



College Connections



It's Who You Know: Networking for Beginners

Many high school students may feel that networking is simply an extension of what they are already doing on Facebook, MySpace, and other online social networking sites, and that their usual social interactions already constitute "networking." In fact, many such activities offer a foundation on which to build networking skills, as does the transition from middle school to high school: finding one's way around an unfamiliar building, introducing oneself to new classmates, connecting with teachers and advisors and navigating among various social groups and extracurricular organizations all require basic networking ability.

Any student who has successfully settled in at a new school has already shown some ability to network. Developing these skills will help him or her build the networks needed to make the transition to college and, later on, a career.

Introduce yourself and listen.

To ease the sometimes awkward process of introducing yourself to others, students



might plan and rehearse what entrepreneurs call the "elevator pitch" – a couple of lines that quickly sum up who you are and what your interests are. But perhaps the most important networking skill to develop is being a good listener, both in classes and when hanging with friends. Most people enjoy talking about themselves and what they do, and anyone who is a truly interested listener will gain information, advice, and useful feedback.

Increase your contacts.

Extracurricular and after-school activities offer students opportunities to increase their networks beyond their classmates and neighborhoods.

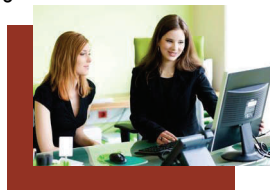
Students involved in such activities should get into the habit of keeping up with people they've met by maintaining a record of names, titles, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and other information. Thank-you notes, e-mails, and communicating with others about help or useful advice they've offered are ways to maintain connections to them.



As long as academic work remains the top priority, a part-time job can help in growing a network and perhaps gaining a mentor while earning some money. Volunteer work is another way to expand a network. Students should be sure that they will enjoy whatever type of service they choose and that they have the time to devote to it. Getting to know the people you work with can lead to other opportunities.

Start getting serious.

Students interested in summer jobs should find out about internships available to high school students. They can learn about such opportunities through school counselors, adult advisors to groups they have joined, and other adult mentors, such as coaches, teachers, school counselors, and clergy. Interviewing for a summer job is good practice for college interviews, and keeping up with co-workers and supervisors after summer is over is a good idea if the student hopes to have any of them write letters of recommendation to colleges later on.



Be reliable and considerate.

Students should get into the habit of following up on any promises or commitments they make. Becoming known as a reliable person is likely to gain other contacts you want to be known as someone to count on to finish jobs or complete activities.

Students should also remember that friends and family are part of their network, and that anyone they know or has met may unexpectedly inform them of a possible opportunity. Even after graduation, students should keep up with the people in their network as they might be a good resource or mentor a younger student. Being a good friend and a useful contact to others, and keeping the principle of "what goes around, comes around" in mind, is good advice not only for networking, but also for life.



Sources: "How to Find an Internship," <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/high-school/8382.html>; "Volunteer Opportunities," <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/high-school/7813.html>; Priscilla March, "Networking for students: a step-by-step guide," *Boston Globe*, March 7, 2007, http://www.boston.com/jobs/college/articles/2007/03/07/networking_for_students_a_step_by_step_guide/; Steven Rothberg, "Networking for College Students and Grads: Top 7 Steps You Can Take Now," <http://searchwarp.com/swa45983.htm>; Nate Desmond, "5 Networking Tips for College Students," <http://www.debtreescholar.com/2010/02/5-networking-tips-for-college-students/>; Wafa R. Musitief, "The Importance of Networking," <http://www.witi.com/careers/2005/networking.php>.

Featured Campus: Field Period at Keuka College

At Keuka College, Field Period, its internship program, has been a unique and crucial component of the college's experiential, hands-on learning program ever since 1942, when it was created by Keuka College graduate and administrator Edith Estey.

Every student at the college is required to participate in a 140-hour Field Period each year. A Field Period can resemble a traditional internship, but may also be a cultural experience, a community service project, or a spiritual exploration. Students have, for example, worked in a medical examiner's office, as a national

park volunteer in Costa Rica, as a coach at a local high school, as a bookkeeper for a corporation, and at a mission in Uganda.

