

Networking 101

– networking tips / etiquette, elevator pitch, etc.

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Why network?

What are your objectives?

- ***Enhancement / security
of Career & Job & Social Relationships?***
- ***Expansion / nurture
of Infrastructure of Mutual Support Resources?***
- ***Gratification of helping others?***
- ***...?***

For effective networking

(& career management / transition) ...

- **Know / promote yourself**
- **Get to know others**
- **Interest others to know you**

How to network impactfully

- **Communicate effectively**

via elevator pitch, letters, résumé, conversations, presentations, etc.

- **Exploit opportunities meet / relate to others**

via networking events, conferences, business and social meetings / events, volunteer activities, ...

- **Form and nurture relationships**

via engagement, business / social / volunteer activities, keeping in touch, ..., exploiting participation professional / social organizations, interest groups, etc., and LinkedIn.com & other tools

For effective networking

- *Know / promote yourself*

How to network impactfully

- *Communicate effectively*
via intro's, letters, resume, conversations, presentations,

Complete the following exercise.
Revisit from time to time to edit / update.

Write down the following aspects of your *transferable expertise*.

- **3 – 5 key professional assets you bring**
- **3 – 5 assets / aspects that distinguish you from other colleagues / candidates**
- **3 – 5 areas of personal interests, hobbies, volunteerism, ...**
- **3 – 5 significant accomplishments** – each BRIEFLY depicting problem/action/result (PAR) – *grow this list to 10 – 20 and occasionally review for examples that address challenge, integrity, conflict, ... (Use mostly for résumé & interview & infrequently for networking.)*
- **3 – 5 attributes of your ideal job**
- **3 – 5 areas of career interest (with and without regard to your experience)**
- **3 – 5 specific “I’m looking for” contacts &/or information** *(for current/next job; constantly update)*

Use the above to produce:

- **Understandable / repeatable description of job position you have/had/seek** *(the crisper, the better)*
- **Résumé, cover letters, Professional Profile, etc.**
- *Note: The above should reflect that you: know yourself, know your competition (industry competitors; job candidate competitors);*
- *know your industry/function (market & customers; job roles); know how to apply capabilities to needs/opportunities.*

For effective networking

- *Get to know others*
- *Interest other to know you*

How to network impactfully

- *Exploit opportunities meet/relate to others*
- *Form and nurture relationships*

Complete the following exercise.
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Write down the following:

- **3 – 5 contacts / info sought by an acquaintance**
- **3 – 5 questions to ask to get know a new acquaintance**
- **3 – 5 “don’t want to miss” networking forums**

For effective networking & career management / transition ... Know/promote yourself, get to know others, & interest others to know you!

Write down the following aspects of your *transferable expertise*.

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Note: The above should reflect that you: know yourself, know your competition (industry competitors & job competitors); know your industry/function (market & customers; job roles); know how to ...

Also,

- 3 – 5 **contacts / info sought by an acquaintance**
- 3 – 5 **questions to ask to get know a new acquaintance**
- 3 – 5 **“don’t want to miss” networking forums**
- 3 – 5 **networking opportunities to check out – frequently update**

**With the benefit of this
“database of me,”
I am now prepared to
develop / improve my
elevator pitch and
networking engagements.**

Elevator Pitch – a brief introduction

OBJECTIVE *(The content of the elevator pitch should be determined by the objective.)*

- **To incite listener to solicit more info / engage in dialog**
- **To result in the listener's "general" understanding of:**
 - who you are and the function you offer,
 - a likelihood of remembering this, and,
 - the capability to "loosely" repeat

NOTE: There is no objective to convey your resume (or any substantial portion of it) via your elevator pitch.
In fact, attempting to do so typically lessens the effectiveness.

