

Connect it

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 Krumboltz, 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 Trojan Network** – a database of USC alumni available for career guidance and networking.
- **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, & with whomever** - opportunity presents itself!

T.I.A.R.A. Method

The T.I.A.R.A. Method is a way to target your Informational Interviews with those you network with and make sure you are asking relevant and useful questions. These are examples of things you could ask not an exhaustive list. The best Informational Interview is the one where you are asking the questions that matter most to YOU

Trends

- What are the various jobs in this field or organization?
- What does your typical day look like?
- What sorts of changes are occurring in your occupation?

Insights

- Why did this type of work interest you, and how did you get started?
- Do you find your job exciting or boring? Why?
- What were the keys to your career advancement? How did you get where you are and what are your long-range goals?
- If your job progresses as you like, what would be the next step in your career?

Advice

- How did you get your job? What jobs and experiences have led you to your present position?
- How does a person progress in your field? What is a typical career path in this field or organization?
- Do you have any advice for someone interested in this field/job?
- Do you have any special words of warning or encouragement as a result of your experience?

Resources

- Are there any written materials you suggest I read?
- Which trade/professional journals and organizations would help me learn more about this field?
- With the information you have about my education, skills, and experience, what other fields or jobs would you suggest I research further before I make a final decision?

Assignment

- What things did you do before you entered this occupation?
- What are the educational requirements for this job?
- Does your work relate to any experiences or studies you had in college?