



NETWORKING 101

Why should you care about Networking? The definition of networking is the development and maintenance of mutually valuable relationships that feature the sharing of information. Building a strong Network has many benefits. It allows you to gain advice and stay updated on a career field, an industry, or an organization, as well as learn about possible job opportunities (now or in the future). Networking also gives you access to the hidden job market which includes jobs that are not posted publicly. When employers are looking to fill a role, they often search for someone they know before posting the position on a job board. This is why it is so important to stay on many people's radars when searching for a job.

TOP 10 NETWORKING TIPS

DO NOT BE SHY. It is important to put yourself out there so others will notice you. You may want to visit our "Networking Tips for Introverts" resource on the ECS Website if this is something that you struggle with.

ESTABLISH STRONG CONNECTIONS. Just because you shake someone's hand and have someone's contact information doesn't mean that you connected with that person. Be sure to follow up continuously.

FOLLOW UP. Your networking should focus on keeping in touch – sharing an article of interest, sending a holiday/birthday greeting, commenting on a social media update, etc. You don't want to be known as the person who only gets in touch when you need something. In order to develop genuine relationships with people, you need to follow up regularly and generously outside of making requests.

BE OPEN. Network with anyone you can. People may change roles and may have opportunities they can give you in the future. Be open to meeting everyone.

ASK FOR ADVICE. Networking is not just for finding a job. You may also find it helpful for different topics such as choosing the right career path.

THINK OF WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER. Networking is a two way relationship. Do not be self-serving. You must also consider what you have to offer the person that you are trying to network with. Showing someone your value is also important in marketing yourself.

KEEP REQUESTS MINIMAL. While some networking is about asking for favors – information on a company, introduction to a person you want to meet– requests should be minimal.

RESEARCH. If possible, research someone's company, position, and career path before you approach them. Customize your questions to show genuine interest.

BE ORGANIZED. Document your connections. Strongly consider taking notes on their role, where you met, contact information, last time you reached out, etc. You may want to start a networking spreadsheet. See Handshake Resources for a template.

STAY PROFESSIONAL. Treat everyone with respect and remember to separate personal from professional. Be wise about what you share while networking.

WHO SHOULD YOU NETWORK WITH?

Skillful networking is a planned, structured, and ongoing effort. While it usually starts with conversations and meetings with family, friends, and acquaintances, it expands into relationship building with people you don't know. Often newer acquaintances will introduce you to additional new contacts and so on.

GROUPS TO CONSIDER

Where?	Who?	How?	Tips
School	Professors (Previous/Current)	Email, In-person	Most professors are willing to help students, but you have to make sure that they know who you are. Office hours and review sessions may allow the professor to know you personally.
	Classmates and club/ organization members	In-person, Email, Messaging Apps, Text, LinkedIn	Establish positive relationships. Make friends within your major. You never know who will be able to give you an opportunity in the future. Connect with others on LinkedIn and stay in touch to be able to reach out in the future.
	Alumni	Terrapins Connect, LinkedIn, Conferences, Email	Find alumni in positions of interest to you on LinkedIn. Examples of messages to send are found in this handout.
Career Fair	Recruiters	In-person → Follow-up Email, LinkedIn	Do research beforehand. Ask them a specific question or remember to write a specific thank you note to stand out and show interest.
Work	Supervisors	In-person, Email, Text (if familiar enough)	Establish a positive, professional rapport and keep former supervisors updated on professional developments .
	Colleagues	In-person, Email, Messaging Apps, Text (if familiar enough)	Connect with colleagues on LinkedIn and use the platform to stay in touch with them.

IN PERSON NETWORKING

In person events provide students with an opportunity to speak with company representatives individually, or in small groups. This is a great way to start building your professional network. Also, it is a chance to learn important information about the company so that you can decide if they are a good fit for you. And of course it is a great way to learn valuable tips for your interview. Employers often track and view your attendance as an indication of your level of interest in their company and they will take it into account when selecting interviewees. If an employer is holding campus interviews, they may use these events to add more candidates to their interview schedules.

DOS AND DON'TS WHEN APPROACHING SOMEONE

DOs

- Familiarize yourself with everyone/most people at an event
- Approach people with an open mind and genuine interest
- Aim for quality connections over quantity
- Have talking points ready
- Follow general social etiquette. This may change depending on the type of event
- Use social media platforms to connect with others
- Have an updated resume available

DON'Ts

- Interrupt others
 - Oversell and come off as too self-promotional
 - Stick to only familiar people
 - Monopolize someone's time and ignore social cues
 - Be disorganized and forget details about different conversations
 - Walk up to someone with nothing specific to talk about. If you walk up to someone it is expected that you initiate conversation
 - Do not be pushy
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IN PERSON NETWORKING CHART

