

PROWL

Temple PRSSA's newsletter

President's Letter

I hope you are enjoying the benefits of being a PRSSA member and taking full advantage of the hands-on experience PRSSA is providing to you through committees, internship opportunities and most importantly, networking.

Networking happens every day; in your classes with peers and professors, at PRSSA, in your immediate group of friends and family. As a future PR professional, make it a point to attend professional events through Temple University, Philadelphia PRSA, PPRA and of course, PRSSA.

Be sure to read this newsletter for some valuable networking tips and tricks.



Best,

Jessica Lawlor
President

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The do's and don'ts of networking in college

By Emily Briggs

While some college students are criticized for their constant texting or obsession with the Internet, as PR majors, we have reason to be excused from the criticism. We need phones with access to sites such as Facebook and Twitter; that is what PR is: networking, promoting ourselves and eventually promoting our future companies or clients. However, being college students and just beginning to network, there are a few tips that are key to networking.

The Dos:

1. Patrick Gordon, a PR professional says, "89 percent of college students utilize Facebook, and while there are thousands of other social networking sites of which to choose, it would only make sense to at least get accustomed to Facebook as many businesses and companies have a 'page.'"
2. Keep an appropriate profile, and update it frequently. Although a clean profile seems to be self-explanatory, refer down to the list of Don'ts before thinking your page is foolproof. Make an effort to not only keep your profile appropriate, but also update it. Although going from being in a relationship to single may not be important to employers, your activities/interests, schools, addresses, e-mails and phone numbers are.
3. Said my accounting teacher in high school, "life is not fair sometimes." While one person, in theory, might deserve an internship more, if someone else has an 'in' or personal connection, they might get the coveted internship. The most obscure networking relationships can work sometimes.

The Don'ts:

1. PNS. Picture, Name, Status. Let's talk Facebook. The picture: many employers will judge a person based solely on their profile picture. The name: just a thought to keep in mind, what would an employer seeing your name as "Harry BigSleezy Levin" think? The status: "Sarah Gonzalez...has no motivation

to do homework...Booo." What does this say to potential employers? While Gonzalez could be a very hard worker and does well in school, an employer does not know this and

is left to assume she has no motivation.

2. Assuming is the name of the game. Anyone who views your page is free to assume whatever he or she wants. One can only control what people see, not what people *want* to see.
3. Anything you put on your page (i.e., a picture) is no longer yours the second you put it on the page. It now belongs to Facebook, Flickr, Twitter or any other site where pictures can be uploaded; you literally 'upload' away ownership of your personal memories.

Public Relations is all about networking. A few simple elements to the practice of networking will make you a much more marketable student. And remember, these sites are personal but they're not private.

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.The Twitter logo, consisting of the word "twitter" in a light blue, rounded, lowercase font with a white outline.The Flickr logo, consisting of the word "flickr" in a bold, lowercase font. The "f" is blue, and the "lickr" is pink.

How to begin networking

By Katherine Carpenter

When a freshman hears the economy is tanking, the job market is shrinking and the unemployment rate increases daily, there is an undeniable swell of fear. What's the point of paying for an education and going to college if there is no job security? Freshmen are overwhelmed with suggestions such as: take advantage of what is given to you, be the person who is named through word of mouth, learn how to network and connect with people.

Network? You have to learn to live by yourself in a new home, make friends with new people, walk new hallways, learn new professors' names and now as a freshman you must network? Networking sounds overwhelming and terrifying. But from first-hand experience, I have found networking is not a process that happens instantly. It is a process to be learned and slowly developed. The relationships students develop with professionals are key in building connections, and ultimately gaining trust with companies and businesspeople. Networking is something strengthened over time.

Even those who have a desired career path will encounter nerves with networking, but those who do not have a declared major should not be any more nervous. Networking can be a way for those who have not declared majors to explore options. It is easy to let the idea of networking slip by you, but before long, graduation will be here.

How to start networking within your college:

- * Visit your career center to discuss how to get started.
- * Talk to fellow students in clubs and/or organizations that interest you. This is a great way to begin building connections.
- * Remember to put your resume together. Keep it current by updating it as your experience grows.
- * Take advantage of any conventions or speakers being held by your respective college. This could lead to meeting professionals. When meeting a professional, get their business card, start a

conversation that will help them remember you if you were to speak in the future.

