



HER RESOURCES

A collection of resources designed to provide practical tools for women undergraduate students.

Networking

A common assumption about networking is that it is only for people in the 'real world', either young professionals actively job seeking or established professionals looking to boost their careers - it's not. Simply put, the purpose of networking is to form relationships with those who can help you get where you want to go. The earlier you start forming these relationships the better. You don't have to know exactly what you want to be doing or how somebody can help you in the future - form meaningful connections and their usefulness will present itself in the future. Below you will find tips for effective networking as an undergraduate student.

"THE SECOND KIND OF NETWORKING, WHICH I PERSONALLY FOUND TO BE MUCH MORE FULFILLING, INVOLVED KEEPING UP RELATIONSHIPS WITH MANY OF MY PROFESSORS. A SIMPLE EMAIL SAYING HI OR AN OFFER TO GET COFFEE TOGETHER CAN GO A LONG WAY, AND ALL OF MY PROFESSORS WERE MORE THAN HAPPY TO WRITE LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION FOR ME!"

- CHINESE & CLASSICS DOUBLE MAJOR; ECONOMICS MINOR



Tools

1

Build networking into your everyday routine. Networking doesn't always have to be something you set out to do at a specific time and place - as a student you are frequently put in front of networking opportunities. Actively engage with faculty, staff and classmates in a positive manner. Faculty often have a wealth of connections both in their field and with former students - creating a meaningful connection with even just a few professors can open a number of doors. Staff tend to be overlooked when students network, but they have similar connections with former students and can offer invaluable professional development advice. Finally, while your classmates may be walking around in sweatpants now, they may eventually be your colleagues or work in a field you're interested in breaking into.

3

Don't be afraid to take the first step. A little bravery can go a long way. Whether you're in class, at a Career Center event, or out in the world, don't be afraid to approach a potential contact. As long as you genuinely take an interest in who you're talking to (who they are and what they do), you can make a long-lasting connection. Most people, if they have time, are happy to talk to a young person about themselves, so reach out and connect!

2

Take advantage of technology. The first step to networking online is LinkedIn. This tool is a great way to discover and stay in touch with professional contacts. Visit your school's career center to get personalized advice on the best way to utilize LinkedIn to your advantage. You can also start following companies of interest or your professional role models on social media. Not only does this demonstrate your interest, it's an excellent way of keeping track of potential job opportunities.

4

Maintain your network. For many, this may be the most difficult and time-consuming aspect of networking, but it's integral to being successful. Networking is more than gaining LinkedIn connections, passing out resumes and collecting business cards. If, for example, you meet somebody at a career fair, send them an email afterward, incorporating details from your conversation to demonstrate your genuine interest. Even if this new contact can't do something for you right at that moment, keeping in contact with them can lead to additional opportunities later on. Continue to reach out after that initial email - check in on their well-being and subtly remind them that you're there in case an opportunity presents itself.

Further Reading

"The Importance of Networking in College" by Carson Kohler | Top Resume

"Career Networking Advice for College Students" by Alison Doyle | The Balance Careers

"The 5 Best Ways to Network While You're Still in College" by Liz Wessel | Forbes

A note from the author

Networking can be difficult to get the hang of, especially when you're first starting out. I was able to start networking when I stopped thinking about it as "networking". All I was doing was chatting with interesting people and the rest fell in place. Talking to people, especially strangers, will have added discomfort if you approach it with the mindset of "Gosh I hate networking" or "Ooh, I wonder what this person can do for me." Find a way to make a meaningful connection - whether it's finding common ground over a subject of interest or a hobby, if you're genuine you'll make connections that can propel your career forward.

- Sam Collins, MA.