Location	Description	Tips
Career Fair	The career fair is one of the most popular networking events for students. It is composed of employers that want to hire UMD students. To take advantage of this event to the best of your ability it is important to come prepared with research on the companies that you would like to talk to, a customized elevator pitch, and a strong resume (come in to get these reviewed at ECS!).	More information about the career fair and what to expect is located in the Career Fair Handout on Handshake. Professional attire is recommended.
Employer Pop-Ups	Employer-hosted information tables are located in the lobby of one of the engineering buildings, and are typically held in the middle of the day. Employers share information about their company and students stop by with their resumes to discuss potential employment opportunities. It is a short interaction, similar to a career fair and can often be done in between classes.	Practice your pitch! Refer to samples in this handout. Casual clothing is fine.

IN PERSON NETWORKING CHART CONTD.

Location	Description	Tips
Employer Information sessions	Generally last 60-90 minutes and are most often held in the early evening. Employers present on topics such as career paths, company culture, products/services, and how to apply for a job or internship. At the end of the session there is a chance to ask questions and often employers will accept resumes.	Casual (but not sloppy) dress is fine if the session is held in the School of Engineering or CMSC. The Business School may require professional attire so it's best to check ahead of time.
Tech Talks	These are similar to information sessions; however the presenter will speak on a specific technical topic first and then may cover career opportunities and the application process for internships and jobs.	Don't be afraid to connect to the individual and ask questions.
Recruiter in Residence Programs: Resume Clinics	Resume clinics: A resume clinic is a 15-minute one-on-one employer appointment that allows you to ask a recruiter about your resume, get general career advice, or learn about job and internship opportunities at their company. It is also a great way to network so we would recommend that you get a resume critique in the Engineering Career Services Office first. This way you can impress the employer and maximize the quality time you have with the recruiter.	<p style="text-align: center;">Why go?</p> <p>Feedback from an employer provides inside information from the recruiters in your industry. This will allow you to tailor your information to best market yourself to those employers. It will also introduce you to who is hiring.</p>
Recruiter in Residence Programs: Mock Interviews & Workshops	<p>Mock interviews: A mock interview is a 30-minute one-on-one practice interview that allows you to get feedback from a recruiter about your interview responses. Typically, it is 20 minutes of interview questions and 10 minutes of feedback.</p> <p>Employer led workshops: Each year several employers lead workshops that assist students with their career development. Past topics have included: resume development, interviewing skills, career fair preparation, making the transition from school to work, evaluating salary offers, personal finance, the federal employment process, and professional etiquette.</p>	<p>How to find them: Career Engineer weekly newsletter contains information & dates of upcoming Recruiter in Residence events.</p> <p>Individualized email blasts to qualified students are sent each time we host a Recruiter in Residence.</p> <p>You can find all these events on Handshake, as well. Use the <i>engr-recruiter in residence event</i> label under "More filters" to see them.</p>

IN PERSON NETWORKING CHART CONTD.

Location	Description	Tips
Networking Receptions	You may also find yourself at a networking reception either at UMD or in the workplace. It is important to prepare with a strong introduction/elevator pitch to make yourself stand out. There are examples of elevator pitches in the elevator pitch section of this handout.	It is important to not come off as pushy or too formal/robotic. Keep conversations conversational. Do not go into the event with the intent of finding a job, rather try to make friends/establish a connection with others.
Intern for a Day program	This program allows you to shadow a professional in a field of interest for one day. It is a great solution to begin networking if you're unsure of where to start. The program is open once each semester.	Learn more about this opportunity at go.umd.edu/ifad
Conferences	Academic conferences are where many people in the same field meet. It is filled with people who share the same interests of the conference. You may want to network with attendees, speakers, and organizers at these events. They are also a great way to learn more about advances in your field. Remember to follow networking etiquette at these events and do not come across like your only reason to be there is to sell yourself.	Be sure to check your Terpmail as ECS sends out limited opportunities for Terp engineers to attend conferences for free and potentially with all expenses paid for.
Networking in the Workplace	This is often overlooked, but it one of the most important places to network. Be friendly and social in the workplace with your immediate coworkers, bosses, and colleagues in other departments. They will be much more likely to help you out in the future (changing departments or applying for a promotion). Workplace friendships/networking is important as these are people in the same field as you.	Even if you have a job "above" someone now you may not in the future so it is important to network with everyone.

Before You Reach Out to a New Contact

Learn about possible career paths.

UMD has subscriptions to Pathway U, Vault, What can I do with this Major, and Focus 2, available to you for free in Handshake Resources. Engineers can also check out our career exploration page at go.umd.edu/engexp

Know yourself. Determine what you would like from your new contact.

What are your skills, interests, relevant qualifications? Do you want advice on career paths or skills valued by the industry? Information about their organization? Other contacts?

