

NETWORKING



SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH
Office of Career Services

Build a robust professional network.

WHAT IS NETWORKING

Networking is a lifelong process of meeting people and making connections. Networking is not just about getting a job...it can be much more. Your network can be comprised of professional friends and colleagues, former co-workers, and acquaintances you meet outside the workplace. As you progress through your college experience and career, you will continue to expand your network. A strong professional network is the most powerful job search tool you can have.

REACH OUT TO THOSE CLOSEST

The easiest way to get started is by speaking with the people you already know well. Ask your parents, aunts, and uncles if they could facilitate introductions to individuals working in your field of interest. Let your past co-workers and old bosses/supervisors know what you are seeking and see if they can refer you to anyone.

EXPAND YOUR IU CONNECTIONS

Join student organizations or clubs to broaden your reach on campus and meet peers with common interests or career goals. Proactively interact with faculty, staff, and campus offices. IU has over 500,000 alumni and you have something in common with each and everyone of them...IU! Begin reaching out to the alumni in your field of interest.

CONNECT WITH PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Professional associations are made up of large groups of people who all work in the same field or industry. Many have job and internship boards where opportunities are posted, and members often share resources and best practices. If you are not ready to join a professional association, it could be useful to see who the active members are and reach out to them.

UTILIZE LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is a great tool to expand your network. Search by organization, title, geographic location and more. Once you find someone to connect with, send a request through the site. Once you have connected, it is time to step out from behind the computer and set up a time to chat in person or over the phone.

CONSIDER INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

Conducting informational interviews is the best way to reach out to people you have never met before. Learn more about a specific career or industry and gain advice from someone in your field of interest.

INITIATING AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW — EXAMPLE

Dear Mr. Conway,

My name is Jason Morrow. I am a Human Development and Family Studies major at Indiana University. I found your name using the IU Alumni Directory and was wondering if you would be willing to chat with me either in person or over the phone sometime over the next few weeks. I would really like to learn more about your career path, how you entered the field, and any advice you have for someone just graduating. I realize you must be very busy and would really appreciate any time and advice you would be willing to give.

Thank you for your time,
Jason Morrow

POTENTIAL QUESTIONS TO ASK

- How did you get started in this field?
- Could you describe a typical work week?
- What are the greatest challenges in this field/position?
- What skills and characteristics are most important for success in this field/position?
- What additional training, certifications, or advanced degree would you recommend?
- Can you suggest professional associations or networking groups for this field?
- Can you recommend other people to talk to about this field?

FOLLOW-UP BEST PRACTICE

Completing the interview is just the first step in the networking process. Next, you must cultivate and maintain this contact by keeping in contact.

SEND A THANK YOU LETTER

Write a written letter or email within three days of meeting. Remind them of who you are and when you met. Convey appreciation for sharing their time and expertise. Mention elements of the conversation that were particularly helpful.

CONNECT WITH THEM ON LINKEDIN

Cultivate the relationship of your new contact by connecting with them on LinkedIn. You will demonstrate an advanced level of professionalism and gain second tier access to people within their network.

FOLLOW-UP WITH REFERRALS

If they provided information for other contacts in the field, ask if they will facilitate an introduction or if you should self-initiate contact. When self-initiating, mention the name of your shared acquaintance and why they were referred.

TRACK YOUR KEY CONTACTS

Create an Excel spreadsheet of new key contacts (see below). Track the meeting date, your last contact, when you sent a thank you letter, and follow-up plan. Periodically connect with important members of your network. You never know when in might lead to a job lead.

CONTACT SHEET — EXAMPLE

Name & Contact Information	Connection	Notable Points
Becky Doyle IU Health 812-555-5555 bdoyle@iuhealth.org	Met at Healthcare & Wellness Networking event 11/2/2022	Hires interns and entry-level cardiac rehab staff
Jack Foster St. Vincent Hospital 317-555-5555 jfoster@stvincent.org	Met at Healthcare & Wellness Networking event 11/2/2022	Knows the hiring manager for St. Vincent in cardiac rehab. Agreed to facilitate introduction