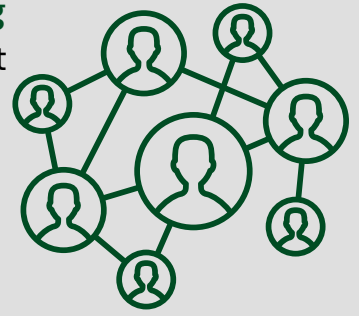# NETWORKING BASICS

Building Meaningful Professional Connections

Networking is about **building and maintaining** relationships that support your career growth. It's the **#1 way to discover job opportunities** and is a skill you'll use throughout your professional life.

WHY NETWORK?

- Gain insights into industries and roles
- Receive career advice and mentorship
- Access the hidden job market
- Expand your professional circle

HOW TO PREPARE

- **Research:** Learn about the person or organization before reaching out.
- **Elevator Pitch:** Craft a brief introduction about who you are and your career interests.
- **Questions:** Prepare thoughtful questions to ask during your conversation.

Dress professionally & be punctual.
Be genuine & show enthusiasm.
Listen actively & take notes.
Never directly ask for a job; focus on building relationships.

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Sample Introduction:
"Hi, my name is [Your Name], a [Your Year] majoring in [Your Major] at Concordia University Irvine. I'm exploring careers in [Industry] and would appreciate any insights you could share."

Sample Questions:
- How did you get started in your career?
- What does a typical day look like for you?
- What skills are essential for success in your field?
- Are there any professional associations you recommend?

FOLLOWING UP

- **Thank You:** Send a thank-you note or email within 24 hours.
- **Stay Connected:** Connect on LinkedIn and keep in touch periodically.
- **Reflect:** Consider what you learned and how it impacts your career planning.

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