Be sincere.

Networking is not just about getting help. Your interest in the person must be genuine to be effective.

Start slow.

To gain confidence, approach familiar people and less desired organizations first. But, don't be afraid to initiate contact with people you don't know.

Requesting a Networking Meeting

If you have found someone you would like to speak to for career advice (through a personal reference, LinkedIn, a chance meeting, etc.), you will want to be prepared for your next phone, Zoom, or in-person conversation. More examples of Elevator Pitches and LinkedIn messages can be found on pages 8-10 and 15-16.

Describe

- who you are,
- who referred you, and
- why you are contacting this person

“Hello Ms. Taylor, my name is Jennifer Woodford. I was referred to you by my former co-op supervisor, Mark Richards, in the Integrated Circuit Design office at Annapolis Microsystems. Mr. Richards recommended that I speak with you about your work at the National Security Agency. I am graduating from University of Maryland next May with a Bachelor’s degree in Electrical Engineering, and I am interested in continuing my work in circuit development.”

Be prepared to summarize your

- skills,
- qualifications,
- interests, and
- how these relate to the company

“Along with my one-year co-op with Annapolis Microsystems where I worked on a variety of circuit development tasks including design, developing prototypes, and FPGA programming, I have developed an interest in security and cryptology, and notice that it is one of the National Security Agency’s main areas of expertise.”

Ask for

- a meeting,
- an informational interview, or
- other ways to learn more about the field from this person

“I would like to set up a time to speak with you further about your organization and your experience in electrical engineering. Are you available for about 30 minutes sometime next week?”

Be sure to respond promptly to any emails or phone calls from your new contact.

Before You Meet

Learn about your contact and their company and industry.

Once you have scheduled a meeting or informational interview, take a look at their LinkedIn profile, at the company website, and read some news about the industry.

Practice what you want to say.

Suggestions for Handling Tough Networking Situations

Be patient yet persistent. Things may take a while to develop, and you will sometimes hear “No.” Be prepared to respond tactfully to a less than warm reception, in case your contact says:

“Well, we’re not really hiring any computer engineers at this time.”

“I understand. However, my goal in arranging a meeting with you is not to discuss a specific job, but rather to talk to you about information and/or advice on entering the field of computer engineering. I was hoping to talk to you more about your perspective on what I can do to prepare myself for a career in computer engineering.”

“Unfortunately I really don’t have time to meet with you.”

“I understand that you are unavailable to speak with me about entering the field of biological resources engineering; can you recommend someone else in your organization that might be willing to talk with me about their experiences?”

“Why don’t you just talk to Human Resources?”

“I will be contacting them shortly. However, I am looking for an opportunity to speak with someone like you who is currently doing the work in which I am interested. That way, when I enter this field, I know where my skills and qualifications fit best.”

During Your Conversation

Listen to what the other person is saying.

If you don’t understand something, don’t guess; just ask! Listening may also give you a chance to help out the other person – networking goes both ways.

How you speak is just as important as what you say.

Be interested & enthusiastic! Be aware of how quickly or slowly you are speaking. Watch for fillers/slang (um, like, cool, ya know...). Use a professional tone and mature vocabulary. Maintain good posture and eye contact and remember to smile.

How to know if the meeting is going well.

Check social queues. See if your contact is smiling, making eye contact, and participating in the conversation. Check to see if they seem like they are in a rush or are giving hints to leave, such as checking their watch or standing up. If they are engaged in the conversation and seem to be enjoying it you can assume that it is going well.

Ending the Conversation

If this is the first time you have met, thank your acquaintance for their time and indicate an interest in communicating again. Inquire about the best way to follow up if you have further questions.

See the tips on following up in the next few pages.

Once You Become More Comfortable

Network anywhere/everywhere you go.

Think of everyone you meet as a networking contact, and practice your skills all the time. For inspiration, check out the success stories in this handout.

Keep a well-documented record of contacts.

If you get a business card, make sure to write where and when you met the person right away.

ELEVATOR PITCHES

An elevator pitch is a short (approximately 30-60 seconds) speech that is used to initiate a conversation about your career interests in a networking situation. The term elevator pitch is used since it should be possible to work it into a conversation during a short elevator ride.

- The goal of an elevator pitch is to introduce yourself, give the person a quick sense of who you are, indicate that you are seeking employment, whether that is an internship, full time position, or a co-op position, and then to highlight interests and a few strengths that you have to offer.
- At a career fair or professional event, you are expected to initiate the conversation by introducing yourself with your elevator speech, which should include the following elements.

COMPONENTS TO ELEVATOR PITCHES

Personal

- Name
- Major
- Year/expected graduation date
- For events outside of UMD include school
- Connection to employer is possible

Hi,

My name is Joe. I am a junior mechanical engineering major at The University of Maryland graduating in May of 2026.

