

Quick Tips for Networking with Alumni or Industry Recruiters

by Rachel Walden

Two helpful lists of event tips for any student attending an alumni or industry event.

Ask these questions to learn more about your field of interest:

- How did you choose this career field? ...get started in this job?
- How did you prepare yourself for this job? ...this profession?
- What classes or projects can I do to prepare myself for this career field?
- Is there a typical career path that most people follow in your line of work? If so, what is it?
- Knowing what you know now, would you take the same job again? ...Why or why not?
- What do you like most/ least about your job?
- What skills and/or personal qualities are necessary to succeed in this career?
- What do you do in a typical day?
- What kinds of internships are available in this type of organization?
- What are the typical entry-level jobs available to college graduates within this field?
- What are the major goals your organization tries to accomplish?
- Would you advise people to enter this career field? ...why or why not?
- What, in your opinion, is the job outlook in this career field?
- What forces typically affect this career field's growth or decline?
- What are some related positions/organizations a person interested in this field might explore?
- Are you a member of any professional associations that you have found useful?
- Who else do you know that I might talk with about this career field? May I use your name in contacting this person?

Make a positive impression. Here are some tips to help you do so:

- Dress in a professional manner.
- Keep the interview brief and to the point. Do not chit chat.
- Do not ask general questions about information you can easily find in a library or on the internet, as this is not the best use of the person's time.
- Always maintain eye contact, smile, and nod occasionally to indicate your interest in what they are saying.
- Take notes if you wish, but do not write everything; rather note key phrases to remind you of the answer or information.
- Feel free to answer questions about yourself if you are asked, or to intersperse some information about yourself.
- Do not forget to ask for names of other contacts. This should always be the last question you ask; in this manner you will be able to expand your network.
- Thank the person for his/her time. Write a thank you note describing what was of value to you.

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Courtesy of the National Association of Colleges and Employers.