Networking
Quick Guide

Career & Internship Services Center (CISC)
III-1131 | 301-738-6338
www.shadygrove.umd.edu/careerservices
usgcareerservices@umd.edu
6 Tips on Networking While You’re in College

It’s never too late to start networking while in college, but an early start always helps. Your time as an undergraduate student is vital for building your professional image, and the more time you allocate to building your image, the more prepared you'll be once graduation comes. Provided below are 6 essential tips to ease your efforts in cultivating strong relationships that will help mitigate the difficulties of finding a job post graduation.

1. Actively participate in your classes. When it comes to classes relevant to your specific major, don't just relax in the back with your eyes and ears half-open. Make yourself known to the professor: sit in the front, sit up straight, ask questions, and even engage in conversation before and after class meetings if you can. The constant communication between you and a professor could cultivate a relationship and make you stand above other classmates. Professors know valuable resources—other colleagues, alumni students, and outside contacts who can help possibly ease your post graduation job hunt.

2. Join student organizations. Sometimes in life it’s who you know, not what you know. Understanding the importance of joining student organizations like Student Ambassadors, Student Event Board, and the Student Council will broaden your reach of contacts and personal relationships. This will allow you to be known on campus and stand above the competing student body. Never shy away from an organization to which you’re not familiar with; you never know the skills you will receive from it or how including that organization on your resume will appear to a recruiter. Also, use the online network of a professional organization and join its young professionals chapter.

3. Take on an internship. Even if it’s unpaid, take any internship seriously because the skills and experiences you may acquire will help in your job gaining efforts later. An internship gets your foot in the door, and, even if it doesn't end in a job at that specific company/organization, it can connect you with other opportunities, as well as serve as a reference source in the future. So don’t perceive your internship as just a resume filler; do your best, and you will thank yourself after graduation.

4. Ask for an informational interview. Want to connect with someone at your internship, a professor, or even someone in your field that you admire? Request an informational interview to find out what he does and how he got there. This can take place even via e-mail or on the phone. Establishing these contacts may alleviate the hardship of finding a job. Provided below are great questions to ask at an informational interview:

- How long did it take for you to secure your job after graduation?
- How did you get into this field?
- Did you do any internships while you were in school? If so, where?
- What would you do differently if you were to do your undergraduate curriculum again?
• Do you use LinkedIn? If so, how do you use it and for what purposes?
• Are there any volunteer/internship opportunities at your place of work?
• Does your company hold any networking events?
• What is the transition like from college to work?
• Do you know any department in your company/organization that is hiring?

5. **Attend Networking Events on/off Campus.** Take advantage of networking events on campus. USG hosts various networking events such as career fairs, dining etiquette dinners, and workshops ranging from informational interviewing to federal jobs. So always dress appropriately and carry a few resumes and student business cards because you never know whom you will have the pleasure of meeting. Off campus, if you have the funds, you can attend and engage in professional conferences. Before attending one of these, you will want to research ahead of time the topics, expert speakers, and companies to be present at the conference. Do this because you will want to get the most out of the experience, especially if you will have no help in paying for it.

6. **Use LinkedIn.** Once you’ve established those connections, keep them. How you may ask. Welcome to the more professional social media networking platform, LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a great way to stay in touch with professional contacts you may have met at events or from other sources, so make sure you make an active effort to keep your profile updated. Make sure to take a professional portrait, upload your resume, and understand how to navigate the user interface. You’ll be meeting professional contacts in no time. You can network using this tool by:

• Connecting with alumni groups by posting a discussion, seeking guidance in your job search; or
• Privately asking for an informational interview from someone who works in the same geographical location or industry you want to join.
Career & Internship Services Center

The Career & Internship Services Center (CISC) offers career advising and services for students at the Universities at Shady Grove as they prepare for an internship or a career after graduation. Through individual advising sessions, group workshops, signature events, and virtual resources, students can receive assistance with the career topics below:

- Resume and Cover Letter Critique
- Featured Job of the Week Highlights
- Job and Internship Search Strategies
- Interview Preparation
- Salary Negotiation
- ...and more!

CISC also offers a few online resources such as an online job database (USG Career Connector) and the Focus-2 Self-Assessment for students who want to explore career options through self-discovery. Visit our webpage below for more information.

To set up an individual appointment or for questions, please email or call us.

Building III, Student and Academic Services, Suite 1131
http://www.shadygrove.umd.edu/campus-services/career-services
usgcareerservices@umd.edu
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