Interests

- What are my interests or passions?
- What do I get excited about?
- What motivates me?
- Why would I like to work for this employer and/or why does their position appeal to me?

I am excited to begin my career in the automotive industry, and the idea of working at Ford appeals to me because of your recent focus on hybrid and electrical vehicles, which is an area I'm starting to learn more about.

Past Experience

- What experiences have I had in the past that are relevant to this employer?
- What have I learned about certain professions or engineering fields?
- You may also be able to apply your past experience to a specific project/job that the company has

Last summer I interned at Volvo where I was able to utilize data to improve a vehicle's performance. I am also a part of Terps racing where I have helped design a chassis on a race car. I believe I could apply this knowledge to your company's goals.

COMPONENTS TO ELEVATOR PITCHES CONTD.

Reason for Attending Event

- Full-time
- Internship/Co-op
- Networking for future possibilities
- Time Frame you are looking to work

Right now I am looking for an internship for next summer. But I am also thinking ahead to opportunities for after graduation.

Call to Action

- What would I like to learn from this professional contact?
- What next steps would I like to happen?

I checked your website and I know that there are not any summer internships available at the moment, but I was curious to know what qualities make an intern stand out, so that I can be a competitive candidate when the application opens.

Additional Items to Include When Possible

- Previous exposure to the company through an information session, informational interview, or previous fair
- A friend or relative works for the company
- Add this information in where it makes the most sense

I checked your website and **attended your information session last week**, so I know that there are not any summer internships available right now, but I was curious to know what qualities make an intern stand out, so that I can be a competitive candidate when the application opens.

ELEVATOR PITCH CONSIDERATIONS

- Make it conversational.
- Express confidence.
- Avoid acronyms or niche words and phrases.
- Do not speak too fast or in a monotone voice. It should not be a memorized script.
- Smile!
- Do not limit yourself to a single pitch. Tailor your pitch to the person you are speaking with.
- Be mindful of your non-verbal cues.
- Enunciate your words.
- Project your voice to be heard if there's a crowd.
- Have a firm handshake, if appropriate.
- Establish and maintain eye contact.
- Have good posture.
- Face whoever you are talking to.
- Maintain a reasonable distance.
- Use a breath mint prior to speaking.

See examples on the next page —>

ELEVATOR PITCH EXAMPLES

NETWORKING EVENT OFFERING A SPECIFIC JOB

“Hello ___, nice to meet you! My name is John Doe and I am a sophomore Electrical Engineering student at the University of Maryland. I am expected to graduate in Fall of 2025 and I am interested in internship opportunities this summer related to software development. I saw that the current intern position offered at your company includes a Java Script bootcamp followed by a project utilizing what was learned during the bootcamp. I do have some experience in Java Script, but I am looking to broaden my knowledge of coding languages and this internship looks like an amazing opportunity to do so and apply what I learn. What’s the best way for me to learn more?

*Add in company name and other researched information when possible.

IF YOU HAVE NOT DONE RESEARCH ON AN EMPLOYER/ARE UNFAMILIAR WITH THEM

“Hello ___, nice to meet you! My name is John Doe and I am a sophomore Electrical Engineering student at the University of Maryland. I am expected to graduate in Fall of 2025 and I am interested in internship opportunities this summer related to software development. I have past internship experience using python in data analysis and also have class experience with other common programming languages.

I am looking to broaden my knowledge of coding languages and I look forward to applying what I have learned to contribute to a company’s goals. I was hoping to learn more about what your company does and opportunities that your company has to offer.

NOT LOOKING FOR A JOB/SEEKING INDUSTRY INFORMATION

Hello ___, nice to meet you! My name is John Doe and I am a sophomore Electrical Engineering student at the University of Maryland graduating in Fall of 2025 with an interest in software development. Throughout the various classes I have taken and past internships I have worked at focusing on data analysis I have gained great experience with a lot of different programming languages.

I am really interested in how you got to your position as senior developer at Apple as this is a position that I would love to have sometime in the future. How would you recommend that an electrical engineer transitions into software development?

IF YOU HAVE A JOB BUT WANT TO KEEP YOUR NETWORK OPEN

Hello ___, nice to meet you!

My name is John Doe and I am a software development engineer at _____. Through this position I have learned a lot about ____ by doing _____. I’m curious about the details of your job and what you do on a daily basis.

I’d love to know if we could help each other in any way or if you have any insight on trends that you’ve found helpful lately.

