

# Networking Guide

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## Proper Etiquette

- View an email as you would a cover letter; it's a professional contact
- Check spelling and grammar
- Check gender so you know whether to say Mr. or Ms.
- Choose a professional tone rather than informality
- Always follow-up to let the person know what has happened

## The Networking Process

### Beginning

- Assess your interests and skills and choose occupations, career areas, or organizations to investigate. Berry Career Institute staff can help you with the self-assessment process.
- Make an appointment with the Berry Career Institute to identify potential alumni, parents, or other volunteers to contact.
- Contact the people you identified and ask if he/she is willing to answer a few of your questions via e-mail or phone. If you are interested in a phone interview, indicate several times when you are available and allow them to choose the time that works for their schedule. Also encourage them to suggest a time as an alternative. If you want to ask a few questions in an e-mail, ask if this is okay and wait for a response. Remember, these professionals are typically very busy with work and other obligations. Realize you may need to try more than once to contact them and that they may not respond at all. Allow a minimum of one week between your initial contact and a second attempt.
- The subject line of your email should be similar to "Current Cornell College student seeking career information." It is important to be concise yet complete in your email: many people automatically delete lengthy messages or those with suspicious subject headers. Tell the person who you are, where you located her email address, and why you would like an informational interview. Proofread before sending.
- Prepare for this opportunity by researching the field or organization and compiling a list of your questions.

### During

- If you and your contact decide to proceed with email, send him your questions. Make sure you ask what you want to know but do not overwhelm your contact.
- For phone interviews, be sure to call precisely at the agreed upon time and ask your relevant questions in an attentive, interested, and professional manner. Remember to verify time zones if contacting out of Central Standard Time. The interview typically last for 15-30 minutes.

### After

- Send a thank you note within 24 hours of the interview or having received the answers to your e-mailed questions. U.S. mail or e-mail are both appropriate.
- Follow up with your contact info and updates if she expressed interest in your search or asked to be kept informed of your career progress.