Networking to Your Advantage - Maximize Your Connections Time!

Why Network? *Because it provides a two-way opportunity for you to get to know prospective employers, and for them to learn more about you.*

Tips for Students at Networking Events:

- Prior to the event, try to "pre" connect with some of the participants via LinkedIn.
- Arrive a few minutes early, so you'll have time to catch your breath and collect your thoughts.
- Present a polished, professional image – this requires a little planning ahead.
- Take the initiative and introduce yourself to someone you don't know. Incorporate parts of your **personal branding speech** into your introduction, but try to keep it conversational, so you don't come across as too rehearsed.
- When they tell you their name, reply with "It's great to meet you, (their name)!" Repeating their name throughout the conversation will help you remember it.
- Shake hands firmly and confidently and be sure to maintain direct eye contact.
- Have a dialogue—make sure you are conversing with the individual.
- Work the room—don't stay in one area the entire time or "hang" only with people you know.
- If food is offered, eat *something*, if only a bite or two - it shows you are comfortable at the event.
- Observe your surroundings—how are others moving around the room? What is the engagement level with students and professionals?
- Offer your résumé appropriately—don't give it immediately, but rather as you chat, asking: "would you be interested in reviewing my résumé?"
- Be sure to write down the names of the individuals you meet as soon as the event is over. Better yet, ask for business cards and offer yours, if available.
- Send follow-up emails— write properly, PROOF CAREFULLY, and send strategically (within 24 hours).
- Ask strong questions—preparation is important, so be sure to put your "homework" to good use.
- Communicate like the professional you want to be!

Networking is about positive connections, so make sure you use the session productively!

Good luck with your professional networking strategies!

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