SAMPLE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING QUESTIONS

WORK ENVIRONMENT

How would you describe your work environment?
How would you describe a typical day/week/month/cycle– regular duties, projects, etc.?
What do you like most about your job? What would you change if you could?
What is the most rewarding part of your job? Least rewarding?
How much flexibility are you allowed in your job (hours, vacations, dress, etc.)?
Does the organization have a mission? If so, how does it fulfill that mission?
How much autonomy do you have on the job?
How are you made aware of supervisory expectations?
What portion of your job involves interacting with others, including co-workers and clients?
What does the organization do to ensure all employees feel included?
How does the company foster an inclusive and diverse workplace?

JOB REQUIREMENTS AND EXPERIENCE

What college courses have been most helpful to you in your position?
Is there special certification, licensing, or an advanced degree required for your job?
What personal qualities do you see as important for success in this job?
How much outside or overtime work is required? Nights? Weekends?
Is much travel involved in your job? If so, how much and what type?
What are the toughest problems you deal with?
Are there other industries, sectors, or roles to which you think my skills/abilities would transfer readily?
Describe a typical day/week that you experience in the role of _____.
How do most people enter this field?
What type of position in this field might I reasonably target given my background?

ADVICE/LEADS

If you were in charge of hiring someone to assist you in your work, what criteria would you use to make your selection?
Are there any professional groups or associations in the field that you would recommend I join?
Do you know of any co-op or summer opportunities that would benefit me?
Have you heard of any events or developments in ___(an area that matches your interests/qualifications)?
Are there any particular companies or employers doing important work in ___ field/industry?
Can you think of anyone else I might talk to who has ___ experience or who has done a lot of ___ work?
Of the people you know who have moved from staff jobs to management, who do you think might be most receptive to a request for a networking meeting/informational interview?
What was the best advice you received when you started in this field?

FOLLOWING UP WITH CONNECTIONS

As stated previously, networking is not a one time thing. It is important to follow up initially and check in to maintain a connection. Following up with contacts is where you want to cement your place as a thoughtful and intentional person. Following up with a contact should start as a note within 24 hours of having a conversation with someone. This note should briefly remind the person what they discussed. A follow up isn't merely an act of politeness. It is necessary to establish a connection.

GENERAL TIPS FOR FOLLOW UPS

- Be sure to personalize your follow up. It will be obvious to employers if you did not take any effort to craft a message specifically for them.
- DO NOT directly ask for a job (unless this was specifically discussed).
- Use a professional subject line.
- Jog the recruiter's memory: remind them of your conversation and anything that stood out about your exchange.
- Let contacts know you value their time and guidance: Thank them for spending time with you. Even more, if a recruiter has offered you advice, let them know you've listened and your specific plan to follow up on the steps they've recommended.
- Show interest: Share something that excited you about their company or a specific role.
- Stand out as an applicant who is committed and follows through: You might include a thoughtful question that shows you did your research to leave a positive impression. In addition, realizing that recruiters get hundreds or thousands of applicant emails, you might ask how they prefer to keep in touch, and then honor their request.
- Send an email/LinkedIn message thanking the person for the interview/conversation at career fair/connecting on LinkedIn.
- Ask if you can continue the previous conversation you were having with them or if you may contact them for advice in the future.
- Send a note about how your conversation with them helped you out. Notify them of the status of your referral/job.

General Thank You Notes

Within a day, you should send a note thanking your new contact for taking the time to speak with you.

When writing the note refer to the date and location of your meeting, and mention any unique or highly specific points discussed so the recruiter or new contact will remember you. Any important information discussed should be restated and emphasized in your letter. Include any information you neglected to mention. Proofread your note carefully. There should be no errors (misspellings or typos). Have someone else proofread it too. Below is a sample.

Subject: Engineering Career Paths Chat

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. _____:

Thank the contact for taking the time to speak with you about their career path and current job.

Mention something specific you discussed (for example, an internship program you discussed or a new company project the recruiter mentioned that interested you). Indicate how you plan to act upon advice they may have given you.

Reiterate your thanks.

Sincerely,

Your name

IMMEDIATE FOLLOW UP EXAMPLES

Post Meeting Follow Ups

FOR AN IMMEDIATE JOB

Hi [Recruiter First Name],

It was great speaking with you at [Networking Event / Career Fair] yesterday! [Add personal unique detail about the conversation]. I was really excited to hear about [details from the meeting].

I applied using the link you provided at the event, and I believe my [relevant experience] would be a great fit at [Company].

[Question about application, job, etc.]

I look forward to hearing from you! I can be reached at this email or [Phone number], and please let me know if you need any additional information from me.

Best Regards,

[First and Last Name]

FOR A JOB IN THE FUTURE

Hi [Recruiter First Name],

It was great speaking with you at [Networking Event / Career Fair] yesterday!

[Add personal unique detail about the conversation].

I was really excited to hear about [details from the meeting].

