A virtual networking event provides direct access to alumni, employers, and influential individuals for participants to have brief, informal conversations around career goals and mutual topics of interest.

Before the Virtual Event

1. Revisit your résumé. Your résumé is your primary document that articulates your qualifications, skills, and prior accomplishments, so review it to remind yourself about the details of your past experiences.
2. Have your résumé critiqued at the Center for Career Development (CCD).
3. Research and familiarize yourself with the individuals who will be attending the networking event. Researching the mentor’s profiles and if applicable, their LinkedIn pages, allows you to get a sense of what each person does, their background, etc. so you can plan out your conversation topics and create a list of people you want to meet.
4. Develop an elevator pitch. Prepare a 15- to 30-second elevator pitch for the mentors in which you introduce yourself, highlight skills or experiences that make you stand out, and describe your interest in meeting with them. This should end with a well thought-out lead-in question inquiring more specifically about something you learned from your research.
5. Prepare two to five questions to ask each mentor that you meet in order to shows you are genuinely interested in them, their lives, etc.
6. Dress for success. Regardless of your industry, it is important to present yourself in a neat, polished manner.
7. Learn the platform. Log into the system before the event begins, to get to know how it works, set up your profile if needed, etc. This way you are ready to use the system the time of the event.
8. Pre-schedule consultations. If the platform allows for pre-scheduling the meetings, do it as soon as possible, so you can ideally meet the people you want to meet.

During the Event

1. Establish a rapport with each networking professional. This can be accomplished through verbal and non-verbal communication. To the extent that you are comfortable, smile, make eye contact, and engage in brief small-talk help to build rapport. Start the conversation with your prepared introduction (i.e., elevator pitch) and share your résumé. Use mature and appropriate language.
2. Have your conversations with the professional. Review your prepared questions and ask the ones that flow based on the professional’s response. Try to make it as organic and natural as possible, vs. an interview or interrogation.
3. Confirm follow-up methods if applicable. Thank each professional for taking the time to speak with you. As applicable, ask the professional about preferred methods of future contact (using the same platform as the virtual event, LinkedIn, email, phone call) following the event.
4. Watch your time. There is likely a pre-set time for your virtual conversation, so don’t go long, preventing another person from meeting the professional on time.
5. Monitor your schedule. Before moving to another conversation, take a moment to write notes about the one that just ended, so that you can remember key conversation topics to help you customize your thank you notes, future cover letters, and to reference in interviews. Consider avoiding back to back scheduling.
After the Networking Event

☐ Send thank you notes to each professional you met. You can send it through the platform, email, or LinkedIn.
  ☐ Use proper spelling and grammar in your follow-up email; this is not the time to rely on your computer’s spell-check program to catch mistakes.
  ☐ Read through it multiple times before sending. As in all professional writing, do not use shortcuts, slang, or informal phrases.
  ☐ Be sure to address your email in a formal manner with “Dear Mr./Ms./Mx. (last name):” - you should never start your email with “Hi,” “Hey,” or address the employer by their first name.
  ☐ You can also request a follow-up plan to stay connected with the individual.

☐ Assess your networking experience and plan for the next one. Reflect on your strategies, interactions, and results, making note of any changes you will make.
  ☐ Make an appointment with a career coach to discuss and/or practice these strategies.

Virtual Interviewing Tips: Technology

☐ Make sure you know how to operate the platform that you will be using for the networking event, ahead of time. Take advantage of any trial-run opportunities available to you.
  ☐ On the day of the event, sign-in to the platform early if possible (10-15 minutes) to ensure your internet is connected and troubleshoot any connection issues that may arise. Practice!
  ☐ Ask a friend or family member who has audio and/or video capabilities to test your image quality, sound, outfit choice, etc. before you start networking.

Virtual Interviewing Tips: Environment & Appearance

DO
☐ Establish a quiet environment
☐ Have your notes organized and in front of you
☐ Align the camera level with your face
☐ Look at the camera so it appears as though you are making eye-contact with the professional

AVOID
☐ Bringing cell phones, food, and other distractions into the room
☐ Posters, pictures, or distracting items/colors behind you
☐ Shadows or over-exposed light that may impact the interviewers ability to see you
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Resources</strong></th>
<th>Résumé, CV, and Cover Letter Samples: <a href="https://career.uconn.edu/resumecv-samples/">https://career.uconn.edu/resumecv-samples/</a></th>
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| **UConn Résumé & Cover Letter Resources** | Read “Building Your Network”: [https://career.uconn.edu/build-your-network/](https://career.uconn.edu/build-your-network/)  
Connect with Alumni via Husky Mentor Network: [https://career.uconn.edu/resources/husky-mentor-network/](https://career.uconn.edu/resources/husky-mentor-network/)  
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