

guide to NETWORKING



WHAT IT IS

Networking is simply interacting with others to develop a relationship and exchange information. The old saying of “it’s not what you know, it’s who you know”, is still current today. Find ways to be proactive and create connections, and watch how much it enhances your job search.

*Get into the
inner circle.*

Employer motivation. Employers prefer to hire candidates who are referred to them by people they know and trust. By talking to as many people as possible, reaching out directly to professionals in your industry, and being a good team member in anything you are currently working on or involved in, you naturally put yourself ahead.

Start with the basics. Tell people you are looking, and what you are looking for. Family, friends, peers, advisors, people at Starbucks, anyone. When engaging in conversation, mention your job search to others. Many people will have ideas or referrals for you that you weren’t expecting. Keep your radar up!

HOW TO MAKE CONNECTIONS

Start here...

Connect on LinkedIn. Start by searching Mizzou alumni who are in your field of interest, graduated with your degree, or are living in your desired area. Once you identify contacts, send an invite with a personalized message and reach out to see if they have advice for you.

Engage on Handshake. Once you complete your profile and update your resume, make your profile public. Then you can open yourself to employer messaging, as well as messaging to peers at Mizzou and other schools across the country.

Check out the Mizzou Mentoring program. The Mizzou Alumni Association has created a program that connects alums in your industry to students in a meaningful way. Find out more at www.mizzou.com.

Attend campus events. Be active and engaged at Mizzou. Check Handshake and stay in touch with your academic unit about in person or virtual information sessions, alumni/employer panels, career fairs, or interviewing opportunities.

Join professional orgs. Almost every industry has organizations dedicated to networking and information sharing. To begin, check out a directory here: <https://jobstars.com/professional-associations-organizations/>

...Then do this.

Request a 20-30 minute informational interview to ask questions about their role/industry.

Find peers who have worked for employer you are targeting. Ask them about the work culture and if they have advice for you.

Complete your mentee profile and heed advice of your mentor. They’ve been there!

Follow up with employers after the event using LinkedIn or Handshake to introduce yourself and express your interest.

Check out programs, events, job boards and member lists to find connections.

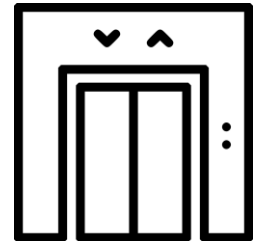
CRAFTING YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

Many networking conversations begin with “tell me a little bit about yourself.” Here is where you deliver your pitch: your professional and concise introduction about who you are and your career interests.

- 1. WHO ARE YOU?** State your name, major, and that you are a student at Mizzou.
Truman Tiger...undergraduate student at Mizzou studying...currently working in...
- 2. WHAT ARE YOU DOING NOW?** Give a broad overview of what you are involved in, working on, or specifically studying.
*I have experience in...I have contributed to projects on...I'm specializing in...
I'm an involved community member in areas of...*
- 3. WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOU STAND OUT?** Briefly mention one or two interesting accomplishments or novel things you are involved in that might be memorable.
I'm a engaging public speaker...I love spreadsheets...I'm a peer mentor... I dabble in theater
- 4. WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?** Talk about what direction you are headed, and what might be a next step for you. If you don't have a specific goal, it is alright to keep this fairly general.
*aspiring to work in...and will start a business...will be a passionate advocate...
I look forward to joining an organization that...*
- 5. WHAT WILL YOU DO NOW?** End with action, something like asking them to tell you more about their organization, or if they have any referrals for you.
tell me about your organization...interested in this specific position...what do you like about the organization...what skills are professionals looking for...

Sample Elevator Pitch

“ My name is Truman Tiger, a senior studying English at Mizzou. I love writing and helping. I have professional experience in copyediting, creative writing, and managing peers. I also love giving back to my community. I volunteer helping to write fun bios for dogs waiting to be adopted, among other service activities. I hope to work at a publishing firm or advertising agency in the Midwest. I was hoping you could tell me more about your organization and entry-level positions. “



MAKING CONVERSATION

Successful networking is making good conversation and asking engaging questions. In any networking exchange, spend 20% of your time talking, 80% listening. Show your enthusiasm!

GO-TO QUESTIONS

Ask something about them

“Where did you grow up?”

Ask something about their career

“What is a challenge in your job?”

Ask something social

“What is your favorite hobby?”

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

DO: What do you like best about your job?

DON'T: Do you like your job?

DO: What led you to decide on your major?

DON'T: What did you major in?

FEELING UNCERTAIN?

If you not sure what to say when first contacting an employer, check out the guides on **MANGO** for tips and advice:

<https://mangoconnects.com/>

next steps:

Talk with a Career Specialist for one-on-one assistance: <https://career.missouri.edu/connect>
Check out more resources at <https://career.missouri.edu> > Resources tab