

Networking Presentation

CEE Summer Research Program

Thursday, June 8, 2017

Networking

...to interact with other people to exchange information and develop contacts, especially to further one's career.

Source: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/network>



The foundation of networking is building relationships.

- * Don't think of networking as a one-sided process. Focus on building a professional relationship based on the prospect of mutual benefits.
- * Grow your relationship from strangers to professional contacts through informational calls/meetings and appropriate follow-up.
- * Relationships take time - don't expect immediate returns from all of your networking efforts.

Why network?

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Potential Benefits

- Insight into a specific role, company, industry, or research area
- Career/job search/interview advice
- Access to “insider information” not publicly available
- Introductions to additional professional contacts
- Job referrals or recommendations
 - Including referrals for jobs that may not be posted!
- Relationships with future clients, contractors, business partners, etc.
- Opportunities to help others

Networking Myths

~~Networking only happens at professional events.~~

~~You can only network with people once you have a strong relationship with them.~~

~~Introverts can't network.~~

~~The best way to start off a networking conversation is by letting the person know you are looking for a job.~~

~~The best time to network is after you see a job posting.~~

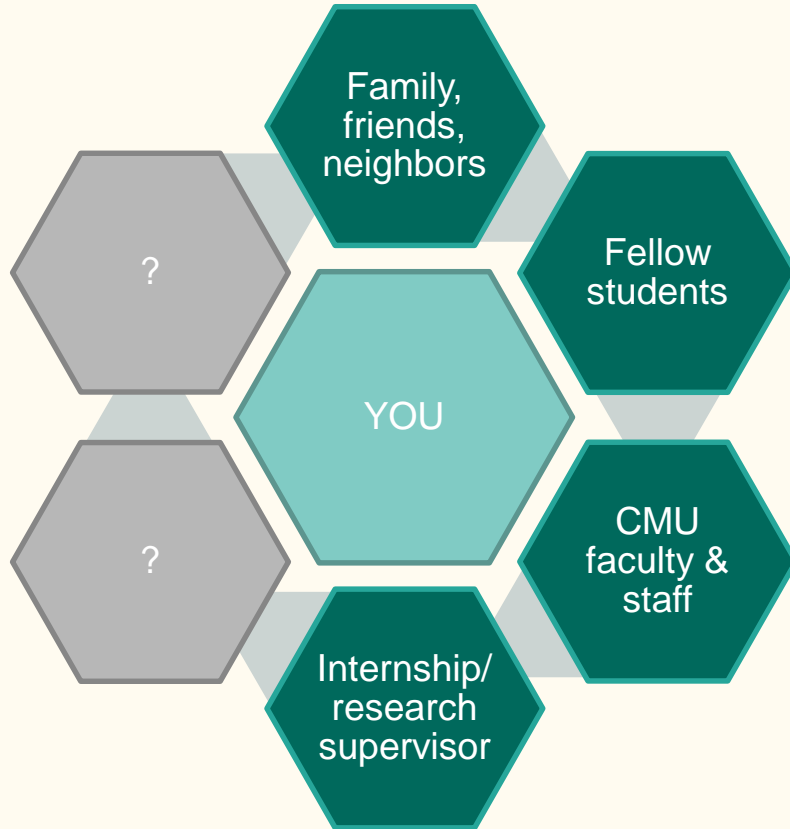
~~You should only network when you're looking for a job.~~

Tip: A great place to make connections is at your current job/internship!

How to network



Define Your Current Network



You do have a network!!

Identify Goals

- Who do you want to add to your network?
- Do you want to:
 - a. Learn more about whether a particular role/company/industry would be a good fit for you?
 - b. Explore a non-traditional career path?
 - c. Further your research by connecting with students or faculty working on similar projects?
 - d. Make connections in the city where you plan to live after graduation?

Find Potential Contacts

Identify People of Interest

- [LinkedIn](#)
 - *Use CMU Alumni Group, CEE Alumni Group, and general searching*

Tip: Identify your contacts on LinkedIn first, then reach out via email for best response rate!

