

## Career Skills: Networking

### PART ONE: Mentor Preparation

Throughout your mentee's college career, they will meet and build relationships with people who can lead them to new resources, internships or jobs, or other opportunities. That group of people is called a network. Networking has always been an important tool in a college student's professional development journey and in securing employment during or after college. Eventually, your mentee will need to reach out to some of these people for advice, recommendations, or connections.

The term "networking" gets thrown around on college campuses, but most students struggle with networking effectively. This is even more so with students who are the first in their families to go to college or who come from under-resourced backgrounds. It's critical that your mentee start building their professional network now to set them up for future success.

You can start by having a conversation with your mentee about how networking was useful to you or people you know. Consider these questions for yourself: Have you gotten job offers through your network that you otherwise might not have discovered? Have you been referred to opportunities based on the people you have access to? How did your college network stay with you after college? What would your opportunities have looked like without your network? Your answers indicate how significant of a role a person's network can take!

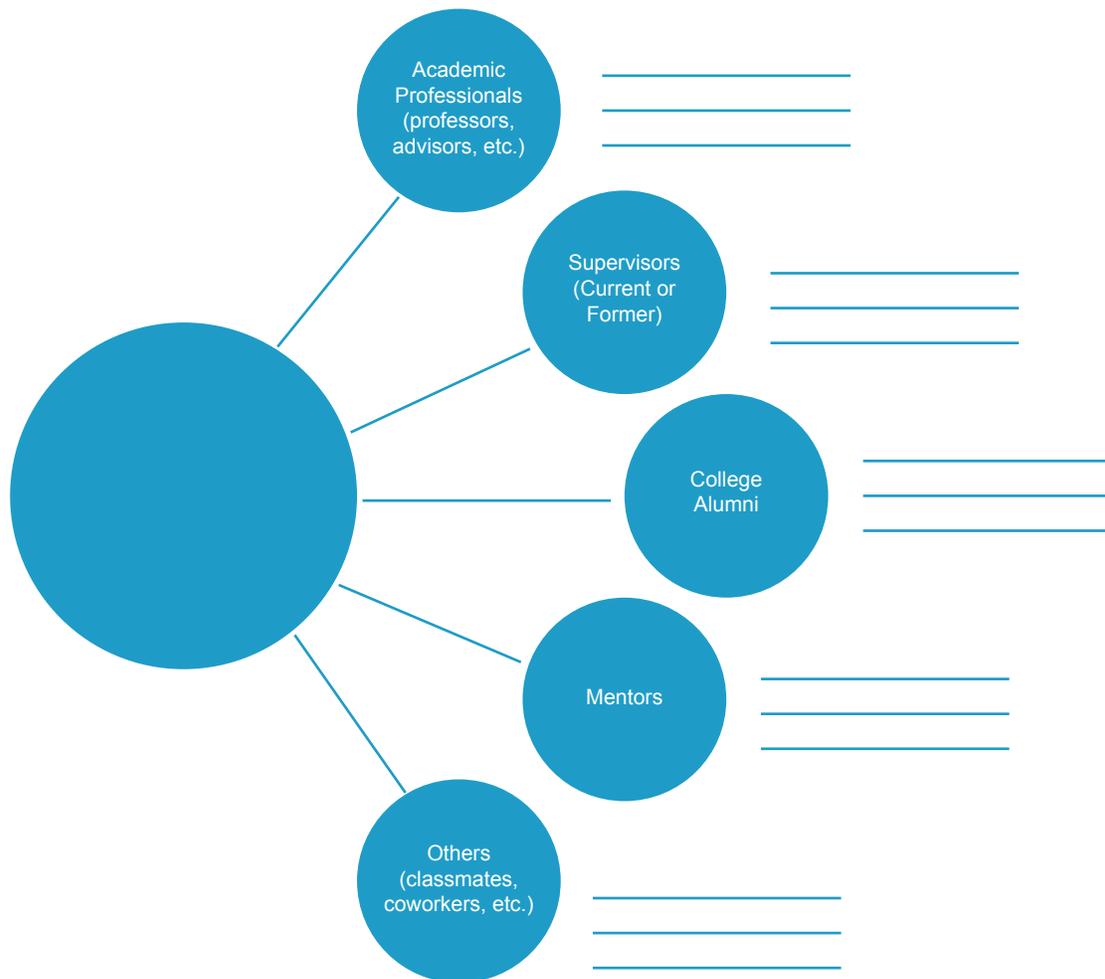
With this module, we will guide you through how to introduce effective networking to your mentee. You will lead your mentee through a conversation on the importance of developing a robust network before graduating college, help them identify and access resources to expand their network, map their networks, and write an email setting up a coffee chat. This may seem daunting at first, but it will take an easy format of 5 minutes of conversation, 15 minutes of a pair activity, and 5 minutes for the email.

### PART TWO: Pair Activity

Throughout your college career, you will meet and build relationships with people who can potentially lead you to new resources, jobs, or other opportunities. That group of people is called a network. Networking has always been an important tool in a college student's professional development journey and in securing employment during or after college. Networking sounds big and undefined, but it's easier to start than it sounds; you just need to know who you're connected to. Let's explore your current network!



First, think about people you know in each of the categories below, and map out your network by filling in the blanks.



Then, answer these questions and share them, along with the chart, with your mentor – or if you prefer, your mentor can ask you these questions and you can respond verbally.

1. Which portion of your network is the most robust, meaning has the most people with whom you have meaningful relationships?
2. Which portion of your network could use some improvement?
3. What's one thing you can do within the next month to expand your network?
4. List ways your network can be beneficial throughout your college journey.

Finally, **set up a coffee chat with someone from your network map** that you are interested in hearing more from. Follow these bullet points to craft your email, and share it with your mentor before you send it out.

- Greeting by name
- Introduce yourself and remind them how you know them and what connects you
- Tell them you'd be interested in talking about your career trajectories and interests
- Suggest a time to meet in the near future (but don't presume they will say yes)
- Farewell

*Example:*

Dear Professor LastName,

I hope this email finds you well. I have been in your Chem 303 class this fall, and greatly enjoyed the material, so much so that I will be declaring my Chemistry major soon. It's been particularly helpful that it is a small class, as class discussions help me learn. I'd be interested in talking with you about your career trajectory, and what opportunities exist for Chemistry majors. Would you be interested in getting a coffee with me sometime in the next two weeks to chat about career trajectories?

Many thanks, and I look forward to hearing back from you! See you in class tomorrow.

Best,  
FirstName LastName