PREPARING FOR VIRTUAL NETWORKING NIGHT

CAREER DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT, CSU CHANNEL ISLANDS
EVENT OVERVIEW

- Wednesday, May 4 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. via Zoom
- 9 mentors
- Industry-focused mentors in Zoom breakout rooms
GENERAL REMINDERS

- Prepare questions to ask mentors
- Be ready to take notes on what you learn
- If possible, we encourage you to have your camera on so mentors can engage in conversation with you more easily
WHAT IS NETWORKING?

Networking Is:
• Cultivating and maintaining relationships
• A mutual exchange of information, advice, and support
• Beneficial for both parties

Networking is NOT:
• Schmoozing
• Bothering or pestering
• Using other people for your personal gain
• Asking for a job
WHY NETWORK?

- **70-80% of jobs are filled via word of mouth/referrals**
- You will broaden your professional network
- You may hear about opportunities that are not public yet
- You might find a mentor
  - Getting insider tips can be invaluable
- You will learn about your industry, its future, and its challenges
Watch this video!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4OTPJZnP8s
What is your goal?

- Why are you attending this event?
- Get clear on:
  - what you want to learn
  - who you want to talk to
DO YOUR HOMEWORK

- Research the Industry:
  - Do a Google search of professional associations in California for your industry
  - Join industry-related groups on LinkedIn

- Research the Company:
  - Visit company/organization website. Read “Careers” page, “About Us”, etc.
  - Glassdoor.com
  - News articles, press releases, social media
  - Use the LinkedIn Alumni tool to identify CI grads working for that organization
RESEARCH THE COMPANY

- What does the organization make/do?
- Who are the leaders and why was it started?
- How does it stay ahead of competitors?
- What mantras or values does the company live by?
- Where are they located/headquartered?
- What position or department appeals to you and why?
- Are there open positions/internships?
RESEARCH THE PERSON

- Look up their LinkedIn profile
  - Review their education, work history, volunteer positions, professional associations, etc.
  - What do you have in common?
- Try to find a position description for the person’s role/job title
- Google them: Do they have a personal or business website?
- You can reach out in advance
  - Connect on LinkedIn
  - Send a customized message that you’ll be at Networking Night and look forward to meeting them
QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What was your career pathway?
- What did you think you were going to be growing up?
- Did you have a mentor who helped you?
- What do you enjoy most about your job?
- What is the biggest challenge your team and organization are facing right now?
- What surprised you the most about your current job?
- What’s a typical day like for you?
- What kind of projects do you work on?
- What are the most important skills I should develop to prepare for a career in [insert field]?

- What are you most proud of accomplishing?
- What professional journals and organizations/associations should I be aware of so I can stay up to date on trends in the field?
- What are typical entry-level positions for recent graduates in [insert industry/sector]?
- What educational preparation would you recommend for someone who wants to advance in this field?
- If you could start all over again, would you change your career path in any way? If so, why?
- Do you have a favorite book or podcast you would recommend?
- What has inspired you lately/What are you excited about?
- What’s the best career advice you’ve ever received?
What is something you are proud of accomplishing during your time at CI?

What are you studying? Why did you choose to study [insert major]?

Why are you interested in [insert industry]?

What would you like to pursue as a career?

Tell me about your favorite class project, internship, or volunteer experience.

What has inspired you lately/What are you excited about?

What are your strengths?
PRACTICE YOUR PITCH

1. Start with your destination.
2. Describe your backstory (i.e., experience or transferable skills – make it relevant).
3. Connect the dots.

Ask yourself:
- What am I excited about?
- What do I want to do next?
- What am I trying to achieve today in this conversation?
Make your closing memorable & follow up

- Ask if they’re on LinkedIn or Dolphin Connect!
  - “Thanks for taking the time to talk with me. Would it be ok if I reach out to update you on my progress?”
- Send a thank you message within 24 hours of the event.
- Personalize each email you send.
SAMPLE MESSAGE

Hi [contact’s name],

It was great to meet you at [name of event] on [date]. I had a great time chatting with you about [something you talked about]. On your LinkedIn profile, it says you’re currently working on [responsibility in current job/organization or side project]—and [reason why it relates to you]. Let me know if you’re ever free for a brief chat!

Best,

[Your name]

Hi Betty,

It was really nice meeting you at the American Psychological Association Conference on the 14th. Your advice on applying to graduate programs was so helpful; I’ve actually shared your tips with the Psychology club at my university. I noticed on your LinkedIn that you’re working on an e-book about equine therapy—that’s a research area I’m considering for my capstone. If you’ve got time, I’d love to meet for coffee or a video chat and hear more!

Best,

Adriana
TAKE ACTION

- Stay in touch with your contacts
  - Schedule a one-on-one meeting via phone or Zoom (i.e., informational interview)
  - Recommend books, podcasts etc. they might enjoy
  - Keep them updated on your progress and any advice you acted upon
- Build your skills by taking a course on LinkedIn Learning (access via your myCI portal)
- Join a relevant club at CSUCI
- Ask your professors about professional associations to join, journals to read, and industry-related events
Career Development and Alumni Engagement
805-437-3270
career.services@csuci.edu
https://www.csuci.edu/careerdevelopment/

Meet with a career counselor for a virtual appointment:
https://calendly.com/csuci-career-counselors

Meet with a career counselor for an in-person appointment:
https://calendly.com/career-in-person