

Developing a plan to connect with industry

Before you reach out to industry it is important to take some time to think and reflect on your motivations and aspirations for connecting with industry and how this aligns with your career planning.

There are many different reasons why we might connect with industry, such as:

- Enhancing your industry contacts that might be beneficial down the track,
- Understanding industry requirements,
- Identifying employment opportunities,
- Seeking mentors,
- Mentoring others and paying it forward, or
- Potentially something else!

We may bring and develop our connections throughout your career journey, so it can be important to reflect on how we want to invest in developing long-term connections. We can do this by taking the time to identify our goals for connecting with industry and doing some reflection and preparation before reaching out to individuals or organisations.

Write your SMART goals for connecting with industry

Begin to plan your engagement by thinking about your motivations for connecting with industry and what you hope to achieve through connecting with industry.

Take some time to set some SMART Goals (**UQ Student Support, Time management and procrastination**)

- Specific: clearly describe what you want to achieve.
- Measurable: include targets to help you measure your progress.
- Achievable: if the task is too large break it down into smaller goals.
- Realistic: make sure you can achieve your goal with your available resources and time.
- Timed: set a deadline for achieving your goal so you have a clear target to work towards.

Goal 1

Goal 2

Goal 3

Develop your plan to connect with industry

Before you reach out to industry, take some time to think critically about why, how, and when you are going to engage with individuals and organisations. Use the questions below to guide your preparation.

Who do you want to connect with?

This could be an individual, team or organisation.

Why do you want to connect with them?

Reflect on your motivations for connecting with them, your identified goals for networking and how it connects with your **career action plan**.

How could this connection be mutual?

It can be useful to think about how this connection could have mutual benefits, not just for yourself, but also for who you are connecting with. For example, passing on opportunities to other people who might be suitable (such as your peers), putting them in contact with others, offering learnings or advice based on your own lived experiences.

How will you connect with them?

Have a think about what platforms would be most appropriate to connect – this could include email, social media platforms, at networking events.

How will you continue to stay engaged with them?

Have a think about how you will stay engaged long-term with them. For example, how often will you connect or can you engage in their content on social media platforms, such as LinkedIn.

Other support for preparing to connect with industry

Check out the range of other resources in the **Career Planning Toolkit**, including the career action plan and developing your unique value proposition.

For further details, please contact:

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