



# NETWORKING GUIDELINES

## Is Networking Effective?

**YES!**

70%-80% of jobs and internships are acquired through networking. The “art of networking” is an opportunity for you to gather information about a career field or company, to expand your knowledge about a job or internship, and to practice your interviewing skills by talking to people. Networking is not asking for a job. It is an opportunity for you to learn, to establish contacts in your areas of interest, and to be informed about and referred when openings are available.

## NETWORKING BASICS

*In the simplest form, networking is comprised of the following steps:*

### 1. Compiling a list of contacts

- Think about the people you know, both personal and professional contacts and compile a list. This list may include family, friends, roommates, co-workers, supervisors, faculty, and alumni.
- As you talk and meet with these individuals, your list will expand to include individuals that your contacts know and refer you to.

### 2. Conducting research

- Before contacting individuals in your network, gather company information.
- Create a list of pertinent questions based on the research you have done to demonstrate your knowledge of the company.
- Also prepare questions about your contact’s career path.

### 3. Contacting your network to schedule informational interviews

- Contact members of your network via a letter, email, or phone.
- Identify yourself, state the purpose of your contact, provide brief information about your background and interests, and thanks and appreciation.

### 4. Create a “networking log”

- It will be helpful for you to maintain a log of all the information you receive from each of your contacts.
- Track correspondence and follow up with each contact with the help of a log
- A sample “networking log” may look like this:

Name	Title	Company	Phone	Email	Referral Source	Date of Contract	Notes/ Comments

### 5. Maintaining Relationships

- Send a “thank you” email or letter after an informational interview.
- Periodically follow-up with your contacts regarding your progress.
- Email is a great way to stay in touch.

**The goal of networking is not to get a job; the goal of networking is to get advice, ideas, leads and referrals.**

### Networking Do’s

- Make a list of contacts– create a “networking tree”
- Network everywhere- grocery store, laundry mat, the gym, etc.
- Prepare your “job talk”
- Prepare a list of questions you would like to have answered about an industry, company, or position
- Bring multiple copies of your resume
- Research the company and do your homework before you meet your contact
- Be professional
- Be genuine & interested
- Make eye contact
- Give a firm handshake
- Introduce yourself
- Exchange business cards
- Ask for referrals for other contacts
- Send a “thank you” email or letter within 24 hours
- Maintain relationships with your contacts
- Keep a log of networking activity and follow up

### Networking Don’ts

- Do not ask for an internship or job
- Do not ask personal or compensation questions
- Do not make negative statements about employers or companies
- Do not make negative statements about a job or industry
- Do not just focus on your needs
- Do not monopolize people’s time– learn the cues about when a conversation is over, and move on graciously to another contact

# INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

## WHAT IS INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING?

Informational interviewing is the most common and effective type of networking. Informational interviews provide an opportunity for you to ask general questions to professionals about a particular career path, about the employer and the company culture, about your contact's job or career path, and about career advice and referrals. These interviews are a tool for acquiring information you would not find in print or on the Web. **YOU ARE NOT BEING INTERVIEWED**— you are the one asking the questions. Informational interviews should always be conducted to obtain information, not jobs!

## THE HOW TO'S OF INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING:

### First Point of Contact:

*Typically there are two ways to obtain an informational interview:*

#### Email or Letter:

- Send an email or letter to an unfamiliar contact asking for assistance and mentioning how you obtained their name.
- Traditional block style format, it is more professional.
- First paragraph— Indicate why you are writing and reference your mutual contact or let them know how you obtained their name.
- Middle Paragraph— Provide details on what you are looking for. Explain you are trying to learn more about an industry, company, or career path, and you would like to arrange an informational interview. Give some detail on your background and how it ties into what you are looking for.
- Last Paragraph— Thank the contact. Let them know the next steps you would like to take, for example, let them know you will follow up with phone call or provide them with your contact information for the employer to contact you.

#### Phone Call:

- Calling or approaching a person is more direct and often used with people you already know.
- Plan in advance what you are going to say by jotting down notes.
- When you reach the person on the phone, be sure to ask them if this is a good time to talk. Make it clear that you are NOT asking for a job. Mention how you obtained their contact information.
- Explain to the person that you are seeking certain kinds of information and ask them if they would be able to find 20 to 30 minutes to meet with you to answer these questions.
- When asking for an appointment, be organized by having your calendar ready. When scheduling be flexible.
- To conclude the conversation, let the contact know you will forward a copy of your resume as a means of introduction to your background.
- Before you go, restate the date, time, and location for the meeting.

### Preparing for the Informational Interview:

- Organize an agenda for this meeting.
- Research the industry and company in advance.
- Prepare general questions to ask about the company, function, or career path.
- Visit the CCD Web site to view sample informational interview questions.
- Practice the questions you have prepared and strategies to keep the conversation moving.
- Be prepared to answer questions about your interest in the industry or firm.
- Practice your "job talk".
- Be professional— business attire is required.

### Post Informational Interview Evaluation/ Follow Up:

#### Take Notes:

- What impressions do you have of this position? Department? Company?
- How did your contact help you to clarify your career objectives?

#### Follow up plans:

- Send a thank you note!
- Keep in touch with your contacts and record correspondence in a log.

## BABSON COLLEGE ALUMNI NETWORK DIRECTORY

### ***What is the Alumni Directory?***

The *Babson Alumni Network Directory* is a resource that connects you with professionals in the alumni community.

### ***How can I access this directory?***

Babson students can access the online directory by visiting the CCD Web site or <http://www3.babson.edu/Alumni/networking/alumnidirectory.cfm>

### **TIPS FOR USING THE DIRECTORY:**

- You will find that you can search for alumni by name, year of graduation, current location, company, industry, and/or job function.
- Alumni identified in the Directory as Alumni Career Educators (ACE) are alumni volunteers who are willing to participate in informational interviews.
- Though you may contact non-ACE alumni, be aware that those alumni are not part of the program and may not be as willing to meet with you.
- Use the additional information on this card for an approach to contacting alumni.
- The directory should not be used to ask for a job or make other solicitations, but rather as a resource for building a network and gathering information.
- Be respectful of our alumni's valuable time and review the Directory Usage Policy below.

### **DIRECTORY USAGE POLICY**

The alumni directory is for official Babson College and Babson College Alumni Association use. It may also be used for individual communication between the individuals listed herein. Use of the contents of this directory for private, commercial, or political solicitations is strictly prohibited and in direct violation of copyright and constitutes misappropriation of corporate property.