



KNOWLEDGE
ACQUISITION
EXPERIENCE

Networking

Networking is a necessary part of any professional environment today. There is little, if any, profitable endeavor that is done in a vacuum; it requires collaboration of many different types.

A professional network is an inventory of diverse and carefully selected contacts and relationships

that interact with each other to support, resource, and inspire ongoing professional development.

Because you are probably studying a field in which you have some experience, you may have already done some networking. The person who

networks your office computers, the Web design person, the business next door, even the vendors

impact your specific context, and the list of such people and organizations never ceases to grow.

Your list of contacts and people that resource you success are integral to your next steps.

These are people that will know you. What is the reputation you will give to those with whom

you deal? Are you a person of integrity, can they depend on you as much as you depend on

them? Are you cultivating a mutually beneficial working relationship with them, or do you just

contact them when you need something? These become important investments in your future.

Every course you take puts you in contact with professionals dedicated to your field of study

from all over the world. This is an opportunity to cultivate a career-altering network of people you know and can trust. These people can be

great mentors, peers, and resources in your future career advancements.

However, networks do not just happen—they

are made. It requires initiative, not passively

waiting for it to happen. This is a good time to

hone leadership skills, step out, and collaborate

intentionally. Are you visible enough in the class

to be seen and sought out by others? These are people of similar passion, similar career goals, and diverse talents. Find people who will sharpen you and strengthen your growth areas as you help them. This only happens when you allow yourself to be vulnerable, get out there, and connect with others.

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relational behaviors, as well as ethical business practices. Whether you take on a new career, or are starting your own business, this is an important aspect of your existence both to your employees and to your customers.

Personal Code of Ethics

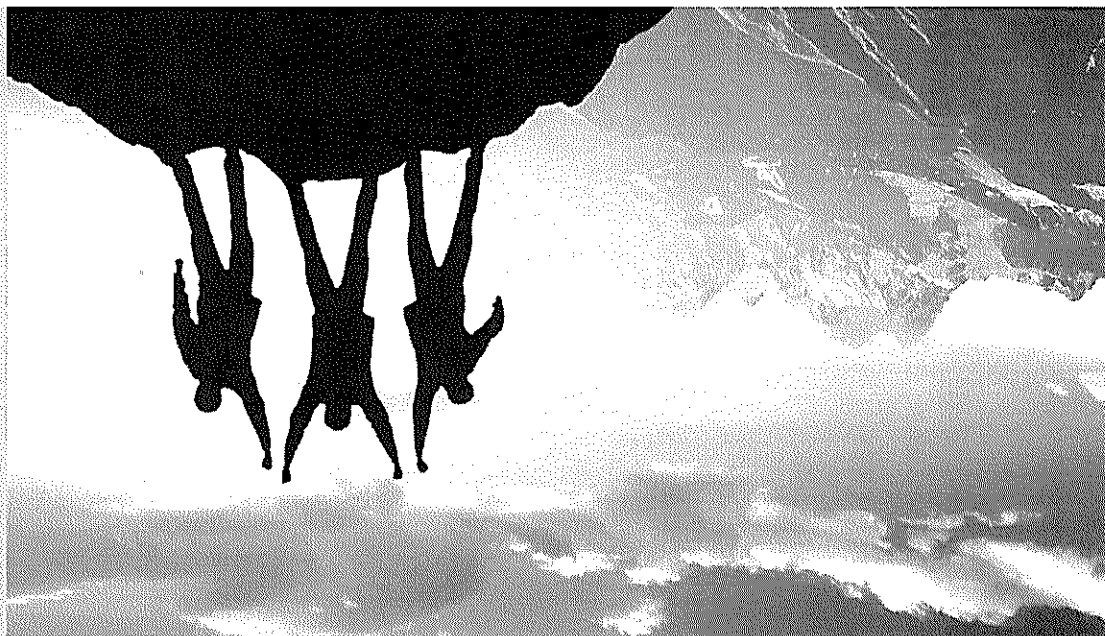
Just as the professional code of ethics is a

boundary for the business, there is a personal side to this, too. Your personal code of ethics is the outward expression of the internal compass that provides governance, and is the basis for evaluation of all outer actions with regard to values, purpose, and integrity. This code includes the non-negotiable character traits by which you live. This code is developed over time and needs to be nurtured and not compromised. No matter what happens while conducting business, we all must look ourselves in the mirror. More than that, we develop a reputation. It is cultivated carefully day after day and can be lost in an instant with a momentary lapse of judgment.

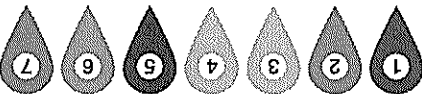
purpose. You may not keep in touch with every person with whom you went to graduate school; however, the ones that you do connect with are friends for life. You support each other and are dedicated to each other's ongoing mutual success. You need these people in your life. It begins here and will continue for the rest of your life.

Professional Code of Ethics

There is a standard by which business will be done. This is the code of ethics. Whether it is written or not, whether it is communicated or not, every business has one. This is very important for you to understand, because it is the underlying motivation of a lot of the activities that are carried out in any profession. The way people care for others, the level of integrity, the ownership of failure, all have to do with the code of ethics. A professional code of ethics is the mutually agreed upon standards by which business will be carried out, including social and



Eric had been the CFO of a company for a few months. He loved the job, and the company was growing rapidly. One day, while reviewing some expense charts, he noticed some expensive charges and multiple in-coming receipts. As he tracked the items back to their source, he found it was the CEO making these unbudgeted expenses. The CEO was Eric's friend, and they had worked together on many endeavors prior to Eric coming to work for him. Eric needed this job, and all other aspects of the business seemed to be conducted correctly. Should he stay silent and move on, or should he confront this issue? His personal code of ethics would not allow this unacceptable behavior to go unchallenged, and he discussed it with his friend, the CEO. The response was quick and sharp. Eric was to take care of just the finances and leave the spending to the CEO. Eric was fired after working there for only 10 months. He had uncovered more than \$300,000 of undesignated expenses. Following his personal code of ethics got Eric fired, not because he was wrong to do so, but because it clashed with the company's professional code of ethics. Had Eric inquired about the company's code of ethics prior to being hired, he may not have wanted the job, as it wasn't a good match for him ethically. Two years later, the CEO's actions were discovered, and he lost his company. Eric left with his integrity intact, but he learned a valuable lesson about ethics.



Conclusion

You have begun a journey in which you take intentional steps forward to a preferred future. This is the first of a challenging but very fulfilling chapter in your life. The overall success and value you take from this experience depends on whether you know yourself, your goals, and what you need to get from this program to reach them. Your support system will help you in difficult times, but overall, the motivation to carry on must come from you. Your character will be built in faithfulness in study, financial responsibility, and the development of professional and personal ethics.

Chapter Review

Here are a few things to remember as you continue on:

1. Your purpose is found in “being” over “doing.” Never cloud life with mere tasks but with purpose. These two complement each other and need to be kept in balance.
2. You will only be as successful as the goals you establish and pursue. This includes moral, spiritual, personal, and professional goals.
3. Your program of study will equip you for your chosen career path and give knowledge to your passions.
4. Professional growth must be an ongoing part of your life in order to be effective. It is important to balance all of life and keep your professional and personal life prioritized and aligned.
5. Your professional code of ethics will place you in relationships and networks that fit your character.
6. You will live by, and be known for, your personal code of ethics. Make them clear and never compromise them.

References

- Fulghum, R. (1991). *It Was on Fire When I Lay Down on It*. New York, NY: Villard Books.
- Perman, M. (2014). *What's Best Next*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.