

## OFFICE OF CAREER & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

# Networking Tips

### NETWORKING IS:

1. **Talking** to people, building relationships and expanding connections.
2. **Being** friendly, genuine and authentic. Leave your troubles or complaints at the door.
3. **Creating** a positive first impression by dressing like you want "*the job*". You don't have to wear a suit but dress professionally.
4. **Articulating** your introduction via a 1-2 minute networking "speech" - a summary of your:
  - Professional experiences, skills & knowledge
  - Goals: desired organization(s), position(s), ideal job responsibilities
  - Desired geographic location(s) (if relevant)
  - Unique qualities
5. **Better** when you are prepared:
  - Don't forget your networking "tools": business cards, name tag and networking introduction.
6. **Easier** when you arrive early to an event allowing you to relax, gather your thoughts & remember your goals.
7. **Successful** when you have a plan making it easier to stay focused & achieve your goals:
  - What outcome do you want?
  - How many people do you want to meet?
  - What information are you looking for?
8. **Simple** when you start slow:
  - Smile.
  - Introduce yourself by saying your name clearly: "Hello, my name is Sam Smith. It's a pleasure to meet you."
  - Shake hands with an *effective* handshake – not a "bone-crusher" or "limp fish".
  - THEN...Utilize your 1-2 minute networking introduction.

■Networking Tips■

9. **Asking** open-ended questions (who, what, where, when, how) which opens up the discussion and indicates your interest in the contact.
  - Where are you working and what is your position?
  - What are your job responsibilities?
  - How did you get your current position?
  - What skills do successful people in your professional area possess?
  - What was the best advice you received when you graduated?
  - What is the most effective strategy for conducting a job search?
10. **Not** asking for a job directly. Most people understand that one of the goals of networking is finding out about job opportunities however asking this outright can make someone uncomfortable. Instead express your interest in & enthusiasm for a specific position or organization.
11. **Engaging** when someone is speaking with you. This means listening and *really* hearing what the contact is saying. Rule of thumb: Talk ½ as much as you listen.
12. **Making** the most of your time. Don't stay too long in one place. Talk to each contact for 8-10 minutes then excuse yourself by saying, "It was nice meeting you ... "
13. **Connecting** – when you are done with your conversation offer ask him/her for his/her business card and offer yours.
14. **Following** through with the contacts you met within 24-48 hours by sending a thank you email or mailing a professional note card, and keeping in touch with them after the event.
15. **Staying** organized. Keep information about your professional networking contacts (business cards, emails, notes) in one place so you can easily find it when needed.

**Enjoy Yourself!**  
**Making connections can be a fun & rewarding experience!**