

# The WSU Virtual Etiquette Dinner

ANDRIA DONNENWERTH: As much as I miss the in-person events, like many of you, I am very excited to be attending tonight virtually with all my fellow Cougs from all the WSU campuses. Welcome!

So to be honest, I'm not really sure how much I need to learn. I mean I know how to eat at a table. I know how to use my fork.

Well, maybe I could use a little-- to learn a little something. First, let's welcome Dr. Robert Harrington, author of Food and Wine Pairing, a Sensory Experience. He's also recognized for his hospitality business research productivity, as well as studies in food, wine, and innovation management. Dr. Harrington is going to help answer the question, why do we learn etiquette? Dr. Harrington?

DR. ROBERT HARRINGTON: Thank you, Andria. And thank you, all, for being here tonight. And thank you for inviting me to participate. So etiquette, what is etiquette? It's customary code of polite behavior. And it can vary by culture. But there are some normal norms that are accepted across the US and in the Western culture.

So why do we learn etiquette? So etiquette is rules of code of behavior and rules on how to act in professional and social settings. And the purpose of etiquette is not just to be stuffy or that sort of thing, but creates comfort for yourself, for your employer, if you're interacting in a business situation or maybe an interview, or even with your guests or customers, if you are working in a professional situation, whether it be in hospitality or some other type of business. And then finally, it shows respect. So having respect and a mindfulness for others in terms of expressing appreciation and that sort of thing.

So when do we employ these social rules? So a number of situations are needed to show proper etiquette-- so certainly in business situations, such as meetings; during dining for business-related events, such as breakfast, lunch, and dinner; certainly during a job interview, where you want to impress or have an impact on your potential employer; on sales calls or other business-related interactions; meeting with important people, such as significant others, of your parents-- or parents; or every day.

So as a hospitality or other business professional, it's expected that you understand etiquette. And the more that you do it, the more you practice, the more natural it will become and the less chance that you'll make a mistake or be nervous about it, when the pressure is on, such as in an interview situation. OK. Thank you.

ANDRIA DONNENWERTH: Great. Thank you so much, Dr. Harrington. Obviously, my girl Ariel led me astray on how to use my fork correctly. But I've washed it, and I think I have my table setting right. Let's see. What do we think? Well, yeah, maybe it's time we introduce our next speaker. Hannah Ekness, hospitality business management junior at Global Campus, is going to instruct us on how to set a place setting. Hannah, can you help me please?

HANNAH EKNESS: Yes, I can. Hi. My name is Hannah Ekness, and I'm going to talk to you today about how to set your place at the table. The first thing that you'll need to remember is that when you are joining the dinner table, be sure that you are presenting a confident and assured persona while you're smiling and using people's names, when you interact with them, that is. And the sitting up straight, that will start off your meal perfectly.

And as you can see, there's a diagram of a formal place setting. And the way that you can remember where the fork goes, where your meal goes, where your spoon goes, where your drinks go, is the acronym BMW, as in the auto manufacturer. In the diagram, you can see that on the top left, there's a butter knife and a butter plate. That's the B. And the M is your meal, the center plate. And W is for water or wine, on the right.

And as you're using your utensils, you see there's a few different forks and a few different spoons. And typically, we start from the outside. And as we progress through the meal, we move into the inner utensils.

Once you pick up a utensil and start using it, the handle shouldn't touch the table again. You can rest it against the plate while you're taking breaks between bites. And then going into that place setting diagram a little bit more, on the left of the plate-- oh, could you go back one more? Thank you very much.

To the left of the plate, there's the salad fork, the dinner fork, and the napkin on top of the plate. And then, to the right of the plate is the dinner knife, with the blade facing the plate, two spoons, which are the dinner and the soup spoons. And above that, you may have a few assorted glasses, maybe with water, maybe with wine.

