

10 Steps to Networking at Employer Events

Approaching an employer at a networking event can be nerve-wracking, but you can make a great impression with some preparation. These steps will help you make a positive and lasting impression on employers at events. Here are 10 steps for success:



1. Research the Employer

- **Know the Basics:** Before the event, research the companies you are interested in. Understand their industry, recent news, and job opportunities.
- **Identify Key People:** Find out who from the company will attend and their roles.

2. Prepare your Introduction

- **Elevator Pitch:** Create a 30-60 second introduction that includes your name, your field of study, what you're passionate about, and your career goals.
- **Tailor to the Employer:** Customize your pitch for each employer, highlighting how your interests align with their company.

3. Dress Appropriately

Make a good first impression with professional attire: Wear business or business-casual attire depending on the event's formality. Make sure you look polished and confident.

4. Approach with Confidence

- **Body Language:** Walk up confidently, make eye contact, smile, and offer a firm handshake.
- **Introduce Yourself:** Start with your elevator pitch. "Hi, I'm [Your Name], a [Your Major] student at Wayne State University. I've been following [Company Name] and am particularly interested in your work in [specific area]."

5. Engage in Conversation

- **Ask Open-Ended Questions:** Show genuine interest in the employer by asking questions like:
 - "What do you enjoy most about working at [Company]?"
 - "Can you tell me more about the company culture?"
- **Listen Actively:** Pay attention to their responses, nod, and make appropriate comments to show you're engaged.

6. Highlight your Skills and Experience

- **Relate Your Experience:** Mention relevant projects, internships, or skills that align with the company's needs.
- **Be Concise:** Keep your points brief and relevant to the employer's interests.

7. Ask for Advice or Next Steps

- **Seek Guidance:** Ask for advice on how to pursue a career at their company or the best way to stay in touch.
- **Inquire About Openings:** If appropriate, ask about internship or job openings and the application process.

8. Close the Conversation Gracefully

- **Thank Them:** Express your gratitude for their time and insights. "Thank you for speaking with me today. I really appreciate your advice."
- **Exchange Contact Information:** Offer your business card (if you have one) and ask for theirs. If not, ask if you can connect on LinkedIn.

9. Follow-Up

Send a Thank-You Note: Within 24-48 hours, send a personalized thank-you email or LinkedIn message referencing something specific from your conversation or presentation to reinforce the connection.

10. Reflect and Learn

- **Review Your Experience:** After the event, reflect on what went well and what you can improve next time.
- **Follow Up on Any Leads:** If you were given any instructions or leads, be sure to follow up promptly.