The Field Period is unusual not only in the number of hours required (560 hours of real-world experience by graduation), but also because each student initiates his or her placement, defines specific learning objectives, and gives a presentation about the experience at its conclusion. The college's Center for Experiential Learning assists students with finding projects, networking with potential Field Period sites, and any necessary

paperwork. Field Period scholarships are available to help with travel costs and other expenses. To learn more, visit: <http://experiential.keuka.edu/field-periods-internships>.

High school students can apply for Keuka College's Experiential Learner of the Month Award, with the winners receiving either a partial or full academic scholarship to the college; for more information, go to http://www.keuka.edu/exp_learner.php.

Source: "Job Requirement," New York Times, January 6, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/06/education/edlife/required.html?pagewanted=all>

Resources: Internships

The Department of Citywide Administrative Services

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcas/html/employment/summerintern.shtml>

New York City offers many internship opportunities for college undergraduate and graduate students. Internships are available in almost every area of municipal government, among them city planning, human services, health care, small business services, budget administration, and information technology. Interns also participate in a series of seminars with City officials.

New York Press Association (NYPS)

<http://s44675.gridserver.com/content/paid-summer-internships>

The NYPS Foundation funds paid summer internships for college journalism students working at local community newspapers. The link above has more information and a downloadable student application form.

New York Space Grant Consortium

<http://astrosun2.astro.cornell.edu/specialprograms/spacegrant/undergrad.html>

The New York Space Grant Consortium (NYSG) supports undergraduate research opportunities in space-related programs that offer research internships in science and engineering to students at Alfred University, Barnard College, Clarkson University, Colgate University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Manhattan College, Polytechnic Institute of NYU, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rochester

Institute of Technology, Syracuse University, Union College, University of Rochester, and various CUNY and SUNY campuses.

New York State Chambers of Commerce

<http://www.bcnys.org/inside/chambers.htm#a>

Links to all of New York State's local Chamber of Commerce chapters can be found at this Web page, located at the site of the Business Council of New York State (<http://www.bcnys.org/>). Local Chambers of Commerce offer many internship opportunities for students; for example, the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce sponsors The College of Saint Rose Joint Internship Program, in which business students work for local companies while earning college credits. The Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce has established a Greater Binghamton Education Outreach Program that provides in-school and after-school programs for students in grades K-12 that focus on work readiness and financial literacy. The Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce provides internship opportunities to high school and college students, matching them to companies based on their interests and level of experience, while the Buffalo-Niagara Partnership offers internships to students majoring in marketing, political science, business, information technology, and other business-related fields. The Queens Chamber of Commerce serves as a "match maker" between schools and businesses looking for interns. Each year, the Rochester Business Alliance presents Young Women of Distinction Awards, which include

paid internships and college scholarships, to female students in their junior or senior year at local high schools. The Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce, through its workforce education program for students from 7th grade to college, promotes the development of skilled workers.

New York State Department of Civil Service

<http://www.cs.state.ny.us/jobseeker/internopportunities.cfm>

This portal contains brief descriptions of internships for high school, college, and graduate students available at various state and throughout the state, the kind of work involved, and whether the position is paid or unpaid, with links to the offices offering the internships and e-mail addresses of contacts.

Student Temporary Employment Program and Student Career Experience Program (SCEP)

<http://www.usajobs.gov/EI/students.asp#icc>

The Student Temporary Employment Program offers Federal employment opportunities to part-time and full-time college students. This program is flexible, as the employment does not have to be related to the student's academic or career goals. The Student Career Experience Program does provide work experience that is directly connected to a student's field of study and career objectives. More information about these programs can be found at <http://www.opm.gov/employ/students/index.asp> and http://www.opm.gov/Strategic_Management_of_Human_Capital/fhfrf/FLX04020.asp.