

Developing contacts in your chosen career field is key to your career development. Follow these tips to get started:

Start your conversation with your "30-60 second introduction/commercial" including the following:

- o Who are you? (Name, Major, Year in School)
- o What is your career focus? Why?
- o Your strengths relative to this goal? What in your background will help you be successful in this field or role?
- o In addition to your coursework, how have you prepared yourself for your new career?

Ask questions about their background or about the work that they do such as:

- o What do you enjoy most about profession X?
- o How did you become interested in profession X?
- o What do you think are some of the biggest challenges working in X?
- o What advice would you give someone just starting in X?
- o What are some of the most significant changes you have seen in X since you started?

Close your conversation gracefully:

- o I've enjoyed our conversation. I'm going to circulate and meet some of the other representatives.
- o Thank you for speaking with me today, may I have your contact information in case I have any further questions?
- o I would love to talk further with you about Y; do you have any time later this week to talk by phone?
- o I wish I had more time to speak with you about Y; could I follow up with you next week? What is a good time/day to reach you?

Networking Behaviors – Your First Impression Counts

- Prepare topics to discuss that cover a range of business and non-business areas
- Ask open-ended questions to learn more about others
- Use open body language – smile, maintain good eye contact, nod
- Avoid using filler words, like "um, uh, ya know, like, etc."
- Balance your "airtime" with the other person's
- Include everyone in your group in the conversation when possible
- Look for signs that the other person is ready to conclude the conversation
- Look for ways to stay in touch, indicating when and how you plan to follow up
- Be yourself – let your natural personality come through in your interactions