

Tips for Networking Events

- Ask questions about the employer and share your skills or experiences (ex. work, project, extra-curricular).
- Discuss projects and accomplishments related to the job types and/or industry that you are interested in. However, you should not limit your questions and conversations to career-related topics. It is completely acceptable to have conversations on hobbies, sports, music, movies, food & wine, fun LA activities, theater, ballet, museums, etc.
- Do not discuss topics such as politics, religion, things you don't know how to do (focus instead on things you want to learn), negative thoughts about other people/companies, etc.
- Talk to everyone, even if they are not in the industry or company you are interested in. Employers are well connected to a variety of people in practically every industry. A good conversation can lead to them offering to connect you with a friend or a family member at the company/industry you are interested in.
- At the end of your conversation with an employer, please make sure you ask the method of communication and the time frame in which they wish to be contacted. Only the person you are talking to can tell you how and when you should follow-up, as each person has their own preferences.

Frequently Asked Questions

I don't know what to say. How should I start a conversation?

Introduce yourself and start the conversation by talking about any skills listed on the employer's name badge. You can also ask informational questions like "how are you" or discuss the skills that you have and feel are your strengths. From that point on, you can also wait to see if the other person has a question, and the questions should go back and forth between each person.

Why can't I stand in a line and wait my turn to talk to someone? I don't want to be rude and interrupt others in a conversation.

You will not be interrupting a group conversation by joining in: that's the purpose of networking! When you are attending any kind of personal, academic or career event, you don't stand in line to talk to someone – you join the conversation. In addition, students typically outnumber employers at networking events, so they will not always be able to provide one-on-one conversations with every student.

I can't introduce myself because the conversation already started with other people. What should I do?

You should join the conversation by listening to what is being said. Then ask a question if you have one or add information to the ongoing discussion.

I don't know how to end or leave a conversation. Is there a good approach?

You can thank the employer for their time and end with "it was nice talking to you/meeting you." You can also just leave the conversation if it is taking place in a large group. It isn't rude if you leave to talk with someone else or take a break. If you had a quality conversation with an employer, make sure you ask them how you can contact them and swap business cards. Don't forget to ask them how you should follow-up, so you know the exact way they prefer to communicate with you.