- * Most importantly, follow-up with that person.

Applying for a job today goes beyond the application. When you have a trusted relationship through networking, this takes your name off the page.

The nuts and bolts of informational interviews

By Ashlee Chisholm

Ever wonder what type of public relations job you would like to have when you graduate? Don't have the time to do an internship in each field that interests you? Your best bet is to set up informational interviews with people who have your dream job. For instance, if you are interested in politics, you would set up a time to meet with someone who works in public affairs.

When setting up informational interviews, you want to ask everyone including family, friends, professors and colleagues if they know anyone in the field that interests you. Temple University's Career and Development Center can assist you with finding contacts as well. Once you have created a list of interviewees, you need to contact them. Arguably, the best way to ask someone for an informational interview is to call or send a letter.

Once you secure a time to meet with the individual, you need to prepare a list of questions you have about the job. You may want to ask:

- *What daily tasks do you have?
- *How did you get your start in this industry?
- *What are some of the drawbacks of this position?
- *What are the rewarding aspects of this job?
- *Can you suggest other people I can talk to?

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Louis Grossman, APR suggests students “use this opportunity to gain feedback on what the qualifications are for an entry-level position. The purpose of an informational interview is threefold: (1) learn more about the company and position (2) show how you can benefit the organization, and (3) get referrals.” Asking for referrals is important; not only does this expand your network, but also gives you different perspectives on your desired career. Use this opportunity to have professionals critique your resume and portfolio. Having been through the same process you’re about to embark on, they will be able to offer advice on what you should do in preparation for future job searches.

Show appreciation for your host’s kindness by sending a thank you note immediately after the interview. It is a good habit to show gratitude when people go out of their way to help you. Hopefully, you will leave the informational interview with a better understanding of what it

ME, INC.

By Alex Crispino

Go to Google and type in “personal public relations.” There will be over 70,100,000 hits. That’s a lot, but what exactly is personal public relations?

As public relations majors, we’ve been taught we are the liaison between our organizations and the public. But here’s the real question, who’s our liaison? Who’s doing our public relations? Yes, that’s right: YOU! We are in charge of creating our own personal brand in a highly competitive corporate America.

Before you start handing out resumes to everyone from the mailman to your professor, you must determine your own “brand.” Think about successful companies like Disney or Pepsi. One of the main reasons they are successful is because of how they market their product. When you think of Disney, you think of the happiest, most magical place on Earth. What do you want potential employers to think of as your brand?

In “Building a Personal Branding Strategy for Today’s Tough Job Market,” author Woody Stoudemire lists four steps to creating and excelling at your own public relations. Start with your story that includes your core values and how you want to be perceived. This story should make your brand leave a lasting impression on the minds of others. For example, Ben and Jerry’s create fun-loving stories around each one of their ice creams that attracts many consumers.

Step two is to know your audience and match your values and services to theirs. Ben and Jerry’s wouldn’t be marketing their brand to people who are lactose intolerant.

Next, you want to make sure your brand is unique and original. Think of Coca-Cola commercials around Christmas time. They always showcase a group of polar bears participating in different Christmas festivities. It has withstood the test of time because of its creativity.

Lastly, Stoudemire says to maintain a relevant resume because you never know when you may need it. It should include only strong references significant to the job you are applying for. Combine all of these and your personal brand will be a success!

Renee Scarano, Vice President of Cash Management Solutions at Merrill Lynch, agrees with Stoudemire and has a little more to add. She believes perception is key when building your brand. The way you dress, how you speak and what is on your Facebook page are all very crucial when marketing yourself. After developing your brand, Scarano says instead of spending time chatting on AIM or Facebook, students should research the fields they’re interested in and join local organizations like PRSSA to build their resume and portfolio.

So here’s the bottom line: you are the CEO of your personal corporation, known as “Me, Inc.” It is your job to create a unique, enticing brand that will engage others and lead to new opportunities. This world has a lot to offer each one of us, now we just need take charge and explore it!

