

Networking

Networking is about more than collecting contacts — it’s about building genuine relationships with people who can share advice, open doors, and help you grow. Through networking, you can:

- Find mentors who guide your career journey.
- Learn how to break into an industry.
- Discover opportunities that may never be posted publicly.

Your network can include family, friends, faculty, staff, supervisors, alumni, professional associations, student organizations, and even social media connections. Remember: most professionals enjoy talking about their career paths and are happy to help students.

Crafting an Elevator Pitch

An elevator pitch is a quick, confident way to introduce yourself and explain your goals. It should include:

- Your academic background.
- Key skills or experiences.
- Career interests or goals.
- Why you’re reaching out.

Example 1

“Hello, I’m _____. I’m a senior Marketing major at UTRGV with a Social Media Marketing Certificate. I’ve worked with the City of Brownsville and local agencies on branding projects. I’m excited about opportunities in digital marketing and brand development at your company.”

Example 2

“Hello, I’m _____. I’m a first-year Criminal Justice major at UTRGV. I’m exploring internships in law enforcement, criminal defense, and cybersecurity. I’d love to learn more about your organization and how my skills could contribute.”

Preparing Questions

Show genuine interest by preparing thoughtful questions before meeting someone. Examples:

- “Can you tell me about your career path?”
- “What do you enjoy most about your job?”
- “What skills or experiences are most valued in this field?”
- “What advice would you give a student entering this industry?”

Professional Etiquette in Networking

- Be respectful of time: Keep introductions brief and focused.
- Listen actively: Show genuine curiosity, not just a desire for a job.
- Be authentic: Share your interests honestly, don’t exaggerate.
- Follow up: Send a thank-you email or handwritten note. Mention specific advice or insights you found helpful.