Networking activity

Shared by: Yarma Velazquez-Vargas, Chicana/o Studies

Materials needed: none

Learning challenge addressed/predictable outcome: in-class collaboration, community building

Best used for: Face-to-Face courses

Learning objectives/ skills fostered:
  o Improving public speaking skills
  o Extending thinking by sharing what they’re thinking
  o Developing workplace skills

What to do/ How to do it:
1. Explain the basics of networking. Provide students with a definition and some basic rules. **Networking is an activity to create and foster relationships for mutual benefit.** Some of the basics of networking that you want to share are:
   a. Don’t start the conversation by asking for contact information but be sure to leave with a card or email.
   b. Try to make a meaningful connection by finding a shared interest (examples: old cars, scrapbooking, films, an author)
   c. Listen to what others have to say and ask questions
2. Have students divide into pairs, give them one of the following scenarios, and have them practice what they learned.
   a. You are at a wedding and you just realized a person at the table works for the company you want to work for
   b. You are at an academic conference and the speaker teaches at the university you are considering for grad school
   c. You are at a career fair at the booth of your desired employer
   d. You are in class and a fellow student had a summer internship at your desired place of employment.
3. Students should take turns being the professional or the student.
4. End the class with a reflection. What were some good questions other asked? When did you feel the most comfortable? Where are good places to network?

Tips for implementing:
Students should develop a list of their resources. They have a hard time identifying the members of their religious congregation, neighbors or fellow students as part of their network. Helpful books and links: [http://www.wikihow.com/Network](http://www.wikihow.com/Network); “Networking for People Who Hate Networking: A Field Guide for Introverts, the Overwhelmed, and the Underconnected”; “Business Networking: How to Build an Awesome Professional Network: Strategies and Tactics to Meet and Build Relationships with Successful People”