

OVERVIEW

Participants will learn why they should network, how to network, and where to network to improve their job search process and increase potential employment opportunities.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Participants will learn the benefits of networking.
2. Participants will learn the different types of networks and recognize existing networks.
3. Participants will learn how to build a networking contact list.
4. Participants will learn how to contact individuals on their networking list.
5. Participants will learn how to maintain a list of contacts.
6. Participants will learn how to plan, schedule, and conduct an informational interview.
7. Participants will learn career networking tips and tricks.
8. Participants will learn most common networking mistakes.
9. Participants will learn strategies to market themselves better during networking opportunities.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Correctly identify why networking is important.

2. Learn how to network.
3. Correctly identify the best places to network.
2. Create a networking contact list with 10 networking contacts from 3 or 4 different organizations/services.
3. Illustrate informational interviewing techniques.
4. Correctly create an "Elevator Speech" or "60 Second Infomercial".
5. Correctly describe the benefit of social networking sites.
6. Correctly identify different types of networking.

MATERIALS

- ▶ Projector/Screen/Laptop
- ▶ PowerPoint Presentation
- ▶ Pens/Blank paper
- ▶ White board/Flip chart if needed/Markers
- ▶ Handouts:

#1 – <i>Networking Trivia</i>
#2 – <i>Building Your Network</i>
#3 – <i>60 Second Infomercial Sheet</i>
#4 – <i>Contact Sheet</i>
#5 – <i>Networking Card Info</i>
#6 – <i>Networking Tips, Tricks & Techniques</i>
#7 – <i>Most Common Networking Mistakes</i>
#8 – <i>Location Specific Area Networking Groups</i>
#9 – <i>Workshop Evaluation Form</i>

PREPARATION

- ▶ **Facilitator Guide** - Read Guide, familiarize yourself with content and flow of activities and decide on schedule. Make note of optional activities you may want to include.
- ▶ **Participant Handouts** - Review handout content and update as necessary. Photocopy all handouts in advance.
- ▶ **Guest Speakers/Team Training**- Plan session segments if applicable.
- ▶ **Measurement/Evaluation Criteria** - Workshop Evaluation Form
- ▶ **Research Materials** -Books, videos, websites & additional materials as needed.
- ▶ **Time Shortening Options**- Review time shortening options if your workshop time slot is shorter.
- ▶ **Instructors Notes**- Use the Instructors Notes space on the right hand side of the guide to help prepare you to facilitate the workshop.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED MEDIA

Podcast- Secrets of the Job Hunt:

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/secrets-of-the-job-hunt/id214060101>

iPhone App- Job Hunt: 50 Tips (Includes Networking Know-How)

Social Networking Videos-

Social Media in Plain English: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MplOCIX1jPE>

LinkedIn: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzT3JVUGUzM>

Twitter in Plain English: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddO9idmax0o>

ACTIVITIES

Introduction (Slide 1)

Introduction of workshop: Facilitator introduces self, time frame of workshop, introduction of participants (if group is small enough)

NOTE: An option the facilitator can consider while introducing the workshop is leading a discussion with customers on which types of networking have worked/have not worked for them in the past.

You Will Be Able To (Slide 2)

1. By the end of this workshop you will be able to:

Network - Know what it is, learn the importance of it and benefits from it

Tap into the “hidden job market”

Identify your networks

Use the correct tools needed for networking

This workshop will focus on developing your networking skills. We'll discuss some tools that you can use to help with networking. However, this workshop doesn't delve into social networking tools. If you are interested in learning more about online social networking, you can sign up for one of our workshops that addresses LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and other social networking tools. We'll spend more time addressing specific networking techniques that you can easily transfer to online social networking.

2. The Power of Networking (Slide 3)

What is Networking?



Facilitator asks the group what they think of when they hear the word “Networking”. The facilitator can jot the ideas generated from the group on a flip chart or whiteboard. After enough ideas have been generated, the facilitator can say:



“Networking is about getting to know people and building relationships that can uncover hidden job opportunities.”