Above the plate will be dessert and dessert spoon and dessert fork, if those are there. Sometimes they're not. And the butter knife and the butter plate are used to politely put butter on your bread. And Professor Harrington will tell us more about that later as well.

And on the next slide, we will look at the continental style of eating. So with the continental style, you hold your fork in your left hand. And when you're cutting a bite, your knife is in your right hand. The cutlery never changes hands. You don't have to deal with the American style, which is different than the continental style, which is what we practice in etiquette and formal dining.

You'll cut one bite at a time of what's on your plate. Point the fork down, and spear the bite, and bring it to your mouth. And in the center, there is a photo that shows you the continental style of resting your utensils on the plate in an inverted V, which shows that you're not done eating, but you're resting your utensils. And if you place your utensils, I guess this is diagonally together, that shows that you're finished dining and that the server can take your plate away.

Let's talk about the napkin and what we use our napkin for. The napkin's purpose is to catch spills. It's not to blow your nose or cough into. You can lightly dab your mouth when you're using a napkin. And you can lay the napkin in your lap. That's where it belongs during your meal. Because then bonus, if you drop something, it doesn't get your pants dirty.

You should keep your napkin in your lap throughout the duration of the meal until everyone is done eating, not just when you're done eating. And a good thing to do is pay attention to what the host is doing and follow them. So when the host has finished their meal, they will place their napkin to the left of their plate. And there's no need to fold it back up into the fancy swan shape that you found it. But just set it next to your plate without showing any of the soiled part of the napkin.

If you need to get up in the middle of the meal to use the restroom or something, or if you have to get something out of your teeth or blow your nose, that's a good time to go visit the restroom, to get some privacy. Leave your napkin on the seat of your chair. And remember to push to the seat in when you leave, so that you do not create a tripping hazard. And that is what I have to share. So back to you now, Andria.

ANDRIA DONNENWERTH: Great. Thank you so much, Hannah. I think now I have it all set. But before we move any further, did anyone have any questions for Dr. Harrington about etiquette or Hannah about place settings? You guys are welcome to use the chat to ask any questions.

We'll also have some time at the end of the event as well. And so yeah, don't fret. We'll have plenty of time for questions. But if you have any, don't hesitate to put them in the chat. So thank you again, Hannah, for all of that. I'm all set.

So now I'm imagining the food I'm going to order when I'm on my dinner interview-- steak, lobster, a side of spaghetti, lava chocolate cake, and a jumbo Margarita to wash it all down. I mean, they're paying, so I can do that, right? Well, maybe not. Let's welcome Dr. Harrington back to go over how to wine and dine with us. I think I might need to learn a few more things.

DR. ROBERT HARRINGTON: Thank you, Andria. Yeah, I think there's a few things we may want to touch on here for a moment to make the dining experience go smoothly. Hannah did a great job of talking about a lot of the dining etiquette that's very important. And we could talk about wine. We could talk about food and dining for hours. But I wanted to touch just on a few points to make things go smoother and to make yourself look good in every situation.

So a few things to always remember-- be on time or be early. The only exception to that is if you're invited to someone's home, you don't want to be too early before they're not prepared to greet you as guests, that kind of thing. But be on time. Don't be fashionably late or that sort of thing.

Also, in proper dress-- so what is the dress code, right? So having an understanding, that's very important. So later on, I think Hannah U is going to talk about dress for success, and she'll give you some pointers for the business situation.

But other situations you may not know. So it's useful to-- you can ask others, or ask the host, what the expectation is, and that sort of thing. A lot of times when you go to events, you don't know if it's business casual, or black tie, or business attire, or whatever it might be. So if it's unclear, ask. So that way, you look like you fit in, and that sort of thing.

The second thing is greetings. Greet everyone before sitting. Introduce yourself. Be welcoming. If others join the table late, stand up and greet them. Normally, we would shake their hand and that sort of thing, in a normal situation. During COVID, just play it by ear. Maybe air whatever or elbow bumps or different things like, that will work.