Elevator Pitch – a brief introduction

COMPONENTS *(The content of the elevator pitch should be determined by the objective.)*

- **Name and Descriptive title** – May not be the workplace title held in the last job, but rather a generally understood and truthful title that better conveys actual area of function and scope of responsibility
- **"What's In It For Listener"** – Service / function / product you offer and its resulting BENEFIT to listener (or that the listener recognizes as a benefit to others he/she may know or come to know and hopefully will convey).
 - Brief statement or two or (typically no more than) three that includes function and benefit and that is understandable by the only listener or generally understandable by the great majority of the audience
 - Best if it includes an element that differentiates you from competitors
 - Nice if content and/or delivery contains an element that "stands out" to embed in each listener's memory
- **Close** – A repeat of Name and/or either title and/or "tag line"

Elevator Pitch – a brief introduction

DELIVERY *(The content, length, and style should be adapted to the audience.)*

- BREVITY -- Remember the objective -- deliver just enough to incite listener(s) to approach you for more info or dialog and/or to enhance likelihood of comprehension, memory, and repeatability (to others by listener)
- Develop versions for delivery to general audience of fellow job seekers, business networkers, general audiences individual professional contacts, casual social contacts, ...
- Develop versions for delivery in 10 seconds, 20 seconds, 30 seconds, 1 minute and 2 minutes
 - Some forums enforce time limit and terminate
 - 10 second version commonly used in large forums and for individual professional and social contact introductions
 - 20 seconds is most common -- Large groups may limit to 10 seconds, including large turn out in forums that typically allow 20 seconds.
 - 30 seconds occasionally is afforded in small forums
 - Occasionally allowed for new participants in groups that allow regular attendees only 20 seconds
 - May be used or modified for use for opening conversation with the person who approaches you for more info after hearing your 10 or 20 second pitch.
 - 1 minute and 2 minute deliveries are uncommon
 - Rarely allowed for new participants in groups that allow regular attendees only 20 or 30 seconds
 - From time to time given to a "featured" forum member (e.g., one or two winners)
 - The 1 minute version may be used or modified for use for opening conversation with the person who approaches you for more info after hearing your 10 or 20 second pitch
 - May be used or modified for use as response in interview to interviewers invitation "Tell about yourself."
- Clarity -- Appropriate volume, projection, speed, tempo, inflection, apparent naturalness, ...
- Eye contact with individual or individuals while scanning audience

Elevator Pitch – a brief introduction

EFFECTIVENESS *(Routinely employ and routinely measure.)*

- **Evaluate the effectiveness of your elevator pitches** (i.e., each version of your elevator pitch)
 - In each forum, did it incite one or more listener to approach you
 - From each forum, did you get a follow-up lead or contact from the actions of a listener
 - Get 2 or 3 friends or family to run a test. You deliver your pitch to one individual privately, that person conveys (in his/her own conversational style) this information to another, who then conveys to you as though you are not the originator.
Do you recognize yourself? Are key elements at least being generally understood and loosely conveyed.
 - Add one more person in the above chain
 - Insert more time (hours, day) between conveyances from one person to the next ... and back to you
 - Repeat with professional associates if you have a version that contains technical or industry jargon
 - Don't underestimate the importance of your elevator pitch (version) that is directed to lay/general listeners – there are more lay/general listeners than technical/industry listeners to convey your message and discover leads for you.
 - Simply “test-presenting” to a friend or family member is good, but usually not an adequate test
- **Always on**
 - Deliver to virtually all contacts who have not heard or who have not heard lately
 - Use as part of your response to family, friends, and associates when asked "How's the job search going?"
 - Coach your family and friends to deliver on your behalf to spread the word of your assets/availability and to use as part of their response to when asked, "How's his/her job hunt going?"

Elevator Pitch – examples

Listener wants to know ...

Who are you?

Can I relate?

(What's the business opportunity or problem you address that I understand & hopefully care about)

What do you offer?

(How do you address the business opportunity or problem?)

(What distinguishes you from others?)

What's the benefit to me

(or that I may convey to others)?

Be sure everyone remembers your name.

Job Seeker says ...

Good morning, I'm Anilla Stration. I am a Senior Interactive Marketing Leader who utilizes the Internet to build sales and strengthen customer loyalty.

My work has consistently resulted in multi-million dollar cost savings. My recent focus has been on maintaining the customer base while shifting customers from phone customer service to web-based customer service. I'm seeking employment with a company that values the Internet as a revenue generating channel.

Anilla Stration, Senior Interactive Marketing Leader.

Customer seeker says ...

