

NETWORKING

The old saying, “It’s not what you know, but who you know.” contains some element of truth. Networking is an important part of anyone’s career life. Your network is everyone you know....and who knows you. Many jobseekers learn of job opportunities or get ideas leading to a position because of the influence of someone in their “network” – this is why it is essential to grow and maintain a healthy network of formal (professional) and informal contacts. Networking is more than a job search strategy – it is a strategy for a strong professional development. In addition to career fairs, examples of networking events include company information sessions, virtual career fairs, alumni functions, professional association events, industry conferences, project showcases, social media, and recruiting events. These are vital for career advancement.



INFORMATION SESSIONS

Information sessions are presentations where companies invite students to come and learn about their company and career opportunities. These are a perfect opportunity to network with the recruiters prior to an interview, or to obtain an interview if one wasn’t offered. Students should dress business casual, as well as bring a pen, notebook, and a resume. It is best to sit a couple of rows from the front, take notes, and ask one or two brief technical questions at the end. As soon as all questions are finished, proceed to the front of the room to meet the recruiters, shake his or her hand, and give your 30-second commercial (sell yourself).

ATTEND NETWORKING EVENTS AND PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES



- Many opportunities exist on and off campus where you will meet employer representatives and Mines alumni. Always ask for business cards.
- Have your self-introduction ready and well-practiced before you ever need it.
- Actively encourage people to talk about themselves, their jobs, role in the company, and interests that you may share. Watch for future opportunities for you to be of help to them.
- Write keywords on the back of the business card after walking away – send follow-up emails, reminding the person who you are, reflecting some details of the conversation and reminding them that you are actively job searching.
- Connect with the person on LinkedIn.
- Follow up and keep your connections updated. Let everyone know how the job search is going – continue interactions even after you have a job – maintain positive relationships.

JOIN STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

For each major, there are on-campus branches of student organizations that are part of national professional organizations offering meetings with speakers who are successful in the field, social events, leadership training, scholarship opportunities, and conferences to expand your knowledge and circle of business acquaintances. Joining is convenient and cost-effective. Check out all of the groups at <http://studentactivities.mines.edu>.