In terms of seating, enter the chair from the right, exit from the right. And always make sure that the chair is pulled in and pushed back in, if you stand up and leave for a moment, that sort of thing, so it's easy for everyone to get around or servers to get around, and those sorts of things.

And then finally, posture-- make sure you keep good posture. Don't slouch, and that sort of thing. Obviously, you want to be comfortable and enjoy yourself. But maintain good posture. Don't put your elbows on the table. Usually, keep your hands in your lap, and that sort of thing. Your hands can be visible on the table, but don't put your elbows on the table-- so some basic pointers there.

The second part is, what do we order? So you want to order items that are easy to eat with a fork and knife. I remember when I was an MBA student at WSU, I was lucky enough to be invited to a special luncheon with a CEO and president of a company to do some networking. And whoever did the ordering for us, they pre-ordered everything in advance, and it was a pasta with cream sauce for lunch. And so I was in a suit and tie, and it was impossible to eat.

And so you don't want to get yourself in that situation if you don't have to. So make sure it's easy to eat with a knife and fork. It's also helpful to talk with others in terms of what they're going to order or get a sense of it. So talk around the table, or that sort of thing, in terms of what their thoughts are, and that sort of thing. You don't want to order a seven-course meal if everyone else is just thinking, I'm going to have a main course and that's it kind of thing. So get a sense of the timing and that sort of thing, what the expectation is.

Also, don't order food that is too expensive. So if things are listed on the menu as market price or the highest price things on the menu, order something moderately priced or in the middle range, so you don't look like you're taking advantage of the situation and the host, and that sort of thing. Also, don't make ordering complicated.

If you have a chance, if you can see the menu ahead of time, if you have food allergies, or you're gluten-free, or whatever it might be, if you can take a look at what's on the menu ahead of time at all, that can be helpful to make sure that it doesn't become an issue, and you don't look like a difficult person if you have too many order restrictions, or things like that and that sort of thing. You want to make a first impression. That may not-- probably isn't your situation, but you don't want to have that impression.

And then in general, the general rule of thumb, particularly for job interviews, is not ordering alcohol, even when others do. But I put an asterisk by that, because in the hospitality industry or the wine and beverage industry, they're going to want to see and talk about food, want to talk about wine, and that sort of thing, particularly if you're applying for a food and beverage position, and that sort of thing. But in any case, always be judicious in terms of your consumption. You don't want to overconsume in any situation. And it's better to be safe than sorry, in terms of ordering alcohol, and that sort of thing.

And then in terms of foods to avoid, unfamiliar foods that are on the menu, you don't want to order something, then not be able to eat it, because you didn't know what it was. But if someone orders something for you, and it's a novel thing to you, be polite. Make sure you taste it at least and don't just crinkle up your nose at it, or whatever it might be. Don't know things like spaghetti, foods requiring special utensils, finger foods, like wings, ribs, shellfish, anything like that. Things that are edible with a knife and fork are the safest bet.

So those are some basic suggestions. And then finally, who pays? So if we're talking about an interview situation, or any situation, typically the person who does the inviting is expecting to pay for the bill. You don't want to fight over the bill. And interviews, the companies are planning to pay for the bill.

So here again, you don't want to take advantage of that person in terms of what you're ordering, in terms of very expensive things. But you can go in with that assumption. Any questions on that part? All right.

ANDRIA DONNENWERTH: Well, thank you so much for that useful information. I think maybe I'll stick to a grilled chicken salad instead and leave the other foods for my celebratory dinner after I get the job. But even though we know what to eat, we should probably learn the proper way to eat. Samantha Carone, HPM senior at Pullman, is ready to review proper eating techniques with us. Samantha?

SAMANTHA CARONE: Hi, everyone. Thanks for having me tonight. So like Andria said, I'm going to talk about proper eating techniques to use. So like she said, Dr. Harrington talked a lot about what to order. And now the food's in front of you. So what do you do?

