Networking

http://careersuccess.msu.edu/phdcareers/search/interact

For Private, Public, and Non-Profit Sector Careers

Networking, or making contacts, is one of the most important activities to engage in as a graduate student. It allows you to build relationships and broaden your scope of influence within communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal:</th>
<th>To build relationships with scholars, community members, and potential employers.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Who You Can Connect With:</td>
<td>Anyone; we build relationships every day in classrooms, conferences, meetings, events, etc. Unsure where to start? We recommend that you reach out to Spartan Alumni to expand your network of connections.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus:</td>
<td>Building relationships that have the potential to benefit your career goals in the present or future; reaching out to new people (employers, community members, students, alumni, etc); learning from the people you network with.</td>
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<td>Things to Remember:</td>
<td>Networking should be about building long-term, meaningful relationships. Remember to keep in touch and thank your connections for their advice.</td>
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How to Get Started

The Informational Interview

- What it is—A meeting between you and a professional. The purpose is to help define your career options or research a company where you want to work.
- Talking to current professionals is a great way to determine if a career-field is for you.
- Ask faculty in your department for names of alumni working in your areas of interest; ask for suggestions from friends, family, or other graduate students who work or have worked in your field of interest; find MSU alumni on LinkedIn (Spartans love to help other Spartans!).
- During informational visits, you get an up-close look at workplaces from an employee’s view & you have a chance to observe daily office activities, and ask questions.

Informational Interview Steps

1. Identify the person or company you wish to interview.
2. Set up the interview through e-mail, phone or skype.
3. Prepare for the interview:
   - Prepare questions to ask that are not easily found elsewhere.
   - See the back of this sheet for links to resources with potential informational interview questions.
4. Conduct the interview:
   - Dress professionally & arrive early.
   - Have your questions available and bring several writing utensils and a pad of paper.
   - Stick to your allotted time; if the interview is scheduled for 20 minutes, make sure it only lasts 20 minutes.
   - Thank the interviewee for his/her time and ask if you can contact them for additional information.
5. Send a “Thank You” note to the person you interviewed with (preferably via post, but email is OK too).

*See the back of this sheet for resources to help you network successfully*
Networking Resources

Why Should I Network?

- **Building Your Professional Network** (MSU PhD Career Services)
  - [http://careersuccess.msu.edu/phdcareers/explore/build](http://careersuccess.msu.edu/phdcareers/explore/build)
- **10 Networking Tips for Introverts** (US News)
- **Networking Tips: How to Work a Room** (University of California, Berkley)
  - [https://career.berkeley.edu/article/021011b.stm](https://career.berkeley.edu/article/021011b.stm)
- **How to be Effective in Networking** (PhDStudent.com)
  - [http://bit.ly/1iFEFUm](http://bit.ly/1iFEFUm)
- **A Successful Job Search: It's All About Networking** (NPR)
  - [http://n.pr/1dicgka](http://n.pr/1dicgka)
- **Six Ways to Network in a New City** (Forbes)
  - [http://onforb.es/1nUyJtP](http://onforb.es/1nUyJtP)
- **How to Network Your Way to a Job** (Wall Street Journal)

Informational Interviews

- **Informational Interviews: A Beginner’s Guide** (Branching Points)
  - [http://bit.ly/1j0QjHY](http://bit.ly/1j0QjHY)
- **How to do an Informational Interview** (Chronicle of Higher Education)
  - [http://bit.ly/1j0QUcx](http://bit.ly/1j0QUcx)
- **How the Informational Interview Helps You Get The Job** (Fast Company)
  - [http://bit.ly/1q0xk41](http://bit.ly/1q0xk41)
- **What Informational Interviews Can Do For You** (Chronicle of Higher Education)
- **Informational Interviews + Job Shadowing** (MSU Career Network)
  - [http://bit.ly/P5o0A9](http://bit.ly/P5o0A9)
- **Informational Interviewing Tutorial** (Quintessential Careers)
- **Coffee in 2002, a Job Offer in 2004** (Chronicle of Higher Education)
- **How to do an Informational Interview** (Chronicle of Higher Education)
  - [http://bit.ly/1j0QUcx](http://bit.ly/1j0QUcx)

*If you have any questions, please contact the PhD Career Services Office at 517-884-1332 or go to careersuccess.msu.edu/phdcareers/prepare/advising to schedule an interview with one of our advisors.*