*Studies consistently show networking to be the **most** effective way to find a job.* Networking can be as simple as asking a friend of a friend about their field of work. You probably “network” more than you think already. Developing a positive mindset is absolutely essential to networking and career growth. Think of it this way - we are all in this together, and we all have something to offer.

3 Reasons Why Networking is Critical During the Job Hunt (Slide 4)



Facilitator can say: “Let's take a look at three reasons why networking is so critical when job hunting”:

Tip:
To make this more relevant, you can ask, “How many of you have heard about a job from someone you know?”

a. Networking is an important business skill. It's the ability to meet new people and build mutually beneficial partnerships or exchanging of information with others to make connections.

b. Networking can directly impact your career achievements and income. (Networking is a key driver behind higher salaries and career advancement and career advancement is all about making connections with people who can share ideas, leads and opportunities. Anyone can benefit significantly by improving their networking skills, habits, and mindset.)

c. Networking is the **most effective job search strategy**. Building long-term, mutually beneficial connections will bring benefits now and throughout your career.

Confidence (Slide 5)

Not only does networking expand your personal and professional contacts, it can also help you increase your confidence during difficult times.

It's natural to want to withdraw when the job search isn't going well. That's really when you should force yourself to go out and meet new people or try new things you've always wanted to experience! Don't throw in the towel!

Quality Network Contacts (Slide 6)

Research shows that 25% of job seekers make over 1,000 network contacts before finding a good job.

Most career specialists feel that a network of between 40-75 people is required for the network process to work

3. Networking - Critical When Job Hunting (Slide 7)



Facilitator can say: "Let's take a look at some reasons why networking is so critical when job hunting":

a. Referrals are generally the number one way of hiring people.

b. Networking can help get your resume moved to the top of the pile and quickly in the door for an interview.

c. It's the ability to meet new people and build mutually beneficial connections and is the most effective job search strategy. Building long-term, mutually beneficial connections will bring benefits now and throughout your career.

4. **What is the Hidden Job Market? (Slide 8)**

It is estimated that only 20% of all jobs are advertised, meaning 80% of jobs are filled by companies who never advertised the position.

This is called *The Hidden Job Market*.

The hidden job market is the positions that are filled by referrals, the "who do you know" method of recruitment. The odds are in your favor for a job if you investigate the hidden job market.

How to Find the Hidden Job Market

The best way to find the hidden job market is by:

- a. Identifying types of employers you are interested in
- b. Find specific potential employers
- c. Finding contacts within the target employer

Information to look for:

Who hires people who do what you want to do?

What industry makes/does what you want to be involved with?

What employers are in your geographic area of interest?

Who do you already know that is connected (or could be connected) to your employer of interest?

5. **How Do You Measure Up? Networking Trivia (Slide 9)**




Facilitator can say: "Do you really know what networking is? The first step in networking is to know what your understanding of networking is and what you are willing to do to generate job leads."



Activity # 1 - Facilitator asks group to take out **(Handout #1) - Networking & Making Connections Trivia** sheet from their packet.

Facilitator explains the scoring “How Do You Measure Up” on the left of the trivia. Give group 3-5 minutes to fill out form. Facilitator can ask if anyone in the group was surprised by how they measured up. Ask if anyone would like to share their results.

6. **Where to Start (Slide 10)**



Facilitator begins Activity #2 by asking participants take out **(Handout #2) Building Your Network** from their packets. On the back of the sheet ask customers to create a list of the people they know for each of the following categories (offer one category out loud to the group at a time):



Facilitator can say: “To begin networking, start with a list of everyone you know in your life that might be able to assist you (family, friends, past co-workers, parents of your children’s friends, etc.). Let’s begin this process together.”



Contact Categories:

Relatives

Parents (other parents you may have had contact with - if you are not a parent - your parents friends you have met)

Neighbors

Acquaintances and friends

College professors

Departmental advisors

Classmates and school acquaintances

Alumni (college or high school) in your target industry

Community business people

Former co-workers

Church/religious institution members

Members of professional or social organizations

Anyone else you might not have listed

When it appears that the majority of customers have completed this segment of the activity, ask customers to then place a star next to the people they know well AND are also currently employed.

