position aligns with your professional goals and what areas you would like to develop further.

For more information, check out our [Elevator Pitch Quick Tips](#) or [videos](#).



### **Follow-up and stay connected**

After you have made connections and built a network—which is always an ongoing process, you will need to put some effort into keeping in touch with them. Here are some easy ways to do so:

- Send a thank you message after each networking event or meeting. Additionally, thank any relevant connections once you have accepted a position.
- Keep your contacts fresh—even those you do not think can assist you. An email every couple of months keeps your name on their brain. You can send an updated resume or inform them on the progress you have made in your search.
- Share good news along the way. Let networking contacts know of positive outcomes as they occur. If they referred you to someone who was helpful, let them know. The more positive interactions you have with your connections, the more they will be willing to assist you.

### **Need additional help?**

Be sure to check out the other resources on our [website](#). Also, watch our elevator pitch [videos](#) to learn about your self-introduction.