

MEETING YOUR CONNECTORS

THE MEETINGS

(Informational Interviews)

Connectors are volunteers who will connect you to the local business community.

Your Connectors are chosen for you based on your education, experience and career goals. As such, your Connectors will become valuable resources for information about the local job-market. They'll answer questions about your profession, explain Canadian work-place culture and introduce you to others in your field. They won't offer you a job. For this reason, it's important for you to use your time with your Connectors to ask questions and listen to learn.

SETTING-UP THE MEETING

1. After you've been introduced by email, coordinate a meeting in-person, by-phone, or Skype as soon as possible. In-person meetings are best; however, they're not always convenient or possible.
2. Prepare for your meeting by reading your Connectors LinkedIn Profile and company website.
3. Think about what you'd like to learn from this person. Ask yourself, what will a successful informational interview give me?
4. If you're meeting in-person, suggest meeting in their office or choose a public place, such as a coffee- shop. Never meet a Connector in a private home.

GET THE MOST FROM YOUR MEETINGS BY BEING CURIOUS & LISTENING

Don't be tempted to turn the interview into a conversation about you. Use your time wisely by staying curious about your Connector and practice active listening.

Tips for active listening from the Center of Creative Leadership

No. 1: Pay attention. One goal of active listening is to set a comfortable tone and allow time and opportunity for the other person to think and speak. Pay attention to your frame of mind as well as your body language. Be focused on the moment and operate from a place of respect.

No. 2: Withhold judgment. Active listening requires an open mind. As a listener, you need to be open to new ideas, new perspectives and new possibilities. Even when good listeners have strong views, they suspend judgment, hold their criticism and avoid arguing or selling their point right away.

No. 3: Reflect. Learn to mirror the other person's information and emotions by paraphrasing key points. Don't assume that you understand correctly or that the other person knows you've heard him. Reflecting is a way to indicate that you and your counterpart are on the same page.

No. 4: Clarify. Don't be shy to ask questions about any issue that is ambiguous or unclear. Open-ended, clarifying and probing questions are important tools. They draw people out and encourage them to expand their ideas, while inviting reflection and thoughtful response.

No. 5: Summarize. Restating key themes as the conversation proceeds confirms and solidifies your grasp of the other person's point of view. Briefly summarize what you have understood as you listened and ask the other person to do the same.

No. 6: Share. Active listening is first about understanding the other person, then about being understood.