Networking

Who you know is equally important as what you know. Networking is about establishing and developing social relationships. It is about making a connection with people. When you make a connection with someone, you not only make a connection with the individual but you open the potential to connect with the person’s network of individuals. This network serves as a type of social capital that can be tapped into and leveraged. When you network, you take an active measure to realize your goals. Chances are, you already network and don’t realize it. Below are suggestions for networking.

You know you Networked if:

1. At the end of a conversation, you have the name of a person who is in a position to help you
2. At the end of a conversation, you learn of a new employer or organization that is of interest to you
3. At the end of a conversation, you learn new information that helps you in the realization of a goal

Planned Happenstance & Opportunity

Planned happenstance is ability to create opportunity from unplanned events. Much of career development focuses on planning, preparation, and known events; i.e. résumés, interview skills, attire, and career fairs. Planned happenstance is about planning and preparing for the unknown and creating opportunity from seemingly chance experiences. It is a perspective that transforms chance events into opportunity through purposeful action. Planned happenstance does not ignore planning and preparation. It evolves it to a level of mastery (Mitchell, Levin, and Krumholtz, 1999).

Networking Principles

1. Take risks
2. Do what you love
3. Talk to people
4. Act; put yourself out there
5. Engage others
6. Persist; keep at it
7. Leverage your student-identity

Networking opportunities

There are multiple ways to network; planned or unplanned. The following are recommendations to help you get started:

- **In-person** - at your place of employment, internship, research, etc.
- **USC Career Network** – a database of USC alumni available for career guidance and networking. Available via connect SC
- **LinkedIn** – You can search by alumni, career, and even major to find people with similar backgrounds and request to learn about their career path
- **Informational interviews** - conducting an informational interview is a great way research a career and network. Simply, locate an individual who is in a career of interest and request an informational interview
- **Professional associations** - join associations in your area(s) of interests
- **Faculty** - you have the opportunity to network with 1-4 faculty members per semester
- **Networking events**—participate in campus networking events
- **Whenever, wherever, & whomever** - opportunity presents itself!