So the first one to talk about is when to eat. This one's really important in many cultures. So it's a good thing to know just as you're getting into hospitality, possibly studying abroad. But the general rule of thumb is you never start eating until all the food is served. Unfortunately, sometimes this means, if you have a super large group, you have to wait until every person gets their food. But it's proper etiquette, and it's a good thing to follow, especially just in any situation.

And then also, a good tip to try to figure out when that is, is to follow the head of the table or the person who invited everyone. They won't begin till all the guests have their food and are content. So then you can just follow them and make it easy for yourself.

So then it comes to passing. So with this, you always want to pass to the right. That's the rule of thumb. However, if someone directly to your left asks for it, and you have a huge table of 30 people, you don't have to pass it all the way around the table to get back to that person. That would just take forever. So it's totally OK.

But general rule is just to pass to the right. With this also, many experts on proper eating say to not pass the items hand to hand, meaning directly hand it to the next person, but rather place it on the table next to the person. This makes the next person not feel rushed and what they're doing and so that they can get to that item whenever they are ready.

So this next one is a big one. I would say probably the biggest of them all. So salt and pepper are married. Always remember that. This means not just passing the salt or the pepper, but you always pass both. That way, there's no confusion about where one is or where the other is.

And then a big part with this salt and pepper is to always taste the food before you use salt and pepper. In many cultures, it's very offensive to the chefs if you just add salt and pepper to your food without even trying it. And especially in this industry, where food and beverage is such a big part of it, it really shows that you always check out the situation before just making a conclusion. Even if you like salty foods, and you know that ahead of time, it doesn't hurt to try it. And you can always add more salt.

So on to bread and rolls-- so Hannah talked about this a little bit earlier, but just to keep going on to it. So bread is commonly served as a starter before an appetizer, and it's complementary to your meal. So if a breadbasket is how the bread is presented at the table, take your piece and your butter back to your place, and use that bread plate, that Hannah was talking about. This way, the bread can keep moving around the table while you still enjoy yours.

Typically, you want to tear off small pieces of your bread and eat it one bite at a time, versus spreading butter on the whole piece and taking bites out of it. The last part of bread etiquette is if somebody requests an item, like extra bread or more dressing, et cetera, it's considered impolite for somebody else to use or eat that item. So if you see somebody else ordering some more bread, and you want some, just go ahead and ask for some more bread. Don't steal it from the other person who ordered it, because that's considered pretty impolite.

So yeah, next up-- so as we learned from Dr. Harrington, foods that you can slurp and spill are a recipe for disaster, like eating his pasta with his tie getting in it. But sometimes it's unavoidable, whether a bowl of soup is a starter, or it's just what sounds best for you that day. So just a tips for those times that you do eat those things-- so a soup, you scoop the soup away from you. Don't shovel it into your mouth.

And then also, leave what you cannot easily get out of your bowl. So don't pick up the bowl and drink the rest of it or be flipping the bowl upside down to get the last couple drops of your soup. Those last couple drops aren't worth it, when you possibly couldn't get the job because they think you're crazy.

So yeah, so then moving on, if you spilled or dropped something-- so don't be afraid to ask the staff of the restaurant you're at to help clean if something spilled. You don't want to be on the ground trying to clean something up when you're on a job interview. You want to be there in front of the interviewers, impressing them.

And then same thing with your napkin or silverware-- if you drop it on the ground, don't fish around for it under the table. Just ask for a new one, and leave it for later in the meal to deal-- or at the end of the meal, or for the staff to clean up later. And then last but not least, if you take a bite of your food, and there's a piece of cartilage or fat or gristle in it, don't spit it out on your plate or into your napkin. As we learned from Hannah earlier, your napkin is used to place on your lap and catch spills. So if you have a piece of grime in there, it'll be super gross to be putting that on your lap.

