

Networking Strategies

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Importance of Networking

Effective networking involves establishing and maintaining contacts and relationships that will help you learn and grow both professionally and personally. In fact, approximately 70% of jobs, as well as 30% of on-campus jobs, are found through networking! Learning how to network is especially important for students now because the job market is getting tighter. In this environment, many positions are no longer "posted"; instead they are found through "back doors." Professional contacts can help you during a job search and beyond. You never know when a networking contact may become an employer, client, or business partner.

FACT: First impressions are formed within the first 4 - 7 seconds.

Identify Networking Opportunities

When forming your network contacts, don't leave anyone out! The obvious candidates include professors and previous employers. The potential for your network is huge:

- Professional/Student Organizations
- Civic and Community Groups
- Volunteer Organizations
- Upperclassmen
- Longhorn Links http://www.texasexes.org (see Career Network)
- Alumni (see McCombs Alumni Resources, McCombs School Directory)
- Contacts from internships
- Past Employers –
 Managers & Co-workers
- LinkedIn Contacts
- Previous and Current Recruiters

- McCombs & UT Alumni Groups
- Friends and Family
- Family friends and friends' family
- Previous and Current Professors
- Mentors
- Religious Institutions

Utilize Networking Tools

Everyone can set up a network of contacts. With a positive attitude and the right tools, your dream job could be one contact away. If you think you've never networked before, get ready to be proven wrong because every handshake or introduction you've made is another start to a potential professional contact. **Informational Interviews** are a great way to continue growing your network.

Networking can feel like a full-time job sometimes. Establishing, maintaining, and following up on network contacts is a continual process that takes time and energy; however, your efforts will pay off in the end. **Networking Lists** can be very useful for organizing contacts.

Informational Interviews

Informational interviews can be one of the most valuable sources of occupational information, and are a great networking technique. They give you an opportunity to obtain relevant information about the realities of working within a particular field, industry or position. Conducting informational interviews will expand your network, improve your confidence when speaking with professionals, and help you learn more about an industry, company, profession, or position within a company. You can interview students with internships, McCombs alumni, current employees or professors.

Reminders about Information Interviews

- You are interviewing to learn about an industry, profession, company, or a position within a specific company
- Select people who are in a position to help you in your job goals
- Prepare questions by researching the company and industry
- DO NOT present a resume in an informational interview (this is not the time to ask for a job)
- ALWAYS send a thank you e-mail or note and remember to maintain your group of contacts. One contact can lead to multiple business and social contacts.

Sample Informational Interview Request

Informational Interview Request E-mail

Subject Line of E-mail Message:

Request to meet for informational interview

E-mail Message:

Dear Ms. Wilson,

I am currently a [classification] at the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas at Austin. I plan to declare [Major] here at McCombs, and I am interested in working in [Industry, company, or position of interest].

I found your name on the McCombs Alumni Directory, and I wanted to reach out to you to learn more about the career path you have taken.

OR

I saw on LinkedIn that you have worked for both [Company A] and [Company B], and I would really like to hear your advice on what it takes to break into the industry.

OR

My cousin, John Doe, recommended I contact you to learn more about the industry and your career path.

I will be in Houston from December 12 - January 2. Would you be available to meet with me for about 20 - 30 minutes while I am in town? Thank you so much for considering my request.

Sincerely, Lucy Longhorn

Lucy.Longhorn@bba12.mccombs.utexas.edu McCombs BBA, May 2014 512-687-5309 Introduction/Purpose

Be clear you are seeking advice, not a job & mention referral if applicable

Offer proposed times & thank them

Networking Lists

Maintaining a networking list will help you track communication with your networking contacts. Keep a list of people you know who may be influential in your job search process, including their title, address, telephone number, and what action you expect to carry out to involve that person in your career planning (set up an informational interview, request advice, give them your resume, ask about job opportunities). Update contacts after they have given you any leads or assistance -- this is a great way to maintain your group of contacts and show appreciation. Reciprocate when the opportunity arises.