When this is complete, ask customers to then place another star next to the names that appear more than once on their list in the various categories.

The names that are starred more than once on your list are a great place to start when networking. Now that we have identified people of interest in your network let's talk about how to network!

D.I.Y. Networking (Slide 11)



Facilitator can say: "Networking should take place all of the time. You should make time to consciously meet, greet, listen, and engage in conversation. Talk to people you don't know everywhere you go: Cocktail parties and weddings, airplane rides, supermarket lines, sporting events, festivals, bookstores and so on."

- Seek out and have coffee with people who work in jobs similar to the ones you'd like to have.
- Learn to ask "What do you do?" with comfort, sincerity and interest.
- Become a better listener. Ask a question and then be quiet until you hear the answer.
- Practice a brief presentation of your skills (this is often called an elevator speech or pitch and we'll talk more about this later).
- Keep a networking card or other form of information about yourself on you at all times. Get comfortable handing out your card.
- If you find it difficult to network, take classes to improve your public speaking, body language and writing skills.



NOTE: Facilitator can tell customers that if they want more help with their skills to look into more workshops that your One-Stop Center offers.

Where Do I Network? (Slide 12)



Facilitator can say: “Try networking where you are comfortable and where other people in your profession might be found.”

- Join every networking club and association in your field. Make yourself visible to the right people in the group. Consider starting a blog that offers smart commentary on your industry.

- Keep in touch with people using tools like [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) (friends from college and people you worked with). They may be in the same boat as you. There are many ways you can use LinkedIn for networking. Once you fill out the education and past employers section of your profile, the site will provide you with a list of others who went to school with you or were at previous jobs with you (and a LinkedIn profile is free).

- Follow up on any lead, no matter how minor.



Optional Activity- Social Networking: Facilitator can show participants how to use LinkedIn and Facebook or can refer customers to an existing social networking for the job search workshop.

7. **Networking - A Two-Way Street (Slide 13)**

Why?

Because your networking contacts are interested in keeping abreast of your accomplishments and career journey. Keeping the lines of communication open after your initial connection is crucial to networking and maintaining your list of contacts.

Remember that networking is a two-way street: If you come upon a resource that you think one of your contacts would appreciate, pass it along to him or her.

TIP:

To make this topic relevant, you can ask attendees how many have a social networking account on any social networks (MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn).

Remember to always send a thank you note or e-mail to people you contacted. Not only does it show appreciation, it helps them to think of you when an opportunity presents itself. If somebody referred you to another contact that was particularly helpful, write to the original person and let them know.

8. Overcoming Networking Fears (Slide 14)



Facilitator can say: “You are not alone if you are uncomfortable networking. Let’s go over some common networking fears and discuss how to overcome them”:

1. One of the most common fears is the fear of meeting strangers. The trick is to not look at new people as strangers. So the first thing you should do is see the people that you are meeting for the first time as friends.
2. The second big fear is the fear of making a fool out of yourself or saying something wrong, this does not mean you have made a fool out of yourself. In most cases, this is only your perception - and the people around you might not even notice. Many people are very busy fighting their own fears, so they will probably not notice a small mistake from you.
3. Many people are very concerned about what to say. Prepare yourself a little before the actual conversation (even if you are using small talk). To start a conversation, you can just use a simple “Hello, may I introduce myself?”
4. Another concern many people have during networking is coming across as uninteresting. You do not need to do anything special, just be a good listener. You’ll be able to ask good questions if you have been listening. If you really want to have something prepared to say, have a unique story as a way of introducing yourself. If you are concerned about not knowing how to finish a conversation, just take a little time for some preparation. A simple sentence at the right moment (a natural break in the conversation) is enough.

Overcoming your fears and concerns about networking is not that difficult. You just need to relax and have a positive attitude.