So just use your fork to remove the piece from your mouth just the way you put it in your mouth, and place it on the side of your plate. Or even hide it on your plate. It's totally not a big deal to do this, but you don't want to make a big scene out of it.

So that's all I have on proper eating techniques. So are there any questions? All right. Well, it looks like not. So thank you so much, Andria.

ANDRIA DONNENWERTH: Perfect. Thank you, Samantha. I'm so glad that you taught me salt and pepper are married. All the time, I was passing them separately, and I didn't realize I could be creating a rift in their relationship and demonstrating my poor etiquette. I don't know about all of you, but I have learned so much already.

And wait, wait a minute. I think I'm-- I'm the only one in pj's? Wait a minute. What should I be wearing? That is probably a good time to introduce Hannah Umansky, hospitality business management senior at Pullman. Hannah, please share with us how to dress for success.

HANNAH UMANSKY: Thank you for that introduction, Andria. So yes, dress for success-- this is a very important topic. Not will your employers recognize what you're wearing, but it's also for you to feel confident in what you're wearing so you can go and get that job and set yourself up for success.

So some things to remember-- the three P's-- proper fit, polished, and professional. So before you go out and spend all your money on buying things, make sure it fits these three categories. You can also find resources for clothing items in your community. Depending on how much you want to spend, you can go thrifting. There are some items at Walmart that you can find for basic slacks and a white t-shirt. Or if you want to spend a little bit more money, find those retail shops that you prefer most, and you can find options in every price range.

So, business casual and business professional-- sometimes these lines can get blurred. And it can get a little confusing as to what you're supposed to be wearing. So I'm going to try and clear that up for you guys.

Business casual-- so this is your slacks, khakis, with a belt, dress shirt or blouse. You can have it open-collared, tucked in; cardigans and sweaters; a dress or a skirt at an appropriate length; and then loafers and dress shoes that cover toes or most of your foot. Sometimes you'll find dress shoes that sometimes the sides are open, but the toes covered. So just use your best opinion as to what you should wear.

Business professional-- so standards include wearing a matching suit in either black, gray, or navy blue. And make sure your blouse or button-down shirt is tucked in, with a belt; professional closed-toed shoes in either a flat or a slight heel. Make sure whatever you do choose to wear on your feet are comfortable. You never know if an employer is going to take you around their property, or you're going to have to do a bit more walking than you had originally thought. So make sure whatever you choose to wear you are absolutely comfortable in, because this could really help your comfort level and theirs.

And then also, traditionally you would be wearing neutral colors. But we've kind of progressed a little bit more. So whatever you feel shares your personality and expresses you best, do that in a professional manner. So some ways you can do this is by adding a pop of color somewhere, in maybe your tie, or a handkerchief, or a shirt. You can add a watch onto it. You can add some accessories, a head scarf if you prefer. There are a lot of different things you can do to add your personality in while remaining professional.

And if you are thinking, maybe this is a little bit too risky. I don't know. Should I wear it? Should I not? You should always go with the safer option and not wear it. You don't want to be in your interview and thinking about that piece of clothing or accessory you put on. You want to make sure you are completely confident and comfortable in that interview.

So how do you dress for different occasions? So I want you guys to just take a couple seconds. Look at these four options and occasions that you could be dressing for, and think about how you would dress.

So I'll give you a couple of seconds to look at those and think about, what would you put on for this? Would it be casual, business casual, business professional? So for in-person interview, you may have guessed this one-- business professional. You want to show up looking your best so you set yourself up for success.

Now we go into a virtual interview. Also business professional, and I mean full business professional. You never know if someone's going to ask you to stand up, turn off a light, get a piece of paper. They could do something where you need to show both your top half and your bottom. So make sure you are dressed business professional all the way through.

Now, the phone interview-- this is business casual or professional, depending on what you want to do. But definitely not just normal casual. There's actually studies showing that people who did a phone interview and were dressed business professional or business casual got the job more often than the person who dressed casually, because they had a completely different mindset. They were in the professional zone, and they really sold themselves to their best ability.

