



Networking Guide

Muhlenberg College
Career Center

Lower Level, Seegers Student Union
484-664-3170
careers@muhlenberg.edu
www.muhlenberg.edu/careercenter

Hours of Operation
Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Networking Guide

Networking and informational interviewing involve having career-related conversations with people to explore and learn more about career fields, the job search, post-graduate education or any sort of professional/post-grad activity you're interested in pursuing.

Think of networking like being a SPY – you get to figure out what someone likes or dislikes about their career, what skills you need to succeed, or even how to stand out in a job search. About 85% of open positions are not advertised, making networking critical for your job or internship search. It's never too early to start networking!

Tools to Network

- Your family, friends, former classmates, professors and others who know you best
 - This group might sound obvious, but it's easy to overlook! Remember to look around the Thanksgiving table and think who might be able to help you. Make sure the people who know you best know what your career interests are, and ask them if they know anyone connected to those industries.
- LinkedIn – This is the best online tool to find connections!
 - First, make sure you have a solid LinkedIn profile. Here you will include a professional headshot, your resume with a record of your accomplishments, and a solid summary of who you are. Remember that the Career Center can help you maximize your LinkedIn profile. You can find more advice on the LinkedIn Profile Tip Sheet.
 - Once you have a solid profile, go to [linkedin.com/alumni](https://www.linkedin.com/alumni) to explore the career insights of over 14,000 Muhlenberg alumni who are already on LinkedIn. This interactive menu will allow you to sort by location, employer, job function, what they studied, and how you're connected. Use these tools to explore all the diverse opportunities a Muhlenberg degree prepares you for.
 - As you zero in on a career focus, check out advanced searches by clicking the search bar at the top of the page and hitting enter. By using Advanced Search, you can focus on certain keywords and cross reference by company, title, or school. You can also search by specific zip codes. Experimenting with these defined variables can provide you with a tailored set of contacts to meet your exact needs.
- The Muhlenberg Network – www.themuhlenbergnetwork.com
 - The Muhlenberg Network is Muhlenberg's brand new networking platform that works like a private LinkedIn just for Mules. To activate your profile and access some of the most eager networking contacts, email Pat Fligge '10, Director of Alumni & Parent Engagement in the Career Center at patrickfligge@muhlenberg.edu

Mechanics of Networking

You've found someone to connect with – now what?! Reaching out to begin a networking conversation can feel like the toughest part. But you can follow this simple and straightforward formula in an introductory message:

Networking Stat

Users typically spend an average of 17 minutes on LinkedIn monthly.

(LinkedIn)

Networking Guide

Mechanics of Networking

#1 **Introduce yourself.** Tell them your name, class year, what your majors/minors are, and your career interests – If you’re emailing a fellow Mule, include Muhlenberg in your email subject line.

Hi, I'm Henry Muhlenberg, a senior at 'Berg where I'm majoring in Psychology and Media/Communications. I'm interested in exploring a career in marketing strategy.

#2 **Let the contact know how you know them.** You could say you found them through LinkedIn, that you both went to Muhlenberg, or that you were referred to them by a mutual contact.

I found you on The Muhlenberg Network, and the Career Center suggested I reach out to you for some advice.

#3 **Ask for help.** Be specific about what you’re looking for, personalize your questions to who they are, and give a sense of where you want the conversation to go.

GENERAL ADVICE: *I see you work at Digitas as a Media Planner. I'm really curious to learn what your typical day is like and what classes at Muhlenberg you felt were helpful to you in your career?*

APPLYING FOR A JOB/INTERNSHIP: *I see you work at Digitas as a Media Planner. I just applied/planning to apply for a job/internship there. I'm curious to learn more about the culture at Digitas, and if you have any advice on how I might stand out in the interview process?*

#4 **Ask to talk and say thank you.** Propose times you’re available to talk to make it easy for the contact to say yes, and show appreciation for their time.

If you have a few minutes to chat, I'd be happy to give you a call. I'm available Monday-Wednesday after 3pm, Thursday after 1pm, and anytime on the weekend. I'm also happy to accommodate your schedule. Thank you so much in advance, and I look forward to hearing from you soon!

#5 **Have the conversation.** Come prepared with questions – at least 5–7 – and take notes so you can follow up accurately. Example questions may include:

What has your career pathway looked like?

What do you like/dislike about your job?

How do you stay informed about trends in your industry?

What skills do you utilize in your job? Were there classes at Muhlenberg that prepared you for your job?

How might I stand out in my job search/interview? Do you see ways I could strengthen my resume?

Where should I be looking for jobs/internships that fit my skills and interests?

Do you know anyone else that I should talk to/that you could refer me to?

Questions not to ask:

Can you hire me?

Super personal questions



Networking Guide

Mechanics of Networking

#6

Follow-up and Thank You's. Sending a thank you after the conversation is mandatory – remaining in touch over time is optional, depending on how helpful you think the contact might be, but regardless, always end on a good note.

Thank you so much for our conversation yesterday. I really appreciate you sharing so much of your time and advice with me. Hearing how you were able to climb the ladder using the skills you learned at Muhlenberg helps me think about my own career path, and I've already edited my resume based on your feedback. Looking forward to staying in touch. Thanks again!

FOLLOW-UP ADVICE: Share progress updates with the contact – opportunities you've applied for or offers you accept, relevant projects you completed, share a news article about their company/industry, etc.

EXAMPLE: *Thank you again for the conversation a few weeks ago. I've already updated my resume based on your advice, and I've been researching the companies you suggested I look into. Our conversation about new trends you're seeing really helped me improve some of the class projects I've been working on. I'll be sure to finish the final projects and share the results with you in a few weeks. Hope all is well with you and your family!*

Wrap up

Networking builds on itself. After sharing your interests and asking questions, make sure to ask your contact if they know anyone else that would be a good person for you to speak to and if they would be willing to make an introduction.

It's never too early to begin networking. You don't need to have a set career pathway in mind to connect with professionals. Networking is a great way to explore and compare/contrast different fields you're interested in pursuing. Talking with professionals from different fields will enable you to figure out if one path resonates with you more than another.

You already know how to network. Networking is simply meeting people and sharing with them. You've done this when meeting friends, classmates, or people on your hall at Muhlenberg. With these tips in mind, you're ready to grow your professional network.

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