

Guide to Networking and Interviewing



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Division of Undergraduate Academic Affairs,
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

RUTGERS

University Career Services
New Brunswick



Networking

What is networking?

Networking is the process of interacting with other people to exchange information and develop contacts, especially to further one's career. A network is a group of supporters who serve as resources for your job search. Some contacts might include people you meet at business and social meetings who provide you with career information and advice.

Why network?

Networking is the number one way that job seekers found employment. It is important to build and maintain relationships because you never know what connections may be beneficial to your job search in the present or future.

How to network?

Be professional and intentional. Start with people that you know well. Connect with family, friends, professors, peers, and current and past employers. Make it known what you are looking for and how someone may be able to help you. Informational Interviews are a great way to break the ice and get to know people outside of your existing network. Ask questions such as: What is your background? How did you get started in this career? What do you like most about your job? What are the most important skills needed to be successful in this industry? What advice would you give someone trying to break into this field? With whom would you recommend I speak? When I call, may I use your name?

Networking Tips:

- Dress the part
- Be prepared
- Be patient
- Be targeted
- Be professional
- Be focused on quality, not quantity
- Be referral-centered
- Be proactive
- Be dedicated to networking
- Always follow up with a thank you note/e-mail

Where to Network?

Personal Relationships: Start by making connections with friends and family.

Career and Internship Fairs: Meet with employers directly who are actively seeking candidates.

Career-related Events, Panels, and Professional Conferences: Attend information sessions, panels, and networking events to develop skills and meet professionals in hiring positions.

Professional Associations: Join and become an active member of professional associations related to your career field as a way to show your value and dedication.

Student-Alumni Career Network: Utilize this online resource to connect with Rutgers alumni.

Find a Mentor: Build a strong relationship with a connection you see as a mentor -- mentors are a valuable source for career guidance, job leads, and overall support during and after the job search process.

Social Media: Maintain a professional profile online, be proactive about connecting with career related groups, and participate in discussion forums.

LinkedIn

facebook

twitter

Instagram

Interviewing

Purpose of the First Interview

The first interview is a key exchange of information between the employer and the applicant. The employer's main purpose is to determine if your education, experience, and personal attributes fit the organization's needs. Your main purpose is to emphasize your ability and interest in the job and the employer, and make it to the second round.

Common Types of Interviews*

- Virtual/Telephone Interviews
- Behavioral Interviews
- Group Interviews
- Case Interviews (business, medical)

*For more information about the types of interviews, schedule an appointment through your CareerKnight or view the entire section on Interviewing in our Career & Internship Guide.



Interview Success Strategies for Professional and Graduate School

Prepare for the Interview:

- Know which type of interview you are going to have.
- Research the employer to obtain as much information as possible including: the organization's mission statement, values, products and services, structure, and competitors. Research the position and be able to discuss the skills and qualities you possess that make you a good candidate for the job.
- Review your background including coursework, academic/research projects, activities, internship and work experience. Be able to provide examples of skills and qualities you have developed that are relevant to the positions.
- Practice interviewing.
 - o **Mock Interview Appointment:** Schedule an appointment with a career development specialist through your CareerKnight account
 - o **Virtual Mock Interview:** The "Mock Interview" module is available in CareerKnight and allows you to use your own computer to rehearse interview questions online and further develop strong interview skills. You can select from hundreds of sample interview questions and review your performance online individually, or with a Career Development Specialist. This system is open to students and alumni.
 - o **Mock Interview Clinic:** Each semester we invite employers on campus to practice interviewing with students in an all-day program. Check our events calendar and sign-up through CareerKnight.

Interview Day

Dress appropriately, bring extra copies of your resume in a portfolio, arrive 10-15 minutes early, relax and collect your thoughts.

During the Interview:

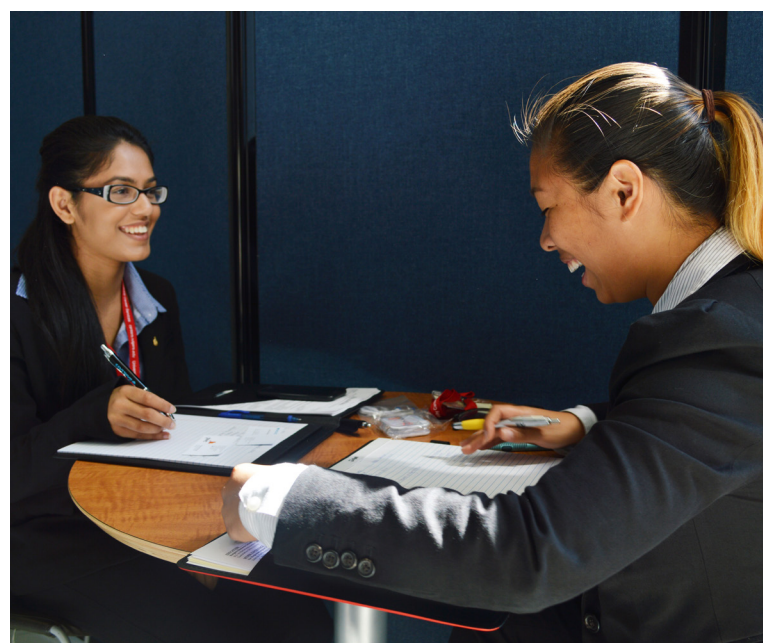
- Greet the interviewer(s) with a firm handshake and smile while maintaining eye contact.
- Be yourself. Display energy, confidence, and a positive attitude. Demonstrate enthusiasm and sincere interest.
- Listen closely and answer the questions with relevant information.
- Provide specific and detailed examples of how you have demonstrated key skills and strengths related to the position.
- Be aware of your non-verbal communication.
- Watch your grammar. Interviewers are impressed by articulate candidates. Use pauses rather than “ums” and “uhs”.
- Stay positive. Never criticize an employer, teacher, friend, colleague, or school.
- Never mention salary or benefits in an interview. Let the employer bring up these topics. Research the career field and industry and be prepared to discuss your salary requirements. Be realistic and have an accurate salary range in mind. Emphasize that your salary requirements are flexible.
- At the close of the interview, ask for a business card, ask about the next steps in the process and a time frame that you can expect to hear from the employer, reiterate your interest in the position and the organization, and thank the interviewer(s).

After the Interview

Write down pertinent facts from the interview (names of interviewers, important discussion points). Within 24 hours, write a short thank you letter or email message to the interviewer(s) emphasizing key qualifications and interest in the position/organization.

Interview Knockout Factors

- Unpreparedness
- Lateness
- Lack of knowledge about the employer or positions
- Inability to express ideas clearly
- Negative attitude toward former jobs, supervisors, or colleagues
- Limited interest
- Not answering questions directly
- Not asking questions
- Poor body language
- Only interested in salary and benefits



CareerKnight

Your Key to Career Success

CareerKnight is your online career management system, developed specifically for Rutgers students and alumni. Through CareerKnight you can navigate every step of your career development plan with an abundance of resources:

- Schedule career advising appointments
- Register for upcoming workshops and events
- Develop resumes and cover letters
- View and apply for internship and job listings
- Participate in the On-Campus Interviewing Program
- Practice interviewing through "Mock Interviews"
- Learn about the latest career and internship fairs

careers.rutgers.edu/CareerKnight

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August 2017