And then on the job, what do you wear? So this is business casual or professional. Or maybe it's something completely different. This is your opportunity to ask and research the company culture and figure out what is best for your company that you are applying to or are on the job that you've already accepted. So make sure you ask those questions ahead of showing up to the job.

And lastly, bring your A game. So not only are you putting on your clothes when you're dressing for success and going to those interviews or etiquette dinners, you are also putting on your best self. So bring your A game. This is your attitude and attention.

So for attitude, don't gossip. You never want to burn bridges with people. The hospitality and business world and world, in general, is a very small place. So you never want to burn bridges.



And then don't swear or use slang. Verbal communication is really important in the professional world. So while you may have some casual conversations, once you're on the job, you never want to approach the situation in that way, to begin with. So make sure you don't swear or don't use slang.

And then be authentic. It's really important to share pieces of information of yourself, so that your employer or the person you're having dinner with really gets to know you. And it can really boost your networking skills.

And then attention-- show your interest. So you can do this by leaning forward, nodding along. Nonverbal communications are really important during this Zoom time. So make sure you are finding ways to show that person your attention and your interest.

And then don't interrupt. Again with the Zoom world, it can be kind of confusing. There's lags and bad connections. So you're always better waiting a couple of seconds, to make sure that person finished what they were saying, before responding, so you are not interrupting.

And then your phone-- what phone? There should be no phone visible wherever you are. So if you're in person, do not put your phone on the table, just casually sitting there. That's really unprofessional.

And then even on a Zoom call, don't put your phone to the side. They can't see it, but for some reason, if the light flashes up, the first thing our eyes do is looks to that phone. And they may think you're distracted.

So just put it away, sound off. Turn it off for a little bit. You will survive without your phone for whatever event you are going to, I promise. Andria, back to you.

ANDRIA DONNENWERTH: Great, thank you, Hannah. Now I feel completely ready for dinner and success. All I need now is help with networking. Our final guest of the evening is Brian McGinnis, founder and owner of Pinnacle Real estate, LLC, and WSU 2021 Hall of Fame inductee. He's with us tonight to do just that. Brian, please share with us your tips on networking. And you're on mute.

BRIAN MCGINNIS: There we go. Well, thank you for that nice introduction. As a matter of fact, I will be an employee of WSU starting April 1st. I'm going to be working with Dr. Harrington. My title will be Marriott Foundation's Corporate Engagement Coordinator. So you will be seeing more and more of me as time goes on.

But very excited about this. I had retired from most of the jobs at my company, and now looking forward in semi-retirement to helping the school out. So anyhow, that's news fresh off the press. Anyhow, thanks for inviting me to talk about networking and the power of it.

I thought it'd be good for me to maybe talk you through my career briefly, so you can see how networking got me to where I am today-- how I got my first job, how through networking with industry and networking with classmates, networking with employers, resulted in job changes and opening up some pretty unique job opportunities for me.

Again, it all started when I was the senior at WSU and interviewed with Westin Hotels and Resorts as I was finishing up my degree. So the networking opportunity there was obviously WSU setting up the interview and then me following up with Westin, after my first interview with them, and letting them know that I was going to be going to Hawaii after graduation, spending a few months over there, and then coming back to the mainland and bearing down and getting a permanent job.

Well, it was interesting. As I moved over to Hawaii, a couple of weeks later, Westin contacted me and said, hey, we have a job opening at our 800-room hotel on Waikiki Beach. Would you be interested? And I knew that might have been a possibility, so I was trying to prepare for dressing for success. So I had put a pair of polyester pants, polyester shirt, tie, some dress shoes, and a belt in the bottom of my backpack.

