

Networking with Sewanee Alumni: It Pays to Be Polite

Before the initial call or E-mail:

- Be confident in the knowledge that the person really would like to talk with you.
- Do your research and know as much about the individual or field or organization as possible.
- If the person's name is difficult to pronounce, try to ask someone on campus who may know them.
- Understand what the alumnus or alumna does and confirm that they still work in the field that interests you. If you discover wrong information about their employment, ask if they would still be willing to discuss the field that interests you OR if there is someone else they would recommend.

When calling to arrange an informational interview:

- Ask if you have called at a good time to talk for a few minutes OR set a better time.
- Have your questions in mind (or on paper) in case your phone call *becomes* the meeting due to a scheduling issue.
- While arranging the meeting, ask for all information you need about directions, metro stop/parking, security, what floor, or **anything** special you need to know to reach their office.
- Ask for or confirm an E-mail address and send a message to confirm the date and time of your meeting.

When the Meeting Time Arrives:

- Have all of your questions well organized.
- Have copies of your resume just in case you are asked, but do not send a mixed signal about your purpose by offering one.
- Dress appropriately.
- Turn off your cell phone, do not chew gum, and do not smoke immediately prior to your informational interview.
- Be an active listener and be prepared to take notes.
- Don't hesitate to ask for the names of others you should meet.

After the Informational Interview:

- Send a note promptly.
- Sometimes mail never arrives; follow with an E-mail message about a week after your note. ("I hope you've received my note by now. Thank you again for your time and all of the great information you shared with me." Etc.)
- Maintain contact over time. Those you meet will be happy to know where you land and how your career develops.

Sources for Stationery:

Print Services

www.paperstyle.com www.americanstationery.com www.horchow.com

Career & Leadership Development

931-598-1121, careers@sewanee.edu

Careers.sewanee.edu