NETWORKING and INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

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So, What Is Networking?

• Building and maintaining career-facilitating relationships

• It’s NOT:
  • hit-and-run contacts
  • “me, me, me”
  • a job interview
Why It’s Important

• A Source of Information

• The Hidden Job Market ~ 80% of jobs

• Networks often lead to experience opportunities, job openings / leads, and references
Networking Possibilities

• Identify Potential Network Contacts
  • Family and Friends
  • Career Fairs and Networking Events
  • Student Groups, Faculty, and Advisors
  • Volunteer, Intern, Shadow, Info’l Interview
Informational Interviewing

• What is it?
  • A meeting you initiate w/ someone working in an industry/occupation of interest
  • To help w/ career decision-making & planning
  • “Informational,” but can result in relationship
Informational Interviewing

How?

- Determine Your Purpose/Prepare
- Identify Possible Interviewees
- Arrange the Meeting
- Show Up…Prepared!!!
- FOLLOW UP
Informational Interviewing

- Determine Your Purpose and Prepare
  - What occupations/industries?
  - What questions do you have? (see example)
  - What are your questions about fit?
  - Questions about career development strategy?
Identifying Interview Contacts

• Start w/ your inner circle & expand outward
  • Warm Contacts
  • Cold Contacts:
Arranging the Meeting

- Be proactive but respectful
- (1) Call, (2) Letter, or (3) Letter-then-call
- Basic Formula (see examples)
  - Introduce self and how you’ve identified him/her
  - Clarify your purpose
  - Show them you have done your homework about the company
  - Clarify logistics (place, time, how)
Show-up—Prepared!!

• Dress professionally (at least business casual)
• Have your Qs prepared/typed out
• Ask Qs that are important to you
• Engage interviewees in talking about selves
• Tactfully access resources this person can offer
Follow-Up

- Make arrangements for follow-up
- Send a prompt, meaningful thank you letter
- Stay in touch: Build something
  - Contact them with additional Qs
  - Send them updates
  - Show an ongoing interest in them
Essential Etiquette

• Don’t Exploit Your Interviewee
  • Bring a resume, but never present it unless asked
  • Don’t ask that person for an internship or job
  • Be a farmer—cultivate the relationship
Next Steps?

• Identify existing networking contacts

• Use the handout to prepare for “Conducting Informational Interviews”

• Seek out related volunteer, part-time positions, and/or look for an internship.

• Come visit Career Connection 😊