Networking at conferences

By Leah Stoner

You are one of the top students in the School of Communications and Theater. Still deciding if you want to go into the field of communications or become a lawyer, you think it would be helpful to attend a communications conference with some of the top professionals in the field. You don your suit and tie, put on your best smile and head to the conference.

However, when you sit down to talk with a table of senior executives, you realize there is one important thing you do not have—business cards.

It is mistakes like these that cost students valuable networking opportunities at conferences.

"Kids today have no clue how to build or find networks and it is absolutely critical," said Kate Nelson, a professor in the Fox School of Business and an expert in the field of human resources. "It's astonishing how big students' networks could be if they just decided to mine them," said Nelson.

The easiest way for students and young professionals to begin mining their networks is to attend conferences. What makes conference networking different from regular networking is the fact with conferences, *everyone* is there to network.

"You're not cold calling anyone. Networking is why people are there," said Nelson.

However, simply walking into a conference does not mean attendees are guaranteed to walk out with a BlackBerry filled to capacity with new contacts. There are several factors affecting a student's networking success while at a conference or large event.

The first things young professionals can do to prepare for a conference is to get business cards, prepare a resume and purchase thank you notes. These are the primary tools of any networking guru. Business cards are crucial for efficiently

dispensing contact information. Resumes are a quick and easy way for employers to assess potential employees and the cards are perfect for sending out thank you notes to contacts with whom a special connection was made while at the event.

"It means a lot to people to get a handwritten note," said Rosemary Rys, APR and professor at the School of Communications and Theater.

Also, before attending the conference, it is imperative that students gather all the information they can about the companies and top executives who will be attending. This information can be found in pamphlets or websites about the conference.

After students identify their networking priorities, it is important to prepare an introduction, also known as an elevator speech. Students need to be able to tell a potential contact exactly what they are looking for in less than 50 words.

Once the introduction has been given, the next step is to deflect attention from oneself onto the other person. Ask the people attending the convention what they do, why they decided to attend or what their corporate culture is like. At the same time, students must be prepared to answer any questions asked of them by other conference attendees.

"People really love to interact with students," said Rys. "It's flattering to be asked questions."

By following these few simple guidelines, any student can network with grace at any conference, event or professional gathering and reap all the rewards networking can bring.



The national PRSSA conference will be held in San Diego in November.

Networking with other industries

By Evan Nicholson

As public relations majors, the concept of networking is practically shoved down our throats. We have been told networking with public relations practitioners could lead to great career opportunities. However, the topic of networking with professionals from other industries is rarely covered.

I spent the summer in Los Angeles participating in the Los Angeles Internship Program through Temple's Film and Media Arts department. The most valuable piece of information I returned to the East Coast with was to network not only with public relations practitioners, but also with professionals in other industries.

If, for example, you are interested in working in the entertainment industry, form relationships with producers, directors, actors, videographers and corporate professionals in entertainment. Networking with these individuals will provide different opportunities from the ones that may arise through relationships with public relations practitioners.

Networking with those from other industries can still be beneficial even if you decide to work in a public relations agency. Since clients and projects may vary across industries in a public relations agency, it would be useful to have contacts throughout multiple fields. If you were working on an education campaign, you could call your contact in the education field to use his or her knowledge in the industry.

How do you network with other industry professionals? An easy way for students is to attend networking events related to fields other than public relations. Also, your peers in college will be working in various industries one day. Maintaining relationships with these people could prove beneficial in the long run.

Networking by volunteering

By Kaytlynn Gorson

In today's economy, students need to take advantage of every possible aspect that could help benefit their resume for prospective employers. This includes participating actively in volunteer work. As a public relations student, you have the opportunity to work in countless settings and contexts and to get your name out in fields that may interest you. Volunteer work does not have to simply be community service; it can include volunteering in your field of interest. Many times the contacts you approach can offer you an opportunity to help volunteer at an event or even a shadowing day to learn more about what they do as a public relations practitioner.

