



What is Networking?

Networking is the ongoing process of developing and maintaining reciprocal, mutually beneficial relationships.

Why Network?

- Build your reputation and brand.
- Learn about opportunities, advice, and connections.
- Collaborate and share information with others.

Many studies reveal that the majority of jobs are obtained through networking.

Who is in your Network?

- Family, friends and their contacts
- Neighbors and their contacts
- Classmates and roommates
- Faculty and staff
- Current and former colleagues and supervisors
- Student organization members
- Find a mentor on Cougar Connect @ www.csusm.peoplegrove.com

Conduct Informational Interviews

One of the best ways to find out about the realities of a career or job is to talk to people currently employed in the field. Through informational interviews, you identify individuals in your field or industry of interest and contact them to gain insight into their career path.

- Find someone to interview through online research or your network of contacts.
- Request an introduction through your referral or contact directly via phone, email, or LinkedIn.
- Request 20-30 minutes of their time to speak in person, by phone, or virtually.
- Do research in advance about the position, company, and field. Try to familiarize yourself with the interviewee's bio or LinkedIn profile.
- Develop a list of questions to ask, but be prepared to listen carefully and adapt to their responses.
- Dress professionally, if meeting in person.
- Bring a resume, in case they request to see it or offer advice.
- DO NOT ask for a job/position.
- DO NOT ask their salary.
- Within 24 hours of the interview, send a typed or handwritten note thanking the person for their time and advice. Follow up on any advice or contacts shared, and keep them updated or share information to continue the professional relationship.

Note: If you're nervous about contacting someone for an informational interview, know that many people enjoy helping students by sharing advice and enjoy talking about their career paths. Some busy professionals may not respond, but many will because they remember what it was like to start/change career paths.

