



## HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF NETWORKING EVENTS

### BEFORE:

1. If you know who will be present, research attendees and their organizations to determine whom you would most like to speak to. The goal is not to ask for a job, but to expand your network, gain insider information, and share your own knowledge or contacts.
2. Prepare a brief introduction that includes your full name (not just your first name), your current situation, and what you are looking for. A more sophisticated “elevator pitch” would also include one or several key accomplishments, what drives you/what you are passionate about in your work, and your unique set of skills. It takes practice!
3. If you are unused to networking events or are more on the introverted side, it can be useful to set a goal for yourself of a minimum number of people to speak to or some key points to explore.
4. Prepare business cards to hand out if you have them, if this is an in-person event. If this is an online event, be prepared to invite others to connect with you on LinkedIn during the event.

### DURING:

1. For each new contact, introduce yourself (see item 2 above) and perhaps have one or two questions up your sleeve (see below) to spark a conversation.
2. Find out what you might have in common with the person you are speaking to. It's OK to talk about things that are not work-related! Your network can also draw from people who share your passion for a specific hobby, who have similar lifestyles (e.g. new parents), or who share a love of a specific geographical region or culture.
3. Try not to spend too much time with a single individual. The event is about taking advantage of the mix of attendees and meeting a broad range of contacts.
4. If it seems appropriate, you can close with some kind of commitment to action (a promise to send the URL of a great website or article, a vow to connect on LinkedIn, etc.).

### AFTER:

1. Try to follow up within a short time frame, perhaps with a piece of information that you promised to share (see item 4 above). If it seems appropriate, suggest connecting via a social network such as LinkedIn. Don't let those business cards you collected gather dust – they have an extremely short shelf life!
2. Research any trends, organizations and ideas you have learned about during the event. Don't forget to thank your contacts if they provided you with leads or resources.

3. Maintain your network by informing your contacts about your news every once in a while and ask how they are doing.

#### SOME QUESTIONS TO GET YOU STARTED:

- How is your week going? What is your biggest career or business challenge at the moment?
- Tell me more about you. What is your area of expertise?
- Who was/is your favorite course or professor at AUP?
- How did you get into your present line of work? What was your first job after graduating?
- What are the trends that you see impacting your field?
- What are the profiles that are most in demand in your profession?
- What advantages do you find working in a big corporation or a small company or running your own business (whichever is applicable)?
- What is most enjoyable about your job? What is most challenging about your job?
- What is the one thing about your job that people who want to get into it should know?