Concrete Steps to Create Opportunities with Biotech and Other Partners
WSU NIGMS-T32 Protein Biotechnology Program

PURPOSE: Take concrete steps to create opportunity (employment, collaboration, or career exploration) with industry partners. Note, networking like this also happens in other arenas (e.g., academia).

HEADLINE ADVICE:
1. **Network**: >70% of opportunity from a network connection. Tap “their” network to grow yours.
2. **Set specific goals**:
   a. Early = build a network of ____ contacts by ____ (date).
   b. Later = apply with ____ companies by ____ (date).
3. **Quality**: Communicate professionally, enthusiastically, and concisely. Tap contacts. Follow up.
4. **Quantity**: Time (6+ months) and replicates (50+ companies) may be required.
5. **Hidden Opportunities**: Collaborators don’t always advertise (or know) what they want. Reach out and create win-win opportunities.
6. **Team Effort**: Your search is unique, but enlist allies. Share contacts, boost on LinkedIn, form study groups...

PROGRAM RESOURCES (ask Matt for access if in our program):
- Join the WSU BT Program LinkedIn Group: https://www.linkedin.com/groups/14004168/
- Alumni database of present employment and past internships
- Letter of support from program leadership

BUILDING A NETWORK AND IDENTIFYING INTERESTING COMPANIES
- Update your LinkedIn profile (free to start; activate 1-mo free upgrade during an active search).
  - A tip sheet is attached (page 3 of handout, from WSU Professional Development Initiative PD).
  - Try This site and This fact sheet for more advice.
- Talk to current and former Biotech types about companies. College connections count.
  - Ask about the process they use to engage industry
  - Ask for specific contacts and open-ended questions about their experiences/companies.
- Ask your research advisor, professors, lab mates, and literally anyone else, for industry contacts.
- Go to meetings, professional development, and networking events sponsored by industry groups.
  - Example: Connect to Life Science Washington
  - Link to mailing list is at bottom of https://www.lswinstitute.org/
  - Attend LSW Opportunities
    - East-West Summit (in Spokane, Fall)
    - Life Science Innovation Northwest meeting (in Seattle, Spring)
    - Career Development Workshop (SciPhD; https://sciphd.com/).

Other groups to work with to find companies:
- Engineering Biology Research Consortium: https://ebrc.org/programs/internship/
- Biotech Company and Employer Maps: https://www.biotech-careers.org/biotech-companies
- Join the WSU BT Program LinkedIn Group: https://www.linkedin.com/groups/14004168/

CREATING A NEW RELATIONSHIP/CONTACT
- Explain why you want to connect. Describe ways you can offer return value (now or later).
- It’s good to try (a) secondary contacts of a primary contact or (b) WSU alumni (Cougs Help Cougs).
- Some questions for building your relationship with a new contact and gather information:
  - *What advice do you have as I pursue a job in xyz industry?*
  - *Do you know anyone in my field of interest and would you feel comfortable connecting us?*
  - *Could I meet with you to talk about your day-to-day activities?*
**COVER LETTERS = Concise Executive Summaries of your FIT with company**

1. **Change (tailor) your cover letter** for each company. No tailoring = not serious.
2. Explicitly and clearly communicate your **FIT and SPECIFIC INTEREST** with a company.
3. **Be concise, enthusiastic, and professional.** No more than one page. Word economy = better impact.
4. **Explain your value to the company.** It is easier (and still important) to explain the company’s value to you, but more important to explain your value to the company.
5. (If grad student) Explain how **grad school experience** makes you a strong candidate for this opportunity. For internships, some companies are used to undergraduate interns, so they are excited by your additional experience and skills. Explain that.
6. **Reference connections by name.** According to Scott Maloney, WSU-CVM Innovation and Engagement Director, being known >>> being qualified.

**TAILORED, CONCISE RESUMES**

7. **Send resumes** (CVs are for academia). On the web, this [presentation](#) offers concise tips for resumes and cover letters, and this [post](#) offers comprehensive guidance for the application process. There is no magic formula and you'll see varied advice online.
8. **Tailor to company.** Position items that create FIT at the top and left.
9. **Be concise.** Go for one-page resume. Two pages max! Omit/tailor skills, experiences...
10. **Include your LinkedIn contact** on resume. 75% of hiring managers look at LinkedIn profiles.
11. **Get personalized help from WSU career resources.** Check [Academic Success and Career Center](#) or this site’s subpage on “career coaches”. Look for similar at your institute if not WSU.

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