

 **Networking In or Out of the Workplace** Written and reviewed by Seasoned Match Mentors

Networking is about interacting and engaging with people for mutual benefit. Equally, you will be able to share your knowledge and skills to help contacts, which will strengthen your relationships. Today, many jobs are never posted. Knowing people in your field along with hiring managers and their networks will help in your job search.

Mentee Objective covered

What is networking and how can an individual excel at it.

Goals / Objectives of the Module

Practice and learn how to network effectively. Understand the characteristics of great networkers. Adjust your networking style based on your personality (extrovert versus introvert).

LESSON / MODULE TOPIC COVERED

Networking is a simple five step process

1. Meet people: Mix it up and get to know lots of people
2. Listen and learn: Actively listen
3. Make connections: Help others connect with people you know can help everyone
4. Follow up: Follow up as necessary and be appropriately consistent

Consider utilizing these ten things when networking:

1. Have business cards
2. Create an elevator speech
3. Develop “ice breaker” opening lines
4. Research your potential network connection
5. Prepare a list of general questions to initiate a conversation
6. Start with a warm greeting and shake hands if appropriate during introduction
7. If seated at a table, start a conversation with the person to the left or right
8. Have an exit strategy to “break the contact”, do not monopolize a contact's time
9. Set a goal at every event to build your network
10. Follow-up with a thank you, consider asking for another meeting

Characteristics of people who excel at networking:

- Appreciation: Say “thank you” in many forms (written or verbal)
- Caring: Network not because you need to, but rather to create lifelong connections
- Confidence: Routinely practice and elevate the skills required
- Empathy: Be interested in hearing different points of view
- Enthusiasm: Make people more comfortable and receptive to a conversation
- Rapport Builders: Develop relationships based on mutual understanding
- Tenacity: Be patient and stay connected, ask for other introductions

Networking techniques for the more introverted or first-time networker:

- Have an objective
- Use lots of open-ended questions



- Use a script
- Maintain eye contact
- Attend many events
- Ask for follow up one-on-one meetings
- Be aware of your high energy time of day

Think of a process you can **POST** on your bulletin board:

- **P** – Create a **P**lan that fits your **P**ersonality
- **O** – **O**wn it in an **O**rganized fashion
- **S** – **S**tick to your own **S**ystem
- **T** – **T**ake **T**ime to build relationships

Proper Networking Etiquette – good manners and proper etiquette never go out of style!

- Arrive on time
- Use name tags as provided, place high on the right side of your garment
- Exchange business cards
- Keep resumes in a folder until needed
- Shake hands firmly
- Be aware of difference between business (five or more feet), social, and personal space
- Turn off cellphone and/or other electronic devices

Lesson Notes

Networking is a skill that requires continual practice. Engage actively in various networking events and share these experiences in your monthly meetings. Networking is a lifelong practice that becomes more intuitive over time. Evaluate daily opportunities that might serve as networking moments and make an effort to connect with new people in any crowd. The connections you make could be pivotal for your professional journey.

Utilize the resources available at The Ohio State University, including the initiatives offered by the Alumni Association. These resources are invaluable for building and enriching your professional network within the alumni and Buckeye communities. Remember, your network can grow from a broad circle into more specialized ones. The adage “never underestimate the power of your network” highlights the significance of these connections. They are crucial for accessing opportunities and experiences that support your career and personal development.

Post Lesson Assignments:

1. Networking Practice: Attend at least one networking event and document your experience. Reflect on how the connections you made could impact your professional journey.
2. Opportunity Identification: Identify and discuss daily opportunities that could be considered networking moments. Share these findings in your next monthly discussion.
3. Resource Utilization: Explore and engage with the Career Success resources, the College of Arts and Sciences and OSUAA offerings available to you. Look for ways to strengthen your connections within the Buckeye community.
4. Network Reflection: Reflect on how your network is evolving and consider how you can contribute to and benefit from it. Share these reflections in your monthly discussions to enhance your networking strategy.



SOURCES

1. Faulkner, Dr. Michael L. Networking for College Students and Graduates: Nonstop Business Networking That Will Change Your Life, Nierenberg Consulting Group. Kindle Edition. Third Edition 2017
2. Resources to view:
 1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSeRyRgjWOI>
 2. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/networking-virtually>
3. Ohio State Campus Event Resources:
 1. <https://asccareersuccess.osu.edu/events>
 2. <https://artsandsciences.osu.edu/events>
 3. <https://osualumni.org.ohio-state.edu/alumni/events-and-travel/events-calendar>

