

Networking is the process of making new contacts, exchanging information, and building professional relationships in person or online.

- Networking is part of the job search process: it can help generate leads, provide you with the opportunity to meet people who may be of help in the future, and advance your career.

Who is in Your Network?

Your network may already be bigger than you realize: think of whom you already know and whom you could add to your network. People who are already in your network of contacts may include:

- Family and Friends;
- Co-workers / Co-volunteers;
- Neighbours;
- Classmates;
- Professors;
- Teammates.

Opportunities to Expand your Network

- Attend networking events, conferences, and employer information sessions on campus (<http://www.mun.ca/student/events.php>).
- Volunteer within the community or on campus – visit the Student Volunteer Bureau (UC 3011).
- Find part-time and/or summer employment.
- Visit the Student Experience Office (UC 3005) to get involved with leadership opportunities on campus.
- Conduct **informational interviews** with individuals working in your field of interest.
- Join professional associations in your field of interest.

How to Effectively Network

Know Yourself

- Be familiar with your resume, and critically reflect on your previous experiences so that you can effectively talk about your strengths and the skills you have developed through your education, work, and volunteer experience.
- Create and practice your **elevator pitch**.

Be Professional

- Dress comfortably, but professionally. Some event descriptions specify the dress code. If you are unsure, **business casual** is usually a good choice.
- Many venues and organizations have a scent-free policy. Ensure you avoid the use of any heavily scented products that could cause an allergic reaction to others.
- Bring along: multiple copies of your updated resume (provide to others only if requested), a notepad and pen, and a professional bag or folder to hold your materials.
- Shake hands and introduce yourself before starting a conversation. Always establish eye contact and be mindful of your body language.
- Once you connect and have a meaningful conversation with others at a networking event, it is beneficial to ask for a business card (if available). This will allow you to keep track of whom you met at the event, and will provide you with their contact information so that you can follow up in the future.

Move Outside of Your Comfort Zone

- Remain calm, smile, look approachable, and focus on the fact that people are there to make new connections, just like you.
- You do not need to connect with everyone who is attending the event. Set a goal for the day (e.g. leave the networking event only after making at least one or two new connections with whom you will follow up with after the event).

Ask Questions

- Think ahead of time of questions that you can use while networking. Examples of possible questions include:
 - What is your educational background?
 - Can you give me a description of a typical day?
 - What skills are essential to being effective in your job?

Follow-up

- Follow up within a 48 hour time frame – review the business cards you have collected and connect electronically (via email or by sending them a LinkedIn invitation).

To book an appointment with a career advisor, visit:
<https://www.mun.ca/student/student-success/career/>

Career Development (Student Life)
University Centre 4002
(709) 864-2033 or careerdevelopment@mun.ca