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Ensuring the kids are alright: Ways to help students network with industry professionals in the age of virtual meetings and career fair disillusionment

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Meeting abstract. No PDF available.

ABSTRACT

The pandemic has derailed the traditional networking vehicles to connect aspiring, ambitious students with industry professionals. As a result, the flow of young talent to best-fitting industry outlets is being misdirected. Moreover, many students are not inclined to accept virtual meetings as a replacement for face-to-face engagement while professionals often prefer virtual meetings as means to maximize productivity. The latter disparity has led to campus “career fairs” turning into stay-at-home experiences that students notoriously lament. Without bridges to network students with the right industry professionals to optimize hiring and onboarding processes, our society faces increasing early career turnover, loss of productivity, and disenchantment of young talent with the technical outlets that could await them. This talk will first clarify the crisis facing industries as a result of pandemic-motivated physical distancing practices. We will discuss lessons learned from recent attempts to foster genuine connections between students and the industry professionals they could work alongside in the future. The talk will conclude with a call to action on part of both students and professionals to collectively rebuild the networking system before a temporary disruption turns into a generational failure.

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