

Career Development - Feedback and Networking

Your manager may be your best resource for feedback, guidance and support. However, not all manager/employee relationships allow for this level of conversation and interaction. As part of your personal ownership and engagement in career development, there are a number of alternative resources available to you.

- 1. Seek feedback from colleagues and team members**
Ask your coworkers what they appreciate about you being on their team
- 2. Reach out to former managers**
Consider what constructive feedback they can provide on your past performance
- 4. Explore feedback from stakeholders and clients**
These individuals see you in action day to day, what strengths do they value?
- 5. Unpack the feedback**
Do some analysis before accepting/rejecting feedback
- 6. Ask a professional**
Have a conversation with a career consultant (consult [Homewood Health](#))

NETWORKING

Networking is how you can access one of your most important resources, the people you know. Networking connects you with people that may be assets in your job search. Networking can help you get on the radar of people who can hire you, open door, or leverage you to other opportunities. You may learn about opportunities that are soon to be posted. To learn more about networking visit the [UNavigate](#) employee webpage. Explore the **Expand Your Network** section and here you will find Lynda.com resources and a number of articles on how to network effectively.

Networking is never about asking for a job! It is about building a community of relationships related to your career.

Step 1.

Begin by brainstorming a list of names of everyone you know personally. For example, include friends, neighbors, colleagues, former employers, social connections, etc. Also, add to the list people you have not yet met but that would be valuable contacts. Don't exclude someone because you assume they wouldn't meet with you or can't help you.

Step 2.

Contact each relevant person and request a meeting. Start with people who know you well and who you are comfortable speaking with. Use these experiences to practice your networking skills.

Step 3.

Before contacting anyone, make sure you are prepared. Consider having an agenda, clearly identify what you want to get out of the meeting.

- If you have not spoken to this person in some time consider how to break the ice and then bring the gap into a career discussion
- Ask questions and invite your contact to talk and offer suggestions
- Commit to staying on track and on time. If you are asked for ½ hour of their time do not go longer, unless they genuinely offer to do so

Step 4.

Consider your networking introduction. This is also commonly referred to as your 30 second elevator pitch. Share with them your job search plans and ask them for other contacts.

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How can you create your own opportunities?

RESEARCH

Job research helps you reveal all of the different roles for which you might be a good fit. Begin your research on the UNavigate website and explore career paths on campus and use the comparison tool to become aware of the numerous jobs available at the university. Reading UToday is a great way to stay current and learn more about what is happening on campus.

*“Interview someone
whose job you want &
discover how they got it.”*

Informational Interviews

One of the best ways to research and explore career opportunities across the university is to conduct an informational interview. Informational interviews allow you to learn more about a department, faculty, team or manager. Look for individuals doing work in the area you are interested in or departments or faculties you have a desire to explore. Be respectful of people’s workloads and time constraints.

Before the meeting: Prepare in advance to get the most out of meeting. Keep in mind this is not a job interview it is simply to gain knowledge and information. **Informational interviews should be brief, schedule no more than 20 minutes.**

During the meeting: Consider the questions below.

After the meeting: Thank the person for their time at the meeting and send a follow up email.

Questions to get the conversation started

- Describe a typical workday?
- What type of pressures are you under?
- What do you like most/least about this area of work?
- What are the key skills or competencies that are important to being successful in this job? (Communication, project planning, etc.)
- What do you appreciate most working for this manager / department?
- Can you tell me more about you team and how they work together?
- What are the pros and cons of your schedule / workload?