9. Networking Preparation (Slide 15)



NOTE: If your customers have taken the Interviewing Workshop, this may have been covered.



Facilitator can say: "Having a prepared elevator pitch can also help you overcome networking anxieties. What is an elevator speech or pitch? An elevator pitch is an overview of your skills, strengths and idea and is designed to get a conversation started. The point of an elevator pitch isn't to get into every detail. All you want to do is to make sure the person understands what you are talking about and what's in it for them."

Facilitator can begin activity to help participants create an impressive phrase they can use to sum up their strongest skills and reinforce their unique qualities (what I can offer you) that gets them remembered.

What your "Elevator Pitch" should contain (Slide 16)

A "hook"

Open your pitch by getting the person's attention with a "hook." A hook is a statement or question that makes the person interested and makes them want to hear more.

About 150-225 words

Your entire elevator pitch should go no longer than 60 seconds.

Passion

Be energetic and enthusiastic.

A request

At the end of your pitch, you must ask for something. Do you want their business card, to schedule a full presentation, to ask for a referral?

Tag Line

Leave them with something memorable.



Facilitator can say: Now that we have discussed an elevator pitch why don't we take a look at **Handout #3** and begin the process ourselves. Ask participants to take out **(Handout #3) My 60 Second Infomercial or Elevator Pitch** and fill in the following areas on their handout:

I: (insert profession or job title or opening hook) can also include: have experience in or most recently was

With expertise in: (insert skills, talents, abilities, knowledge)

Put in most recent

My background includes: (insert industry, department, type of company or service)

My unique qualities are: (insert marketable traits and characteristics)

Tag line: Memorable way of ending the pitch or "what I can offer you."



Facilitator can ask for volunteers to share their short Elevator Pitch with the group.



If there isn't enough time to complete this activity, the facilitator can encourage customers to take the worksheet home and complete it. Facilitator should encourage customers to practice and rehearse their pitch so that they can easily deliver it when given the opportunity to do so.

10. **Keep Track of Your Contacts (Slide 17)**



Facilitator can say: "The whole point of networking is making contacts you can keep. Don't let your valuable work go to waste - keep track of those contacts so you can use them in the future":

Some people think that the sign of great networking or a networking event is walking away with a contact or with tons of business cards. However, in the hustle and bustle of a networking event, you may be handed many cards from many people, and when you get home you

find yourself scratching your head, trying to put names with faces. Keeping track of all of your new contacts can be overwhelming. Here are some techniques you can use to make the whole thing a little less confusing, and to help you work more efficiently.

- a. When you meet someone and swap business or networking cards, after your conversation, take a minute before moving on to the next person to make a few notations about the conversation or about the person on the back of their card.

- b. Sift through the business cards. Sort them by industry, by company, by the position of the person, or any category. This will help you to plan a strategy to follow up with them. Then, follow up. Send emails to arrange further meetings and reference the conversation you had at the event. Even if you think you won't be able to do business with someone at that particular moment, take the time to drop them a line, thank them for their time, and encourage them to stay in touch. You never know when a contact may become the most important person in your job search.

- c. A simple spreadsheet is a great place to start to make sure your good networking doesn't go to waste, and in order to keep track of all your new contacts.



Here's how to do it:

1. Set up a spreadsheet. This will serve as a place for all of the networking you do. For example, please look at the Networking Contacts worksheet (**Handout # 4) Networking Contacts Sheet**. In order to really stand out, particularly when networking with someone you've only met once or twice, remember specifics about your meeting. Write down what your network contact does professionally, what you talked about, where you met them, who introduced you or whom you know in common, etc. Then, when you reach out, it will feel much more sincere because you can mention specifics about your encounter.

2. Fill out the worksheet as you go. Whenever you meet someone, either randomly or at a networking event, try to sit down with your spreadsheet for a few minutes—take out any business cards or info you collected, and jot down any notes you can think of about the meeting.