And when I was invited to have an interview, I pulled them out of my backpack, shook them out, tied my tie, went down and interviewed, and got the job. So I ended up working in Honolulu, in Waikiki Beach, for two years in a variety of jobs in the Rooms division as assistant manager of the front office and running night audit. It was a great opportunity. And through networking there, I was able to get a job offer at the Westin's new property on Maui managing a restaurant. And so again, networking intercompany-wise gave me the opportunity to get the job opportunity in Maui.

So after that, I decided, after three years in Hawaii, to move back to reality again. I came back to Seattle. Didn't really have any network established aside from just people I went to school with. So I ended up hiring a recruiter to help me find my next job.

I ended up getting a job as a sales manager for two Doubletree hotels at Sea-Tac Airport and was booking groups, conventions, that sort of thing, sports teams, tour groups, that sort of thing, for three years. Until one day, a guy that I graduated with, who had gotten his MBA, was working for a hotel consulting firm, stopped by the hotel to pick up some information, talked to me. He said, hey, how about would you be interested in working for our firm? And I said sure.

So I interviewed, got the job, and ended up for four years working for a national consulting firm, doing feasibility and market analysis work for hotels, restaurants, and convention centers for four years. But had it not been for that contact with that fellow classmate, I never would have heard about the job.

As I was working for this consulting company, one afternoon, a gentleman from Westin Hotels and Resorts, who wanted to network with us-- because we were consultants. He wanted to get information from us. So we had lunch. A little while later, he calls me up, says, hey, we'd like to hire you to do what you do for that consulting company. But for us, we want you to do that in North America and Asia.

So I interviewed for the job, got it. 11 years later at Westin, after having three positions of a development analyst, director of development planning, and director of development, I was able to travel from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to Oaxaca, Mexico, from Key West, to Alaska. I also worked on the Westin Osaka and the Westin Tokyo projects.

And it's so funny. Talking about etiquette, the customs and etiquette in Japan is very, very different. So before I went over there, Westin trained me on where to sit at the dinner table, how to pass. You never fill

your own glass, and you always pass a certain way. And you never sit in where-- the person who coordinates the meal has to see the door. So you don't block that. Anyhow, we went through quite a bit of training. So we were accepted and didn't offend anybody in our work in Japan.

So again, after 11 years at Westin, I left, because I was considered through with traveling, and was able to find my own slot. Started my own company, Pinnacle Real Estate, and pursued several projects, and redeveloped a resort, conference center, marina, facility, in Puget Sound. I worked on Sailor's Lodge. I did quite a bit of development consulting over the years.

And again, after 20 years, I still have the company. I'm sort of retired from that now, now as I'm starting my WSU position. But anyhow, that's a little bit about my background. But the networking portion of it was incredibly, incredibly important for me on my career path. So I guess one thing I would say is never burn bridges with your former employee. Always leave a job in good standing, even if you don't like the job. Because I guarantee you it can always come back and haunt you if you don't leave each job on a good basis. Because people do follow up on references and all that.

One thing I wanted to get across to you is particularly, why networking? Is that 70% to 80% of jobs are filled through networking. They're not listed. They're not published. You don't hear about those jobs. Those are all done by people who know other people. And word gets out about you. You get an interview. You get the job.

But every job I had after my job with Westin was always through word of mouth. So just realize how important networking is to the future of your career. Because the most connected people are going to be the most successful. I guarantee you on that.

So my recommendation to you is just in school, start your network. Grow your network. Maintain in communication with your fellow classmates. When meeting new people, always offer up your business card first.

But after you meet somebody and make a connection, always follow up with that person. It's incredibly important to not let that connection go. Because connections are hard to come by, particularly if you have some common ground or some common interests. Because that's, again, your network for career development.

Even inside your own workplace, networking with people within the company you work for is incredibly important. You become much more visible within your company and are going to be looked upon for potential advancement, if you have established those relationships.