I would love to connect with you to keep in touch and possibly receive advice in the future. I look forward to hearing from you! I can be reached at this email or [Phone number].

Best Regards,

[First and Last Name]

MAINTAINING CONTACT

It is also important to follow up periodically with connections. This may be following up after you applied for a job with them, following up after a career fair, or keeping up with people throughout the years. It is important to stay in touch to enable you to keep the connection. Even if a connection is not relevant to you right now, they may be later, so it is important to follow up.

HOW TO FOLLOW UP OVER TIME

- Connect on LinkedIn!
- Comment on social media/LinkedIn posts
- Message them with questions
- Get coffee/lunch
- Congratulate them on a new job
- Say Hello if you see them at an event
- Like their posts
- Update them about how their advice may have helped you out

SAMPLE FOLLOW UPS

AFTER APPLYING FOR A JOB

Hi [First Name],

I hope you are doing well. I recently applied for the [Position Title] and I wanted to check in on your decision timeline. I am excited about the opportunity to work at [Name of Company] and contribute my [Specific Skills that the Company is Looking For] to your team.

Please let me know if I can provide any additional information. I look forward to hearing from you regarding our next steps in the hiring process.

Best,

[Your Name]

MESSAGING ABOUT A LINKEDIN POST

Hi [First Name],

I just saw your article you posted about [What Article or Post Was About]. I was really interested in the section on [Specific Details from Article or Post]. [List any Additional Thoughts that you may have]. Thank you for sharing the piece!

I hope all is well with you.

Best,

[Your Name]

IF YOU SEE THAT THE PERSON YOU CONNECTED WITH AT AN EVENT IS NOW IN A DIFFERENT POSITION OR NEW COMPANY

Hi [First Name],

We connected back in [Date Year] at [Networking Event] and I see that you are now at [Name of Company]. I wanted to congratulate you on your new position. How are things going with your new company?

Best,

[Your Name]

LEVERAGING HOLIDAYS

A great time to follow up with contacts is during holidays. Here are some sample messages using Thanksgiving.

TO A RECRUITER

I wanted to reach out this Thanksgiving season to say thanks again for all your help in navigating my application to X company this semester. I can't wait to get started and I hope you have a well deserved break after this busy recruiting season!

TO A REFERENCE

This Thanksgiving, I wanted to reiterate how grateful I am that you agreed to help me in my job search! I know that your recommendation is making a significant impact on my success and I'll be sure to keep you updated with how my search is developing. I hope you have a lovely holiday break!

TO AN INTERVIEWER

I'm reaching out this Thanksgiving to say thank you for the opportunity to interview at the company. While I didn't get the role, I learned so much about the job search process and enjoyed learning about the company during our time together. I look forward to reapplying to X company when I develop my academic and professional profile and hope to connect with you again in the future. I hope you have a nice holiday!

TO SOMEONE YOU HAD AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW WITH

As I reflect on experiences I'm thankful for this month, our conversation comes top of mind. I wanted to thank you again for taking the time to meet with me and share so much great information about your career path and your time at X company. I've been implementing the suggestions you provided on my resume and I'm already seeing results. I hope you have a great holiday.

TO A FRIEND

It's Thanksgiving and I didn't want to forget to say thank you for sharing some recommendations for helpful LinkedIn Learning courses that I was able to add to my resume this semester. Also, thanks so much for connecting me to your contact at X company; we had a really productive conversation where I learned a lot about the industry. Looking forward to seeing you once we're back from break!

CONNECTING ON LINKEDIN

- For how to set up your LinkedIn and more tips refer to the LinkedIn handout provided by ECS.
- On LinkedIn The University of Maryland has made groups that students and alumni can join. We highly recommend that you follow: “University of Maryland,” “University of Maryland—A. James Clark School of Engineering,” “A. James Clark School of Engineering Alumni [Official],” or “University of Maryland International Student and Alumni Network” if applicable. Within these groups you can find people to connect with by filtering for things like major, job, and company. This can help you find graduates that may be interested in connecting with you. People are much more likely to help you if you have something in common with them.
- When connecting with someone it is important to not just hit the connect button and send the general message. Personalize your message to show the person that you are connecting with the context of your request. Include who you are and why you are interested in connecting with them. Some example messages may be found below.

Example Connection Messages

Be sure to personalize your connection messages with others on LinkedIn. These messages should be straightforward, short, and unique to each person.

Hello ____,
I found your profile through __ and find your work at __ really interesting, especially your project about __. I'd love to connect with you to follow your career journey.

General connection to someone you do not know

Hello ____,
I am a junior mechanical engineering student at The University of Maryland. I read through your profile and found your career journey really interesting. I found __ (project, job, etc.) particularly impressive. I would really like to connect with you to learn more about your work. Would you be willing to chat for 20-30 minutes next week?

