

Networking isn't a four letter word,
but it could be summed up by one.

Talk

- **Networking matters!** You're smart to be here. Only 5-25% of jobs are advertised. You'll learn more by talking to people you know (and like today, expanding who you know) than you will in front of a computer screen.
- **Notice who's on the bus with you today.** Practice on each other, but make it real because you can connect with each other on LinkedIn and compare notes about what you learn tonight and throughout your job search process. You might also find that you're able to make connections for each other at the event if you know things about the others here on the bus (*"Oh, you might want to meet Malcolm, he's studying finance and he just told me about his internship."*).
- **Invite others into your conversations.** Help each other out. (*"Malcolm, I'm glad you're here, I'd like you to meet Kendra. We were just talking about her honeymoon in Hawaii."*)
- **Be curious about the people you're meeting.** Your genuine interest in finding out about the people at the event will be clear to the people there. Here are some possible questions if you're stuck:
 - *What do you like about your job?*
 - *What do you wish you'd known when you were searching for your first job?*
 - *What do you like to do in your spare time?*
- **It's okay to be nervous!** We're all sometimes nervous at these events. You don't have to be at 100% for the whole evening. Just keep coming back to the reason you're here, and get back in action if you notice yourself making a 10th pass at the food table.
- **Wear your nametag.** Practice a quick introduction of yourself. Gauge interest from your listener. Remember to keep your handshake firm (but not too firm!) and maintain eye contact.

- **Ask for help with a specific focus in mind.** What would be most useful for you in your job search? If you're clear about your focus, it'll be easier for people there to offer you help. And remember...they're at the event because they want to help you!
- **Ask for business cards and follow up with meaningful details about your encounter.** When you send a LinkedIn connection request, instead of the default message, write something about the connection you made (example: *"No matter what you say, I think the Broncos will have a stellar season this year. Let's stay in touch so we can continue our rivalry"*).
- **Look for opportunities to be helpful to the people there.** You may know of a resource (web site, person, software) that would help the people you meet. Offer up your knowledge and your willingness to help.
- **Ask if it's okay to stay in touch with people you meet at the event.** Find out how they like to be contacted (via LinkedIn, via email, via phone, etc.), and make note of their preferences. Also ask them how frequently they are willing to be contacted so that you don't extend beyond their good will. Make note of what they tell you so that you remember later, and set reminders in your calendar to stay in touch.
- **Follow-up with rigor.** If you say you're going to send a LinkedIn connection or write the title of a book in an email, do it within 2-3 days, and include a short note about where you met and a reference to your conversation. Research the organization where your new contacts work and use some of those tidbits in your follow-up notes or phone calls.