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Approaching Networking

Networking is one of the most important skills to develop as a student and future professional. It is not just about meeting people, but about building meaningful relationships that can support your growth, open doors to opportunities, and help you learn from others' experiences. I see networking as something that happens over time, not something that is forced or fake. It is about being genuine, showing interest in others, and staying open to new connections. The importance of networking really stands out when thinking about how many opportunities come from who you know rather than just what you know. Especially in creative and media-related fields, relationships can lead to internships, collaborations, and even long-term careers. Networking also allows you to learn from people who have more experience, which can help guide your decisions and give you insight into your future path. It can also build confidence, because the more you talk to new people, the more comfortable you become with sharing your ideas and goals.

When it comes to how I personally network, I try to keep it natural and not overthink it too much. I like to start with simple conversations, whether that's in class, at events, or even during internships. I make an effort to listen carefully and ask questions, because people appreciate when you show genuine interest in what they do. I also try to follow up when possible, whether that's connecting on LinkedIn or just keeping in touch. I

think consistency is important—networking is not just one conversation, but something you build over time.

Another part of my approach is taking advantage of opportunities that are already around me, like guest speakers in class or events related to my field. There have been times where speakers have shared practical advice about putting yourself out there, being confident, and not being afraid to reach out. Those moments have helped me realize that networking does not have to be intimidating—it can actually be a learning experience and even something enjoyable.

One of the most honest parts of networking, though, is dealing with rejection or being turned down. When that happens, I try to be real with myself about how I feel. Maybe I get a little sad at first, and I might overthink why I was turned down or what I could have done differently. That reaction feels natural, and I think it is okay to feel that way for a moment. However, I also try not to dwell on it for too long. I believe that things happen for a reason, and if I know that I tried my best, then I can accept the outcome and move forward.

Taking a minute to process and accept certain outcomes is important because it allows me to continue growing instead of getting stuck. Every rejection is an opportunity to learn something, whether that is improving how I communicate, building more confidence, or simply understanding that not every opportunity is meant for me. In that way, getting turned down becomes part of the process rather than something that stops me.

Overall, I believe that rejection is an important stepping stone that everyone must go through in order to grow as a professional in any industry. It helps build resilience and prepares you for future challenges. Networking is not about being perfect—it is about

showing up, trying your best, and continuing even when things do not go as planned.

In the end, my approach to networking is simple: be genuine, stay open, and keep going. I

want to build real connections, learn from others, and create opportunities not just for

myself, but for the people I connect with as well. With time and experience, I believe

networking will become even more natural and impactful in my journey.

Related Links

<https://www.linkedin.com/learning/>

<https://www.themuse.com/advice/networking-tips>

<https://hbr.org/2016/05/learn-to-love-networking>