

## How to Prepare and Get the Most Out of a Networking Event

Networking events offer many opportunities for career exploration, even though they may appear to be a waste of time. Therefore, we highly recommend that in order to maximize the experience and benefit the most out of it, you approach such events strategically and prepare appropriately.

### Prepare

- Research:
  - Companies web sites and LinkedIn
- Communication – prepare and practice:
  - Elevator pitch (who you are, what you did before business school and how it is relevant to what you want to do)
  - Company-specific questions - prepare 5-7 meaningful questions for the company representatives

### Day of Event

- Bring
  - Business cards
- Dress
  - Business casual
- Body language:
  - Be positive and display a relaxed, confident attitude
  - Smile, show enthusiasm, keep eye contact and give a firm handshake
  - Practice active listening
- Be likeable!
  - Be clear, concise, compelling and targeted as you only have a brief period of time to obtain the information that you need and make an impression
- Take Notes:
  - After talking to each person you had a significant conversation with, write notes on the back of their business card to remember important details (do this away from the person's sight)

### Follow-up

- Within 24 hours - send thank you notes to everyone with whom you had a meaningful interaction and/or connect via LinkedIn (use common sense)
- Continue to read company websites and apply to job postings
- TRACK all your activity – keep a written record of your communication with each person so that you know when you last connected with them and what was discussed
- Long-term follow-up –
  - Invite your contact people to Career Management Center events as well as events on campus that you think might be of interest or relevance to those people.
  - If you think your new contact could be a good speaker then invite him to speak with your class mates.
  - Try to plant the seed for an internship if this is something you would be interested in pursuing