Hello everyone, I am René McGee. I'm sales agent for XYZ Company. Improving profitability is important to businesses of all sizes.

I help business impact the bottom line through XYZ programs that

- increase employee morale and productivity,
- improve attraction and retention of employees,
- reduce payroll taxes, ... and more
-

and all at no direct cost to the employer!

Please see me to explore how XYZ will benefit your business.

Again, my name is René McGee.

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- *Interest other to know you*
- *Exploit opportunities meet/relate to others*
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**With the benefit of my
“database of me” &
a well designed & practiced
elevator pitch,
I am now ready for
networking engagements.**

Networking etiquette and best practices

Inappropriate behavior can be distracting and repellant.

Appropriate behavior facilitates focus to person, conversation, message and engagement.

a. Preparation

- **Know your ideal prospect.**
- **Rehearse questions that will eliminate all other suspects quickly.**
- **Set written goals:**
 - # of conversations: How many people will you speak to?
 - # of leads for appointments: How many “actionable” business cards will you take?
- **Organize your mobile "office" (i.e., your clothing)**
 - Pocket for your cards (same one all the time)
 - Pocket for their cards (same one all the time)
- **Name badge**
 - Place on right breast (to be seen when you are shaking hands)
 - Use font that is readable from 3 feet away in dim light
- **Dress not to be noticed but to be appropriate for group and comfort**

Networking etiquette and best practices

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b. At a networking event, DO:

- **Expect to learn about contacts; get leads; maybe get an appointment**
- **Meet new people; establish contacts; learn about people; exchange info/leads**
- **Discover opportunities you can address; tease / build around how you can impact**
- **Make arrangements for a future phone call to set up appointment.**

Ask for the administrative assistant's (gatekeeper's) name. (Ask your new contact to have them tell assistant he/she is "expecting my call," and offer a second card for the assistant.)

c. At a networking event, DON'T:

- **Expect to sell anything or get a job.**
- **Hang out with your friends.**
- **Hog the conversation / deliver monologues / endless "I".**
- **Mostly "pitch" (sell) you or your offer.**
- **Collect as many cards as you can.**
- **Lead people on. If no is the correct answer, say so nicely.**

Networking etiquette and best practices

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d. Working the event

– Meeting & Greeting:

- Use firm handshake (not limp; don't crush).
- Note eye color of person to whom you're talking.
- Politely use prepared disengagement line.
- Move on quickly.

– Body Language:

- Relaxed (comfortable).
- Open stance (engaging).
- Approachable smile (inviting).

– Manners:

- Don't interrupt.
- Don't monopolize other people's time.
- Do invite 3rd and 4th parties into conversation as soon as possible.

– Respect:

- Other people's time.
- Other people's space.

Networking etiquette and best practices

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e. After the event

- **Make desired or committed follow-up contacts within 48 hours**
- **Keep score** – *measure your performance / measure fruitfulness of event or event type:*
talks # cards taken # dials afterwards # appointments # closed sales
- **Study the performance ratios:**
Leads-to-conversations Appointments-to-leads Closes-to-appointments
- **Evaluate results from each network event you attend from time to time to validate that your return on investment of time, effort and money is worth it.**

Networking opportunities

- **Natural Market network** – family, friends, associates (professional & social), acquaintances
- **Nurtured network** – People you no longer see regularly, but have maintained contact
- **Extended network** – family, friends, associates, acquaintances of Natural Market network
- **Networking fora & events**– job seeking fora (CNG, CF, CIT, SPNG); business card exchanges (Chamber & commercial); professional organizations and fora; www.HibberdsList.org for a list of events; ...

Go to www.google.com & www.yahoo.com and

search “career” AND “networking” AND “NJ”;

search “business” AND “networking” AND “NJ”; search “Chamber of Commerce” AND “NJ”

- **Web-based relationship management and networking fora**
(e.g., www.Linkedin.com) **and web-assisted fora** (e.g., <http://nj-network.Ryze.com/>)

Networking opportunities

Never stop networking –

*Your networking enhances
your business role, career and your personal life,
as well as those of your associates.*

(Really? Yes, really! Just ask associates for testimonials.)

Q

&

A

Thank you!