

# WHAT'S NEXT?

## How to Research Your Network

In order for you to benefit from this event, it is important for you to be an active participant. That means you should feel free to ask questions and to add your thoughts and ideas relating to the career that you want pursue at any time. The aim of this handout is to help you think about researching questions that will yield information that is meaningful to you.

Your goals are to learn about the networking process and how to ultimately network toward a desired job. The quickest way to cut off a valuable networking contact is to ask for a job. While the individual might have a job available at some time, your initial goal is to get information, not employment.

Keep in mind that one of your best resources for networking is alumni from your school. They've taken the classes you have taken, they have been on the job market just like you, and they have some perspective to share because they know what it's like work in their field. This guide will also help you talk to new potential members of your network.

Your growing network is a research resource. Instead of asking questions which could be easily answered online, consider questions that focus on preparation or training for the field, such as:

### Experience and Entry:

- How do people break into this field?
- What is the best preparation for this kind of work?
- What experience did you have to get your job?
- How did you get your start in this field?
- What recommendations do you have for me regarding a job search strategy?

### Educational Training, Memberships:

- What books or journals would you recommend that I read?
- Which professional associations should I join?
- Are there conferences or events that are important to attend?
- Do you recommend that I enroll in any particular classes (clinical or otherwise)?
- Should I do an internship? Do you recommend a particular site?

### How to get a job in the field:

- Ideally, what should I have on my résumé?
- How did you get your start in this field?

- Can you recommend particular employers I should look into?
- What type of professional and personal skills does it take to succeed at this type of work?

#### Working in the field:

- What are your primary job responsibilities?
- What is a typical work day like?
- How much variety is there in your work?
- How much training/supervision do or did you receive?
- How much client contact do you have?
- How much contact and what kinds of interactions do you have with individuals or groups outside the office or organization?
- Does your job require that you travel?
- What are the toughest problems and decisions you handle?
- What do you like/dislike most about your work?
- What do you see as the major issues/ trends in the field today?
- Are there important things I need to know about this field that I haven't brought up?

#### Professional Development and Advancement:

- What opportunities for professional development exist in your field?
- What opportunities for advancement are there in this organization or in the field?
- Were you mentored? Do you mentor employees? (Thoughts?)
- What would be a typical next career move for someone in your position?
- What kinds of projects have you developed in your position that have been meaningful to you?
- How will you connect the work and experience of your current position to your next move?