

Networking Event Success Guide

Networking is an essential skill that helps you make meaningful professional connections, explore careers, and discover new opportunities. Use this worksheet as a guide before, during, and after your event to stay confident, intentional, and professional.

Before the Event: Prepare to Make a Strong Impression

Research, plan, and practice. Preparation shows professionalism.

Task	Action Steps
Research the event and attendees	Look up participating employers, alumni, or speakers. Identify 2–3 people or organizations you want to meet.
Prepare your introduction ('elevator pitch')	Write a short (30–60 second) summary that includes: your name, major, career interests, and what you're seeking to learn.
Bring the essentials	✓ Updated résumé ✓ Professional or Business Casual outfit ✓ Notebook or phone for notes ✓ Positive attitude and curiosity
Set personal goals	Example: "I will introduce myself to at least 3 professionals" or "I will learn more about internships in my field."

 Tip: Rehearse your introduction with a friend, mentor, or career counselor to boost your confidence.

During the Event: Connect with Confidence

Engage authentically and show curiosity.

Task	Action Steps
Approach professionals confidently	Smile, make eye contact, and offer a firm handshake (if culturally appropriate).
Ask thoughtful questions	Examples: • What do you enjoy most about your role? • What advice would you give someone entering this field? • How does your organization support early career professionals?
Listen actively and take notes	Focus on the person's answers and jot down key insights or next steps.
Exchange contact information	Ask for a business card or LinkedIn connection. Be sure to thank them for their time.

 Tip: Avoid asking directly about job openings—focus on building relationships and learning about career paths.

✉ After the Event: Follow Up Professionally

Strengthen connections through gratitude and reflection.

Task	Action Steps
Send thank-you messages	Within 48 hours, send a short thank-you email or LinkedIn message. Mention something specific from your conversation.
Reflect on what you learned	Write down key takeaways or advice you received. How did the event shape your career goals or next steps?
Take action	Follow up on leads, apply for opportunities, or schedule informational interviews with contacts you met.

💡 Tip: Keep a running list of your networking contacts with notes on how you met and topics discussed.

Description of Professional Dress and Business Casual

-  **Professional (Business Formal)**
Suits, dress shirts, blazers, ties, formal shoes, dresses or skirts, etc.
-  **Business Casual**
Slacks or khakis, collared shirts, blouses, cardigans, closed-toe shoes, etc.

Bonus Career Readiness Tips

- **Be authentic**-Networking is about building relationships, not collecting contacts.
- **Stay open-minded**-Every conversation can lead to new insights.
- **Practice professionalism** online-Update your Handshake and LinkedIn profile and reflect your career goals clearly.
- **Connect with the Career Education & Development office (CED)** for career readiness resources and support.