It's interesting. Being a networker, you don't have to be the sort of extrovert kind of big personality, blah, blah, blah. You can be a successful networker as an introvert. Just do smaller meetings. Don't talk to 40 people. Just invite someone to lunch. Invite somebody to coffee. One by one, you can build your network that way.

You're going to be attending a lot of events where you are going to be meeting people, industry events. It might be an organization you join outside of your company that's within the industry, like a meeting planning thing, or something of that nature. Always have a game plan going into a meeting. You want to make sure that you write down a list of people you know are going to be there, who you want to talk to, who you want to connect with.

And work that room like a professional. You want to be able to get the most out of it and not just attend for the attendance sake. You want to make as many connections as possible.

And when you're done, always follow up. Always reconnect with that person you've got gotten the business card from. Maybe send them a LinkedIn connection. Send them an email to somehow connect with them again.

And then, if you find you've learned about what their interests are in, what they're pursuing, if you're hearing something through your work, or outside of work, send them the lead. Send them the information. Say, hey, did you hear about this? Did you know about this? This may be of benefit to you and your career.

I think paying it forward is an important thing and investing in those relationships to grow your career. I really [? listed ?] about five people that, over the last 40 years of my career-- and as I've moved around and done my own thing, we continue to connect through-- Andy [? Olsen, ?] who is on our advisory board, I worked with him at the consulting firm when I started out. And then when I came back and worked for Westin, we hired his firm to do some work.

When I was looking to leave Westin, he gave my name to an investor who wanted to invest in this hotel that I developed. We ended up teaching, co-teaching a class through the University of Washington. I know boo, boo UW. But they have a real estate certificate you can get through their extension. And we taught the hotel class. And then, of course, Andy and I are both on the advisory board.

But I've just got several people. As go into your career, you're going to continue to connect, and meet, and bump into people that you know through work, through school. It really is a small industry from that perspective.

I'm just going to leave you with one last thought. And that is, it's never too early or too late to invest in your network. The worst thing, the worst mistake you can make, when it comes to networking, is not trying it. Because if you don't try it, it's not going to benefit you. And it's something that you just need to practice. You need to work on it and make it part of your daily routine. And it'll pay off big time over your career.

ANDRIA DONNENWERTH: After listening to our wonderful guest speakers, I feel confident and ready to attend a dinner interview and wow them into offering me the job. So I would like everyone to give me a thumbs up, either like this or using the Reactions button, if you learned something. If you just had a good time and you learned something, great. Awesome. I'm seeing some great thumbs up. Marcus doing, oh, this is awesome.

So for any of you that didn't give me a thumbs up, do you have any leftover questions? Now is the time to ask them. Anybody? You can ask it in the chat. You can ask it verbally. We're here at your disposal. You can pick our brains and ask us any questions. Going once, going twice.

AUDIENCE: Is there an appropriate time to give a toast?

ANDRIA DONNENWERTH: That's a good question. Who in our committee would like to answer that?

DR. ROBERT HARRINGTON: A great question-- I don't know the specific answer to that. Typically, those are very specific situations, where they'll be toasting, and that sort of thing going on-- certainly, weddings or that sort of thing. But it could also be to thank a host, or that sort of thing. So typically, it'll be either toward the beginning of the evening, before everyone settles in, or toward the end. But yeah, that's my thoughts. And I don't know if Brian or anyone else has other thoughts.

BRIAN MCGINNIS: I don't know. It seems like maybe tapping your glass, to make a little bit of noise to hush the crowd; standing up, so that you'll get the attention of the crowd; and then hitting the glass some more, if people are not quieting up enough. And then offer up the toast. But I think Bob's right-- usually at the beginning or the end.

ANDRIA DONNENWERTH: Perfect. Thank you so much. Do we have any other questions? Comments? Great. Well, I thank you, everybody, for attending. We wish you all the best of success at your next dining experience. And we want to provide a very special thank you to our committee of faculty and students that organized tonight's event, as well as our special guests. So thank you again for joining. We greatly appreciate it.