Introduction:

(Martin): Hi Everyone! Welcome to Take Your Networking Efforts Offline by the Walden University Career Services Center. What comes to mind when you hear the word “networking”? For most, it might be LinkedIn, or perhaps Facebook or Twitter. If you are active on social media, online contacts can pile up by the hundreds, maybe even thousands for some. However, if your only strategy is to network through social media, you are missing a very key component of your overall networking strategy: Offline networking!

Offline networking might include becoming actively involved in professional associations, volunteering, or connecting with groups in your community. It might mean asking a respected professional to mentor you, or to meet for an informational meeting over coffee or lunch. Or for the brave, picking up the phone and calling someone who actually has your dream job! Maybe someone in your LinkedIn network! Most people are happy to talk about their success, and how they got to where they are today. What about starting your own networking group? Reach out to other professionals with similar interests, and organize monthly meetings to share ideas, career tips, and professional goals. Networking groups can help you stay motivated and informed.

Before you attend professional gatherings, such as conferences, workshops, or other professional development events, make sure you prepare ahead of time and set specific networking goals. Ask yourself, who do I want to meet and what do I want to find out? Be proactive and check your online image - remember that people you meet face-to-face may still look you up on social media. Practice your introduction or elevator speech to build your confidence. During the event, dress sharp, be friendly and approachable, and find ways to add value for other participants. Bring your business cards to distribute and stay in touch with key contacts afterwards through LinkedIn.

Offline networking is a powerful way to build depth and richness into your networking efforts. The point is not to replace online networking, but to enhance and balance out your efforts. The key to effective networking is to share your passion and show simple gratitude. Make sure your network gets something back from you. This might be sharing your expertise or the knowledge you’ve gained during your Walden program; offering to work on a project; or volunteering where needed. And be sure to follow up with a thank you card. This kind of thoughtfulness is remembered and valued.
For more information, visit the Walden University Career Services Center today and check out our networking tips! Combine online and offline networking into your powerhouse dynamic duo!

Finally, I’m including a list of resources to further enhance your networking skills.

Thanks for watching and have a great day!

Resource List:


The Muse: 30 Brilliant Networking Conversation Starters: http://muse.cm/2pdrx3E

Business Insider: 9 Conversation Starters to Smooth Over Any Awkward Networking Event: https://read.bi/2dtifhe