



## Career Services Assignment 5 – Attend a Meetup

**Instructions:** Find a technology meetup or networking event and attend it (either virtually or in-person). Search sites like Eventbrite.com, Meetup.com or do a search like this “[name of your city] + technology meetup. You can also ask your classmates or post the question on LinkedIn and see what recommendations you get.

If possible, go with fellow students or alumni. Answer the following questions below.

### Which meetup did you attend?

I was able to network with 2 members from IT in my organization! I met with an IT Business Manager and an Executive Director of IT Strategy & Planning.

### What did you learn?

I learned a lot about our IT organization and how it is structured. They had a reorganization recently and I was able to see their updated organizational structure. I found this interesting to see how they were reorganizing and changing roles to accommodate our ever-changing business. I also learned that IT is constantly changing (which I could have guessed!).

One of the people I met with spoke to me a lot about user interface and about how this is what the user experiences, such as going to an app store, searching for an app, installing and downloading. He said there is a lot of research that goes into this such as: understanding what the end user needs, what the job is/context to fully understand what you need to provide to create the best experience possible. He also made a great point of not having bias with your own design. Others have valid opinions and input that should be listened to, and it is important to accept feedback and constructive criticism. He also told me that there are a lot of strong communities outside of our organization, such as User Experience Professionals Association, and that there are people doing projects you would never even think of, it's a brand-new world! He also recommended the book “The Design of Everyday Things,” to learn more.

The other person I spoke to was a woman who is the Executive Director of IT Strategy and Planning. We had a great conversation about women in STEM. It turned out we both had a similar background, both going to school thinking we would be biologists but pivoted into something else. This is when she found IT, and she told me how she used to go by Chris instead of Christine, since people would not want a woman coming to fix their computer. It was really inspiring to hear her story and how she has been able to move up and grow in the IT organization. Having so many similarities in our personalities and interests has motivated/excited me to keep moving forward to learn as much as I can. We did not talk about her role so much,



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but she is going to connect me with other folks in the IT department so I can continue to network and learn more. Hopefully, after I finish this bootcamp there will be a junior role for me to move into! She also wants me to keep her up to date with how the course is going and that she fully supports my goal of changing careers.

### **Did you meet anyone new?**

Yes, I met 2 new colleagues who I had not connected with before! Based on these connections I will also have opportunities to network with others from the IT department in the future!