3. Keep track of correspondence. Create a final column in which you can track any subsequent correspondence you have with the person. Put things like, "Sent resume on 2/3/11. Told to follow up 6/1." This way, you won't forget anything or annoy people with multiple or ill-timed messages.

Remember to put any contact in there, not just high-profile people. Make sure *you* follow up with people when they ask you for ideas or send you an e-mail.

11. **Making Contact (Slide 18)**
By phone or by letter-



Facilitator can say: "When connecting with a network contact or with a referral there are a couple of tips you might want to consider."

1. Explain why you're contacting them. Be direct about whether you're contacting them to ask about the industry, or actually looking for a job, but never ask for a job outright. Ask them if they have any suggestions about how to approach your job search.
2. Ask whether this is a good time to talk. Give your contact a choice to speak with you now or to make arrangements for a time that is more convenient for them.
3. Tell them why they are a special contact for you. If you have a mutual friend or acquaintance, mention his or her name.
4. Describe your skills briefly. Let the person know how they can best help you. They can't read your mind, so depending on what you want, ask if they have time to meet with you, insights about the current job market in that field, or if they know other people you should talk to. If they can't help you, ask if they know anyone in the industry who might be willing to talk to you - not about a job, but about your job hunting strategy.

If they can't help you, ask if they know anyone in the industry who might be willing to talk to you - not about a job, but about your job

hunting strategy. If they suggest getting in touch with someone else, ask permission to use their name, and then follow up as soon as possible.

You should bear the following points in mind when you are drafting your networking letter:

- Keep the letter short and to the point. Try and keep the tone friendly without being overly casual.

- If you are following up after a networking event, remind them where you met or explain how you come to have their details (for example, you have a mutual acquaintance or you read about them in a recent press report)

- Explain who you are and why you are writing. Make it clear that you are not looking for a job at the moment, but are seeking an informational interview so you can further your knowledge of a certain career area.

- Acknowledge that you are asking a favor and make it clear that you only want 15-20 minutes of their time, at their convenience.

- If you are contacting someone you have not met before, you may wish to invite them to suggest an alternative contact if they are not the right person for you to speak to.

- End your networking letter by letting them know you will contact them by phone in the next few days to discuss a possible appointment.

- Notice that the opening sentence mentions the name of the person who referred you to the reader. This establishes a connection with the reader before moving on to your request.

- Don't be afraid to add your own personality in the letters. Just remember to keep them short and to the point. Be sure to avoid asking for a job directly.



Optional Activity: Networking Business Card Info

Facilitator: Ask participants to take out **(Handout # 5) Creating Your Networking Card** and have customers complete the worksheet so that they can craft the content of their networking card. If there is not enough time for this activity during the workshop, you can mention the worksheet and encourage customers to complete the worksheet at home. Customers can also go to www.vistaprint.com to order networking cards.



12. **Networking Tips (Slide 19)**

If you are given the opportunity to have an informational interview, do not forget to acknowledge the support staff you talk to. They are sometimes your most direct link to the person who has the power to hire you, so their impressions of you can make a difference.



Helpful Tips (Slide 20)

Facilitator can go over **(Handout #6) Networking Tips, Tricks & Techniques** and **(Handout #7) Most Common Networking Mistakes**. If there is not enough time in the session, the facilitator can make reference to the handouts and encourage customers to review the handouts at home.

13. **What's Your Next Step? (Slide 21)**

Facilitator can ask the workshop attendees to think about their next steps:

- Who will you contact next?
- How will you adjust your career plans and/or job search strategies based upon the information you gained?

ADVANCED OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Facilitator can guide participants on how to research networking groups in their area. This optional activity can include a hands-on search of Facebook and LinkedIn groups or can include a handout with existing networking groups in the area.



Note: This handout will need to be created and customized by each facilitator to capture information for their geographic location.

14. **End Workshop (Slide 22)**



Facilitator can say: “Stay positive, sincere and professional and always thank people for taking the time to talk to you. Distribute workshop evaluation and One-Stop Center workshop schedule. “