Networking Basics
A common synonym for developing and maintaining contacts and personal connections with a variety of people who might be helpful to you and your career. Creating friendships is networking… you do it all the time. You can network with everyone!

First Impressions
- Come prepared! Know who will be at the event, appropriate dress attire, and BE ON TIME!
- Have positive body language—smile, stand up straight, and arms at your side.
- Prepare some conversation topics prior to the event.

Professional Attire

**Mainstream Casual**
- Skirts and sweaters in a variety of colors and patterns.
- Slacks or capri pants.
- Relax but elegant shoes.
- Short-sleeved tops, maybe with vests.
- Fashionable combinations of tops, vests, and skirts.
- Open toe shoes.

**Executive Casual**
- Brightly colored or patterned shirts and ties.
- Sports coats and jackets.
- Dressy slacks.
- Loafers or monk-strapped shoes.
- Brightly colored skirts.
- Bigger and unique jewelry and accessories.
- Fashionable jacket and skirt.
- Closed toe pumps.

**Traditional Business Attire**
- Traditionally patterned shirts and ties can be more brightly colored.
- Dark and subtly patterned suits.
- Dark brown or navy blue oxfords.
- Professional tops without a deep neckline.
- Suits can be more brightly colored.
- Tights and closed toe heels.

Strategies
- Start small and practice, attending events is important.
- Work the room/event—if you notice an employer/alum by themselves that you wish to talk to, approach them first.
- Set a goal prior to the event, such as talking to ___ many people, or ___ many companies.

Conversation
- Create your Elevator Pitch, this is your 30 second commercial, all about who you are! Include your name, major, year at UNH, and your career goals.
- Avoid religion, politics, money and heated current events.
- Have questions prepared to ask: “Tell me about your background”, “what advice would you have for someone entering the field”, “are there colleagues you would recommend I talk to”, “how did you get started”, to name a few!
- Find commonalities and shared interests. You can also talk about recent events, sports, and other general interest topics
- When ready to leave a conversation, let the person(s) know you were happy to talk to them, ask for a business card, and move on!

After the event
- Write notes on the back of business cards!
- Follow up with the contacts that you made.
- Send an email stating it was nice talking with them, who you are, and include something you discussed.

Handshakes
- Have a firm handshake - don’t grip too hard, but don’t have a limp hand.
- Your thumb should be up, and between your thumb and index finger should meet.
- It should last about 3 seconds, with a couple of pumps… do not hold on forever! Smile and make good eye contact during the handshake.

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Dining Etiquette Specifics

Napkin
• Your napkin will be on your left, or on your plate when you approach your seat.
• Place your napkin on your lap when everyone is seated at the table.
• Place your napkin on your chair when you need to excuse yourself for a moment. Place the napkin on the right side of your plate at the end of your meal, when everyone is done.

Drinks
• It is recommended to not order alcohol during an interview. Some networking events may be acceptable to order, but limit yourself to one.
• Water, juice, and iced tea are safest choices.

Ordering
• You should never order the most expensive item on the menu, unless your host recommends you to and it is something you would like.
• Order a mid-priced item that you will enjoy.
• Try not to order foods that are very messy to eat.
• If you are not sure what to order, ask your host for recommendations!

Passing
• Salt and pepper should always be passed together even when someone asks for only one.
• Community food items (such as a bread-basket) should be passed to the right.
• When passing items such as creamer or a gravy/dressing boat, pass them with the handle towards the recipient.

General Dining Tips
• Always taste your food before you add salt or pepper.
• Cut one bite at a time, including with salad.
• Pace your eating with your host. Do not finish too quickly or take too long.
• Turn off your cell phone during the meal/event.
• Do NOT talk with food in your mouth, and do NOT chew with your mouth open. You should also avoid slurping and smacking your lips.
• Follow the lead of the host when it comes to dinner conversation! Do not bring up business items until the host/interviewer does.
• If food is hot, allow time for it to cool rather than blowing on it.
• If you drop a utensil, do not pick it up. Politely ask for a new utensil.
• Sit up straight at the dinner table, and do not put elbows on the table.
• Do NOT reach across the table. Politely ask someone to pass the item.
• You may start eating when everyone is served. If you are unsure, follow the lead of the host/interviewer.
• To signal to the server that you are done with your meal, place your utensil across your plate, with the handle at 4 o’clock.

Cocktail Hour Specifics
• Keep your right hand available to shake hands. You can have your cup sit on your plate to be able to hold both.
• Do NOT overload your plate with Hors d’oeuvres or appetizers.
• Be aware of your beverage, especially when alcohol is involved. Do not drink too much/too many.