CONTACTS	ACTION	DATE OF CONTACT
Gina Jones	Phone Call to request advice	12/10/XXXX
A & E Network	on how to get into TV publicity	
233 E. Main Street		
NY, NY 10017		
212/210-5555		
Valarie Ebeier Barnard		12/15/XXXX
Fashion Press Director	Referred by Atoosa Behnegar Set up informational interview	
Esprit de Corp.	She may have an entry level	
1275 Broadway, 16th Fl.	position open	
New York, NY 10018	l control of the	
212/650-8316		
George G. DelToro	Columbia Crad Deferred by	1/18/XXXX
Morgan Stanley & Co.	Columbia Grad. Referred by Heather Moskowitz. Invite to	
3751 Avenue of the Americas	dinner to discuss how to break	
NY, NY 10020	into Finance.	
212/555-1234		
Jennifer Shapiro	Met through contact at	2/1/XXXX
National Promotions	Atlantic. Sent her a CD package.	
Columbia Records	Call to follow-up.	
24 Music Square East		
Nashville, TN 37203		
615/346-9875		

How to Work a Room

Career Fairs, like the BBA Career Expo in the Fall and Spring, are breeding grounds for great contacts. Recruiters come with business cards and informational handouts on their company and current job opportunities. Recruiting companies will send a handful of recruiters ready to meet students and answer questions. Just like you, hundreds of other students and even alumni are vying for those prime job openings and your preparation and presentation are keys to achieving your career planning objectives.

1. "Do Your Homework"

- Try to know as much as you can about the crowd before going
- Research companies and find out who and what they are looking for
- Know whom you want to meet and why you think the company is right for you.

2. "Dress to Impress"

- Polished business professional dress is always best for career fairs
- NO fumbling, bring a leather portfolio for resumes and business cards
- Review the required dress for any event prior to attending

3. "Plan of Attack"

- Circle the room once to determine which companies to talk to & where they're located
- Start with companies that don't have a long line
- Smile as you approach and always maintain eye contact

4. "Feel'em Out"

- Ask open-ended questions to gather more information about the company and listen to answers
- Remember You are trying to pass the test as a personable human being first and as a talented job candidate second
- Do not monopolize the recruiter's time

"Press the Flesh"

- Be the first to extend a hand
- Shaking hands shows that you're eager to interact
- Give a firm handshake before and after a conversation and thank the recruiter for his or her time

6. "Cover Your Tracks"

- Send a hand-written thank you letter or follow up e-mail
- Ask for business cards or jot down people's names and e-mails
- Include stories or topics of discussion from your conversations to personalize your correspondence
- Review the Job Correspondence section of the instructional guides

The 60 Second Introduction

The 60 Second Introduction is your best offense against other candidates in situations like career fairs and receptions. When you only have a limited amount of time with a recruiter, the 60 Second Introduction serves as a brief yet effective introduction which guides you smoothly into your conversation. The content of the 60 Second Introduction is predictable; the preparation and practice required is not. You will distinguish yourself if you can do this well. In order to assemble the information for your 60 Second Introduction you should review your relevant experience. Avoid giving more than a few facts since the recruiter will not be able to remember or follow them all.

You may follow the examples given and include background, education, etc.; OR, you may focus on your unique capabilities and strengths and how they fit into a work environment. Your introduction should not sound rehearsed. It is not necessary to cover all the points listed – use your judgment about what highlights your skills and abilities the best.







The 60 Second Introduction (Cont'd.)

What Should I Include in My Introduction?

Who are you?

What makes you interesting? Include a unique point that can connect to the interviewer or to the position you are inquiring about. Talk about something memorable.

Education

Mention your BBA degree, major, any honors or awards. Discuss a significant activity that you are involved in or a concentration that applies to the position for which you are interviewing. Why did you choose your major?

• Work Experience/Internships/Academic Projects/Case Competitions

Talk about any internships you've had, positions you've held, or projects on which you've enjoyed working. This can be with student organizations as well as a job. Don't get too specific, just touch on some major accomplishments.

Why do you want to work here?

Emphasize why your chose the specific company, how enthusiastic you are about job opportunities at the company, and skills you have that make you a good fit for this company. Explain what you have to offer this organization.

End with an engaging question

Doing this will turn your introduction into a conversation. Ask an open-ended question about something if you cannot find information on their web site or company press releases. Make sure your question is appropriate and not Controversial.

Follow-Up: Maintaining Your Network

Following up is integral for successful networking. By following up, you are sealing the networking link between you and your contact. The easiest and most common way to follow up today is through e-mail. However handwritten notes make a lasting impression – they come across as more personal and are a rarity in today's internet-driven world. Genuinely thank your contact for his or her help in your job search and include a topic or anecdote from your conversation to personalize your correspondence. Be sure to provide all your contact information so your contact can conveniently communicate with you.