Connection with hopes of an informational interview

Hello ____,
I have really enjoyed working with you. I've learned a lot about __ from our work together. I would love to add you to my network. (This message may be more or less formal depending on your relationship with the person).

TERRAPINS CONNECT: UMD'S ALUMNI NETWORK

You can access Terrapins Connect through Handshake. Here are some highlights:

- Terrapins connect allows you to connect specifically with UMD graduates in your field.
- Many of these graduates are open to answering questions for Maryland students.
- Follow the same communication tips as explained for LinkedIn.

LINKEDIN STRATEGIES

There are many ways to help out others and establish strong connections on LinkedIn by adding to others' and your own profile. By helping others and giving endorsements they are much more likely to do the same for you. Here are some ways to strengthen your profile.

Write a shout-out post on your feed.

I'm thrilled to have had the opportunity to work alongside [tag teammate] during this incredible internship experience! Together, we learned, grew, and made lasting memories while [specific detail about internship]. Grateful for the chance to have collaborated with such a fantastic colleague! [Insert picture or project].

I wanted to take a moment to give a huge shout-out to [tag teammate] who never fails to impress me with their incredible skills! Whether it's their exceptional [insert specific skill], their [insert another skill or attribute], or their ability to [insert a third skill or accomplishment], [teammate] truly sets the bar high. Not only is [teammate] a fantastic [insert profession or role], but they are also an amazing person who constantly inspires those around them. Keep up the outstanding work, [teammate], and thank you for being such an inspiring colleague!

Add teammates in the Projects section

When you add entries to your Projects section, don't forget to add teammates who contributed to your project. This is a quick and easy way to acknowledge others' experiences and abilities.

Give Endorsements

Scroll down to the Skills section on your connection's profile and hit Endorse on skills that you want to vouch for. Endorsing your connection's skills is a way to recognize any professional abilities that you've seen them demonstrate. When you endorse a connection's skills, it contributes to the strength of their profile, and increases the likelihood that they'll be discovered for opportunities related to the skills they possess.

Leave a Recommendation

Click the More button (next to the Message button) on your connection's profile. Press the Recommendation option to leave a note about what it was like to work with them.

Choose your relationship to them, their position at the time you worked with them, and a brief note.

I've had the pleasure of working with [teammate] at [company name] for the past two years. Their attention to detail is unparalleled and they always deliver quality work. [It is optional but recommended to include comments on a specific project you worked with the colleague on, where you specify their particular skills and contributions]. [Teammate] would be a great asset to any team!

REFERRALS

Employee referrals are when a candidate is referred for a position through an existing employee at the company or someone within the candidate's network. It is a helpful way to shorten the talent search for employers and a valuable way for candidates to be seen.

Some companies have a formal process for referring candidates, whereas other companies have more informal procedures where a simple email referral is sufficient. Once a referral is submitted, the hiring team will evaluate whether or not the candidate is the right fit for the position.

HOW TO OBTAIN A REFERRAL

- **Where do I do this?** This can be done through any platform (LinkedIn, in person, email, etc).
- **How do I do this?** Find someone who works at the desired company and connect with them.
- **I feel awkward asking someone for this.** Many companies give incentives to their employees to give out referrals, so do not be shy. The worst someone can say is no!
- **Personalize your strategies.** Your strategy for obtaining a referral should depend on how well you know the individual you are trying to get a referral from. For a friend this may be informal, but for someone who is more of an acquaintance, this should be done through a formal message.
- **How do I find people?** Try to ask people that you have something in common with. This includes people who are a part of an organization that you are in., co-workers, peers, classmates, friends, college alumni, connections on LinkedIn, etc.

FOR SOMEONE YOU KNOW

Hi [Friend's Name],

I hope that you are well. I have recently come across a job posting at [Company] that I believe I would be a great fit for my career goals and skills. I am reaching out to see if you might be able to help me out with a referral.

To make this as easy as possible I have prepared:

- A brief summary of my qualifications, experience, and interest.
- My resume
- My LinkedIn profile

If you are comfortable with providing a referral I would really appreciate it. If not, I completely understand. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best Regards,

[First and Last Name]

FOR SOMEONE YOU DON'T KNOW WELL

Hi [Contact Name],

I hope this message finds you well. I recently came across an exciting job opportunity that I believe aligns well with my skills and experience. The role is for [Job Title] at [Company Name].

Although we met briefly at ____, I was wondering if you would feel comfortable providing me with more information about the job, writing a referral, or introducing me to the appropriate individual at [Company Name] who could further discuss the role with me.

I have attached my resume, and I am happy to provide any additional information that may be helpful. I really appreciate your consideration. I look forward to the possibility of connecting further and discussing this opportunity.