By actively participating in volunteer work for various organizations, you have the opportunity to gain experience and meet professionals who you could one day work for. It is important you make the most out of your efforts by increasing your visibility, networking with contacts and building valuable alliances. Networking with staff as well as other volunteers could assist in your future endeavors by providing you with established contacts. As a public relations student, you are learning just how much people in the field rely on each other for opinions, support and examples. Volunteering gives you the opportunity to create relationships that will help strengthen your career.

The key thing to focus on after you actively establish these relationships is to continue to network with the contacts you have made. By maintaining a relationship, you leave the door open for future opportunities and possibilities to work with them again. In networking with clients, you are also letting them know how valuable your volunteering experience was. It is very possible through your volunteer work, your client could assist you in your future undertakings. As a student today, you should take advantage of any networking opportunity that opens up in your area of interest. Volunteering is a great way to establish those networks and show prospective employers all you are capable of.

Creating a personal board of directors

By Leah Stoner

Professionals, career coaches and professors all tell us networking is one of the most important aspects of finding a job in today's job market. Some would say it is the only way of finding a job.

However, simply hounding business professionals until they offer you an interview will not automatically land you your dream job. It is the connections we make in addition to our professional relationships that really determine our success in the future as professionals and as people.

Enter your "Personal Board of Directors," which refers to the people in your life you consult and take advice from on a regular basis. They are the people you go to when you need to know how to fix a leaky faucet or what to wear to your first interview. Your directors come from all facets of your life, and the issues you discuss with one member may not be the issues you present to another member. Regardless of where you find your board members, they should all have three things in common: they are knowledgeable, they care about you and they are invested in your future.

Having a personal board of directors does not mean calling a meeting every month at your kitchen table and doing a detailed analysis of your life. Instead, it is about gathering a team of people you know and trust, who can offer you advice on how to reach your goals.

The first step to establishing your personal board of directors is to identify your goals. Once you establish what you want to accomplish, you can decide who will help you reach these goals.

Next, start "hiring" directors to fill those positions. It is important to find people from four different areas of your life: your personal life, family life, academic life and professional life. Members of a balanced board of directors might include a roommate, cousin, professor and former boss.

Within these different specialties, not every member has to fill the same role. The strongest

board has several different connectors, challengers, supporters and wise elders. For example, your mother might be your supporter. She might act as your own personal cheerleader who always encourages you. Meanwhile, your father might be the challenger, always pushing you to do your best and confronting you when you don't fully apply yourself. Yet at the same time, your professor has connections to get you that dream internship, while your boss from your summer job has been in the work force for 40 years and can give you the inside scoop on office politics. It is this combination of talents that create the best team.

Finally, stay in contact with board members. It is up to you to keep these relationships strong. Members might want to resign from their positions on the board if they feel they are being ignored or if you are ungrateful. Keep in touch with family members, visit a professor during office hours, go out to lunch with friends or thank your internship supervisor for helping you with your latest assignment.

By going above and beyond simply networking and creating your own personal Board of Directors, you will open doors for yourself, and keep those doors open for years to come.



Networking with your peers

By Sarah Hutton

Networking. What goes through your mind when you read that word? Do you get a little anxious thinking about some of the ways you could be better at networking? Do you get a little nervous thinking of how uncomfortable networking can seem? If so, you're not alone. The idea of putting ourselves out there to professionals can seem daunting. But, while networking with professionals is the most effective and important kind of networking, it is not the only kind. It can also be beneficial to network with your peers; a peer's recommendation could help get you a valuable position.

Last spring, before leaving Temple to study abroad, I asked a few friends to let me know if they heard of any internship opportunities for the upcoming fall semester. One of my friends contacted me and told me we had a new advisor for an organization we were both a part of who worked at Camp Ramah and was looking for a PR intern for the fall. I e-mailed the advisor, we discussed the internship and even though we never met in person, she offered me the position. I found out months later she had asked our organization's president if I would be a good person to hire, and our president spoke very highly of me.

In this situation, I networked directly with my friend by asking her to inform me of opportunities. I also networked indirectly with my organization's president. Since I have been responsible, mature and completed all tasks asked of me in the time I have known her, she gave me an excellent recommendation.

Networking with peers doesn't just help you get semester-long internships; you could also land a valuable paid position.

