Building your Professional Network

connecting to your future by connecting with others

Whitman College
Career and Community Engagement Center
Why “networking”?

1. build relationships
2. research options
3. get answers

"The single greatest 'people skill' is a highly developed and authentic interest in the other person." -- Bob Burg, business author and podcast host

“You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people, than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.” -- Dale Carnegie, American writer & lecturer

"Success isn't about how much money you make; it's about the difference you make in people's lives." -- Michelle Obama
### Where to look?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Network</th>
<th>Professional Network</th>
<th>Whitman Alumni Network</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>❖ family friends</td>
<td>❖ past supervisors</td>
<td>❖ 17,000+ strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❖ neighbors</td>
<td>❖ former co-workers</td>
<td>❖ source of professional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❖ classmates</td>
<td>❖ professors</td>
<td>❖ history of connectivity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consider the following questions:

1) Create a list of 3 “dream” organizations that you think you would like to work at some day.
2) Consider how you might learn more about and get connected to those organizations? Who in your circle of relationships would you talk to first about your interests?
3) What steps would you take to expand that circle of relationships?
Where to find contacts?

In-person situations to build your network might include:

- discussing your interests at a large family gathering or with friends and families in your community
- asking your former internship, research or summer job supervisor what steps they took (or what skills they needed) to move into the role they're in now
- striking up a conversation with that chatty person next to you in the plane seat, coffee shop line, or conference event
- attending a Whitman student-alumni networking event like Whitties

Helping Whitties

https://www.whitman.edu/newsroom/archive/2016/whitties-helping-whitties
What are the tools?

**LinkedIn Alumni Tool**
- publicly accessible data
- 12,000+ strong alumni and student profiles
- good for research
- need a profile to start

**Whitman Connect**
- closed proprietary tool
- new platform, growing quickly
- alumni and student profiles
- alumni advice and mentorship
- set-up your profile to connect

https://blog.linkedin.com/2020/may/june/12/four-tips-to-network-on-linkedin
How to reach out?

- Begin with curiosity
- Keep it positive & professional
- Follow-up is crucial
- Give back to the network

Writing activity

Take the next few minutes to read through the article shared on the previous slide, then begin crafting your introductory email to a new connection that you are meeting for the first time.

1) How would you introduce yourself? What is the pertinent information from your background that you should include?
2) What types of information are you seeking? What questions do you have for this individual to help you learn more about their field, career trajectory or current role?
3) How do you want them to respond?
4) How will you close your note?
What to say? (when in person or in the informational interview)

**Warm up**
- How did you get your start in this field?
- What projects are you working on right now?
- How is (interesting industry development) impacting your work?

**Achieve your goals**
- Gather information about an organization
- Gain insight about skills and knowledge relevant to the field
- Learn more about programs for current students

**Tap into their networks**
- Who else do you think I should be talking to about my interests?
- Are there other organizations that you suggest I research or connect with?

https://www.themuse.com/advice/3-steps-to-a-perfect-informational-interview
https://www.themuse.com/advice/5-tips-for-nonawkward-informational-interviews
Share your “elevator pitch”

The “elevator pitch” is the information you would share with someone on a 40-second ride up an elevator if you wanted to initiate a relationship. It’s an extension of your introduction.

EXAMPLE:

Hello, My name is ____________, and I’m a ____________ studying ____________ and ____________ at Whitman College. I’m interested in/curious about a career in ____________ in the ____________ field. I have been involved in ____________ and ____________ where I developed skills in _____________. I also interned/worked at ____________ where I discovered that I really enjoy _____________. I’d love to learn more about opportunities to build a career in ____________.
How to stay connected?

Follow-through is crucial - it's the most important step!

1. Send a Thank you note (24-48 after you talk with them)
2. Send a LinkedIn connection request (around the same time as above)
3. Set a reminder to reconnect (3-4 weeks during recruiting, 6-8 weeks otherwise)
4. Give to the network - share an article, news, trend info or personal update

https://blogs.whitman.edu/sec/2016/03/28/do-you-thank-you-notes-from-a-professional/
Keeping organized

This type of tool can help you keep on top of the relationships you’ve begun and those you need to reconnect with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Outreach Date</th>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Meeting Notes</th>
<th>Other Notes/Next Steps</th>
<th>Thank you sent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jessica James</td>
<td>Starbucks</td>
<td>Worked together previously</td>
<td>5/1/2016</td>
<td>5/5/2016</td>
<td>She is on the communications team and can connect me to her manager and/or teammates to learn more. Traveling this summer to Peru, make sure to ask how the trip went.</td>
<td>Follow up by 5/15 if he hasn't made introductions; he's leaving for his trip on 6/2</td>
<td>5/6/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Stone</td>
<td>Starbucks</td>
<td>Intro from Jessica James</td>
<td>5/5/2016</td>
<td>5/10/2016</td>
<td>Asked me to send my resume as a follow up and wants to connect me to an internship recruiter.</td>
<td>Send resume ASAP and follow up by 5/20 if he hasn't made introductions yet</td>
<td>5/11/2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We’re here for you!

Contact Us

https://www.whitman.edu/after-whitman/career-and-community-engagement-center

509-527-5183

ccecc_info@whitman.edu

Schedule an alumni network appointment at: https://whitman.joinhandshake.com/

Facebook  Instagram  SEC Blog