Best Regards,

[First and Last Name]

HOW TO WRITE A REFERRAL

You may also be put in a position to write a referral for someone else. Writing referrals allows you to establish connections with others and help out your company. Here are some examples for how to write a referral.

BEFORE YOU'VE STARTED THE POSITION

- You have accepted the position but have not yet started and want to refer someone for another open role
- You declined an offer, but want to refer someone else for your role
- You've established a positive relationship with the recruiter/hiring manager

Subject: Job Referral for [Position Name]: [Friend Name]

Dear [Hiring Manager's Name],

I hope this email finds you well. I was recently offered a position at [Company Name], and although I have not started yet [or: although I will not be joining the team], I wanted to take the opportunity to refer my friend, [Friend's Name], for the [Job Title] position that is currently open at [company name].

[Friend's Name] has [number of years] of experience in [relevant experience or skills], and I believe they would be an excellent candidate for the role. [Include any additional details about your friend's experiences, qualifications, or character that would be relevant for the job].

I have known [Friend's Name] for [number of years], and I can attest to their exceptional work ethic, professionalism, and strong skills in [relevant skills]. I believe that [Friend's Name] would be a valuable addition to your team, and I am happy to recommend them for the position.

Please let me know if there are any further steps I need to take to ensure that my referral is considered, or if there are any other details that you require from me.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

Two more examples on the next page —>

DURING THE POSITION

- You have an established relationship with HR, your manager
- You've found out how your company handles referrals i.e. form, calls, emails, meetings
- You've established some credibility

Subject: Referral for [Friend's Name] for [Job Title] position at [Company Name]

Dear [Hiring Manager's Name],

I hope this email finds you well. As an intern at [Company Name], I have been impressed with the company culture, the talented team, and the commitment to delivering high-quality work. I am writing to refer my friend, [Friend's Name], for the [Job Title] position currently open at your company.

[Friend's Name] has [number of years] of experience in [relevant experience or skills], and I believe they would be an excellent candidate for the role. [Include any additional details about your friend's experience, qualifications, or character that would be relevant for the job].

I have known [Friend's Name] for [number of years], and I can attest to their exceptional work ethic, professionalism, and strong skills in [relevant skills]. I believe that [Friend's Name] would be a valuable addition to your team, and I am happy to recommend them for the position.

Please let me know if there are any further steps I need to take to ensure that my referral is considered, or if there are any other details that you require from me.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

AFTER THE POSITION

- You completed the internship
- You have a positive relationship with the employer
- You have established credibility

Subject: Referral for Job Opening at [Company Name]

Dear [Hiring Manager's Name],

I hope this email finds you well. I recently completed my internship with [Company Name], and I wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude for the opportunity to learn and grow with your team. The experience has been invaluable, and I am grateful for everything I learned during my time with the company.

As someone who has worked closely with your team, I wanted to bring to your attention a talented professional in my network who I believe would be an excellent fit for the job opening you have advertised. [Friend's Name] has [number of years] of experience in [Industry/Field], and I believe their skills and expertise would be a great asset to your team.

I am confident that [Friend's Name] would thrive in the dynamic and challenging environment of your company, and I highly recommend them for the position. Please find their resume attached for your consideration.

Thank you for your time and for considering my referral. I appreciate everything that I have learned during my internship and am excited to see how the company continues to grow and succeed in the future.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

SUCCESS STORIES

Networking can be daunting. But we're here to remind you that it really works! Here are some success stories from students just like you.

FIRST YEAR CAREER FAIR SUCCESS STORY

"My first internship came from jotting my email down for a recruiter list at the Chi Epsilon Civil Engineering Career Fair in October. I followed up with the company recruiter via the email I was given. A few days later while I was walking to the dining hall, I got a call from the recruiter and we scheduled an interview! I was over the moon. I think it was really helpful that I was proactive and followed up with the recruiter to show my interest early. As a freshman I was unsure whether or not I was qualified but they were impressed by my initiative and I accepted the internship offer soon after the interview!"

SENIOR YEAR BEYA CONFERENCE

"Before the BEYA conference, I was hesitant to attend as I'm an introvert, lacked technical experience, and felt like I had little to offer despite being close to graduation. A friend convinced me to go to a hospitality suite hosted by a prestigious company, where I ended up speaking with a UMD alum. Unexpectedly, she asked for my resume and set me up for an interview the next day! After the interview, I ran into her again, thanked her, and explored the conference. I headed back to campus and as I was walking to Clark through SPH, I got a call from the hiring manager. She had been looking for me at BEYA to present an offer in person! Since I had already left, she made the offer over the phone, and I later accepted. After ending the call, all I did was laugh. I laughed so much that I was about to cry from how surreal the last two days had been! Sometimes, stepping out of your comfort zone can lead to the most unexpected opportunities."