Faris Algeo, a junior at Temple University majoring in English and Spanish, works as a preschool teacher. She found out about this job because her friend's mom is the director of the program and says she "never would have known about the job otherwise, especially since it is in

New Jersey." The job began in August and she is receiving a raise in November. She is also a member of the teacher's union. When asked what job skills she is learning, Algeo responded, "I have to talk to the kids' parents every day and they always have problems and questions so this job is really helping to develop my people skills." She is also learning the importance of putting the needs of others before her own. She explains, "I never thought I would have to tell someone how many times their kid peed, but the parents care, so this job is making me pay much closer attention to details that don't seem important to me."

Talking to your friends about your interests and job needs and establishing your credibility among acquaintances can help you attain a variety of valuable positions. This isn't to say you should completely abandon networking with professionals, because in the long run that will always be the most important kind of networking. But when it comes to part-time jobs and internships, networking with peers can be equally valuable. You will learn a lot about what you want to do after graduation and build many contacts through peer networking.

Internship spotlight

By Christanna Ciabattoni

Getting coffee, making photo copies, filing records and picking up dry cleaning for your boss: these mundane tasks aren't on senior public relations major Cristin McGrath's daily to-do list. Every Monday and Tuesday, Cristin begins her day with a long haul commute to New York City and makes her way down Broadway, through the Viacom building, up to the 20th floor and into VH1's public relations department.

"I look for press clips related to VH1 shows, celebrities and concerts," said McGrath. "I make copies of all the press clips and then distribute them to all the publicists and executives. Later in the day, I'll be in charge of mailing media kits for new shows, mailing tickets to concerts and just usual office work."

McGrath was fortunate enough to land an

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internship position at a reputable and internationally-known company allowing her to partake in real public relations duties. Within the first month at VH1, McGrath was given the opportunity to work the pressroom and red carpet for VH1 Divas 2009 and Hip Hop Honors 2009.

"I've learned so much from VH1," McGrath notes. "In my PR classes, we always talked about Bacon's Media, but I have finally used it firsthand. It's so much easier to understand things when you can use it yourself. I've learned how to organize and execute the red carpet for a large scale event or concert and how to address press outlets."

Finding the perfect internship is by no means easy and most of the time requires a lot of research, preparation and waiting. "I searched for fall 2009 internships and MTV Networks popped up," says McGrath. "I definitely thought that I hadn't gotten it because it took three months to hear something, but then I got an e-mail from HR."

Internships are also great places to network. You will be given the opportunity to meet many prominent and important people that could help you out in the future. If they think you are really special, they might even offer you a job at their company upon graduation.

"Networking is the most important thing when trying to land an amazing internship," says McGrath. "As soon as I met everyone at the office, I added them to my LinkedIn account so I was fresh in their mind." Networking is all about contacts, and internships will provide you with contacts that can help jump-start your professional career. "It's great to know the vice president of VH1, the Senior Executive of Communications at VH1...all of the connections of just the people in my office are priceless."

Overall, internships will get your foot in the door. If you're good at what you do, your foot (as well as the rest of you) might just stay there!

Don't be afraid...

By Christanna Ciabattoni

Networking can be very scary and intimidating, but there's no need to be afraid! Professor Gregg Feistman shares a few pointers on how to ease the stress.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO:

* practice

Your nerves might get the best of you, so practice what you're going to say before a phone call, personal introduction, etc. Rehearse until it sounds smooth and natural.

* ask

It's perfectly okay to ask for someone's business card, information about their company or permission to contact them in the future.

* inform

Inform everyone you know (family, friends, teachers, etc.) that you're looking for contacts. You never know who they might know!

* make a phone call

Although an e-mail is easier, they are not very personable. A phone call will make you sound more serious about your future plans.

* wait

The results of networking are not always immediate. If you don't receive a fast response, give them a few days. If you still don't hear anything, contact them again politely.

* sell yourself

Without going overboard and bragging, let your contacts see you stand out against the crowd and why you'll be great asset to their company.

Keep an eye out for our next newsletter!
We will be highlighting some of the many
fields of public relations.

layout by Sarah Hutton