## Networking Basics & Informational Interviews

### Why Network?
- Vast majority of jobs are filled through networking
- Referrals are hired 2x as quickly as people using a career site

### With Whom Do You Network?
- With your acquaintances or your “weak ties”*
- With the acquaintances of your friends, relations, and colleagues

### Why Contact Them?
- They either know you or they know someone that knows you
- They allow you to:
  - Build your network
  - Practice interviewing
  - Gather valuable info
  - Obtain referrals
  - Learn from what you heard

### Informational Interview
- Ask for an informational interview with an acquaintance
- An informational interview is **not** a job interview but a strategy for you to gather useful insights
- See if your connection can connect you to others in their field.

### Maintaining Connections
- Connect on LinkedIn.
- Circle back to those you interviewed at a later date. Let them know how you are doing. You may want their help and advice in the future!

### Informational Interview Steps

#### How Do You Begin?
- Make your initial contact via email or phone.
  - Proofread any emails.
- Mention who suggested you contact them.
- Ask for no more than 15 min.
- Take only 15 min. on the interview day.
- Take notes during the interview.

#### What Questions Do You Ask?
- **About the Work They Do**
  - Type of work?
  - Typical/composite day?
  - Like best/least?
  - Challenging aspects?
- **Any Career Advice They Have**
  - Critical skills to acquire?
  - How does hiring work?
  - Others I might speak to?
  - May I follow up later?

#### What Do You Do After the Interview?
- Keep a spreadsheet with contact information, date, discussion summary, referrals, any follow-up, etc.
- Write a handwritten thank you note.
- Go back over your interview notes. What did you learn? What questions do you want to ask in the future?
- Try to match key topics/information you are seeking to specific referrals from your informational interviews.

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