Find Contact Information

- CareerShift (accessible from the Resources section of [Handshake](#))
 - *Search by name, location, company, etc. under My Contacts tab*
- [CMU Online Community](#) (aka Alumni Directory)
 - *Email alumni directly through the system*

Initial Outreach

- First outreach should mention:
 - Who you are / how you found them / why you are reaching out / and what you are requesting of them
 - Be as specific as possible!
- Follow-up after 1.5 – 2 weeks if no response
 - Keep your tone friendly and acknowledge how busy they must be
 - If they don't respond to your second outreach, stop contacting them and move on

Tip: Use an Excel spreadsheet to track your networking outreach/communication, and make notes for follow-up

Initial Outreach - Sample

Good afternoon Mr. Shaw,

My name is Shelby and I am currently pursuing my master's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering at your alma mater, Carnegie Mellon University. I found your profile on LinkedIn and am impressed by your broad experience solving problems in the field of water/wastewater engineering, including industry, consulting, and policy work.

I am currently enrolled in many water-related courses here at CMU and am curious to hear which skills you think are most important for an entry-level water engineer to develop for success on the job. Would you have 15-20 minutes for a phone call some time in the next two weeks? I'm sure you are busy so your time is greatly appreciated.

Best,
Shelby

Networking Communication - Sample

Good afternoon Mr. Shaw,

who

My name is Shelby and I am currently pursuing my master's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering at your alma mater, Carnegie Mellon University. I found your profile on LinkedIn and am impressed by your broad experience solving problems in the field of water/wastewater engineering, including industry, consulting, and policy work. how

I am currently enrolled in many water-related courses here at CMU and am curious to hear which skills you think are most important for an entry-level water engineer to develop for success on the job. Would you have 15-20 minutes for a phone call some time in the next two weeks? I'm sure you are busy so your time is greatly appreciated. why

Best,
Shelby

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Informational Interviews

You ask the questions!

Start the Conversation

Select easy questions that will allow the interviewee to discuss his/her background:

- I reviewed your LinkedIn profile, but can you tell me more about your background and how you ended up in your current role/company?
- How have you utilized your Master's degree at your company?
- On what types of projects are you working right now?

Focus the Conversation

Narrow in on what you're trying to learn from this conversation:

- **Career Exploration:** What skills do you feel are required to work in X field at your organization?
- **Company Exploration:** How would you describe the company culture at X?
- **Job Search Advice:** How did you land your first job in X field? What do you wish someone would have told you when you were conducting your job search?

End the Conversation

Thank them for their time, and let them know how helpful/informative the conversation has been:

- I really enjoyed learning more about your work and experience at X
- Thanks so much for taking the time to speak with me – I now have a much better understanding of X field

Confirm Follow-Up

Make plans to stay in touch, and keep networking:

- May I keep in touch as I continue my job search?
- Do you have any additional recommendations on people I should be in touch with as I continue networking?

Networking Follow-Up

- Always send a personalized thank-you note (email is fine)
- Determine next steps to maintain the relationship -- note this on your Excel tracker or calendar
- Follow up should be directly related to what you discussed in the informational interview. Sample follow-up plans:
 - Thank you and update on outcome of call with one of their professional contacts
 - Reporting out what you accomplished during your research program
 - Notification of active job searching
- If they have helped you, offer to reciprocate now or in the future
 - What can you help them with? Be willing to provide others with networking assistance such as insights, introductions, etc.

A Few Unofficial Rules of Networking

- Don't ask for a job or referral in your first communication with a networking contact (ask for advice/info/contacts instead!)
 - When in doubt about how to communicate with a networking contact, put yourself in the other person's shoes
 - Always, always, always follow up (but not too much!)
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More Networking Resources

Vault.com (accessible from the Resources section of Handshake)

The Muse

- <https://www.themuse.com/advice/introducing-the-email-template-thatll-get-you-a-meeting-with-anyone-you-ask>
- <https://www.themuse.com/advice/how-to-ask-for-an-informational-interview-and-get-a-yes>

CPDC Video Resources

- <https://www.youtube.com/user/cmucpdc>

Never stop networking!

For individual networking advice, schedule an appointment on [Handshake](#) or email us:

- BS Students: Val @ vquatr@andrew.cmu.edu
- MS/PhD: Shelby @ siked@andrew.cmu.edu

