

Strive to Thrive

Career Tips For Ted Rogers School Students

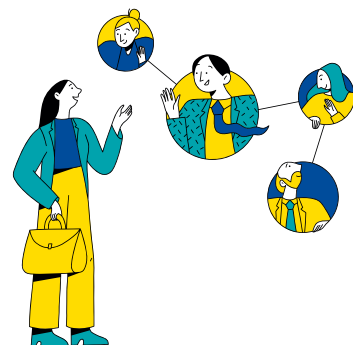
These reports leverage the expertise of BCH staff to share best practices for students & alumni.

Updated August 2025

What is Networking?

Networking is the when you exchange information, converse, and connect with professionals to expand their connections, discover job opportunities, and stay informed about updates within the industry.

A strong network will help advance your career development and professional success. You can learn about potential job opportunities before anyone else, giving you the advantage when applying for a job. Networking can also benefit you long-term, as you might not need an opportunity right now, but you can leverage that connection in the future.



Tips for Networking



Connect with People You Find Interesting: If you are looking to develop a strong connection, you are more likely to be successful if it's someone you are genuinely interested in. You will be more enthusiastic overall, and you'll be less likely to get stuck in the conversation.

Prepare Specific Questions: Ask questions that are specific to the person you are talking to. People do not want to answer general questions that anyone could answer, they would rather connect over personal experiences.



Keep it Conversational: Be professional and respectful, but don't be afraid to be authentic and show your personality!

Don't Be Transactional: It's very easy to tell if someone is interested in you or just the role you are in. Be genuine - and be truly interested in them as an individual. Transactional relationships often don't flourish.



Be Yourself: Your goal is to build a long-term connection. The best connections are made when you are being authentic.

It Won't Always Go as Planned: No matter how comfortable you get with networking, sometimes you will have a bad day or experience. Prepare as much as you can, but if you mess up- don't worry- this is how you learn. Just move on.



How to Prepare Before Networking

Prepare Your Elevator Pitch

Elevator pitches are an opportunity to introduce yourself and your skills in a persuasive manner. When delivering an elevator pitch, know what you want to achieve. Elevator pitches generally take around 30 seconds!

Start your elevator pitch by introducing yourself and the program you are in. Then speak about your current role, student groups involvement, and what makes you a candidate worth hiring.

Speak to your top skills when describing your current role, that way the recruiter can connect with your strengths.



Create a Strong LinkedIn Profile

Make sure your LinkedIn profile is optimized to represent who you are and your professional accomplishments. You will be connecting with people after a networking event or will want to send a follow up thank you message, so make sure your profile is well set up.

Research the people you are meeting with prior to, so you can ask tailored and specific questions about their career journey.

Sample Messaging

For Industry Expert

Hi Huzaifa,

I saw on your LinkedIn profile you quickly advanced from the 'HR Generalist' role to 'Director of People and Talent' at Kotn.

As a HR student at TMU I am wondering how to follow this career path myself and am hoping you would be open to share some insight. Would you be open to a coffee chat?

Thank you

For Hiring Manager or Recruiter

Hi Amy,

I came across your LinkedIn profile while researching a job opening at Apple.

I saw that you have been hiring for Business Development Representative and am really excited about the role. I am submitting my application and have extensive experience in sales and building customer relationships. I would love to learn more about what you are looking for, specifically and was wondering if you would be open to a call?

Thank you!

In-Person Networking

In-Person Networking events are exciting and the best way to build strong and deep connections! The main aspects to consider are standing out from the crowd and not being transactional. You want to build the foundation for a strong long-term connection.



- Introduce yourself and give a firm handshake.
- Speak to unoccupied employers to make better connections.
- Ask the individual interesting and unique questions that are open-ended to keep it conversational.
- Listen! Conversations are a two-way street. Actively listen, be present, and engage in the conversation.
- Build rapport - be genuine and sincere in both your verbal conversation and body language.
- Make sure you connect with the individual on LinkedIn after the event to stay in touch for any future job opportunities within their company!

Virtual Networking

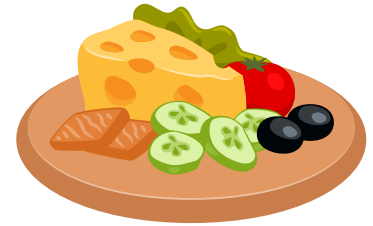
While more relaxed, virtual networking can be tricky. It is tempting to keep your camera off and take a backseat at a virtual networking event, but this will not leave a positive lasting impression. **You must make sure you are engaging throughout the virtual event, connecting with employers and asking insightful questions.**

- Participate!! Ask questions, engage in any activities throughout the presentation or event.
- Have your camera on at all times with a clean background or virtual background.
- Mute yourself when not speaking to avoid background noise.
- Research the individual(s) on LinkedIn to ask specific questions regarding their past work experiences.
- When connecting with the individual on LinkedIn, send them a note re-introducing yourself, so they will remember you.



Networking Events with Food

Networking events with food are exciting! But can also be another factor to consider with how to appropriately navigate eating, connecting, and maintaining professionalism. Here are some tips for how to navigate a networking event with food.



- **Keep your hands clean** - try to choose easy to eat foods and use napkins or wash your hands after eating to keep your hands clean - nobody wants to shake a greasy hand.
- **Focus on networking** - while the food is a nice treat, you are there to network. If the food will interfere with being able to make a strong connection network first and then once you are done you can eat.
- **Don't overfill your plate** - be mindful of everyone at the event. The goal isn't to get as much food as possible, but to build strong connections. Take small amounts so that everyone can have some food.
- **Don't immediately go for seconds** - Demonstrate professionalism and courtesy for your hosts and fellow attendees by allowing everyone to get their first serving before you consider going back for more.
- **Clean up after yourself** - clear any plates or garbage you have used and offer to help others. You are representing the way you will show up in a work environment. Taking the time to clear up after yourself shows respect, responsibility and attention to detail.



- Dress professionally and based on their dress code.
- Prepare your Elevator Pitch to showcase your value.
- Ask about events and initiatives about the company.
- Be mindful of others waiting to speak.



- Wear strong perfume/cologne.
- Ask repetitive questions found on the job description or website.
- Let your cellphone interrupt the event.
- Cut someone off when they are speaking.
- Ask for a job or provide your resume.

Learn More for Free



LEARNING

Learn more about networking through these LinkedIn Learning courses.

[Networking Foundations: Networking Basics](#) (Kevin Wallace)



LEARNING

Learn more about networking through these LinkedIn Learning courses.

[The Ultimate Guide to Professional Networking](#) (Dana Robinson)



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Learn more about networking through these LinkedIn Learning courses.

[Professional Networking](#) (Dorie Clark)

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Alysha is a Career Consultant with 5+ years of experience working in human resources, recruitment, and career services. She is passionate about helping clients identify and leverage their skills and interests to find fulfilling work. Alysha prides herself in her empathetic, supportive, and straight forward approach to support students in their career goals.

Data Sources

- 1 [RMG 799 - LinkedIn & Virtual Networking Strategies \(Sarah Anderson\) - Google Slides](#)
- 2 [Brew a Connection: How to have a Killer Coffee Chat - Google Slides](#)
- 3 [Tomaszewski, M. \(2022\) How to Write an Elevator Pitch \(Examples & Speech Template\).](#)
- 4 [Augustine, A. \(2022\) The Importance of Networking \(and How to Do It Well\).](#)
- 5 [Kagan, J. \(2021\) Networking.](#)