



NETWORKING 101

“Networking is simply the process of doing research on the job market by talking to people.” --Peter Fiske

Office of Career Services and Preprofessional Advising

<http://web.mit.edu/career/www>

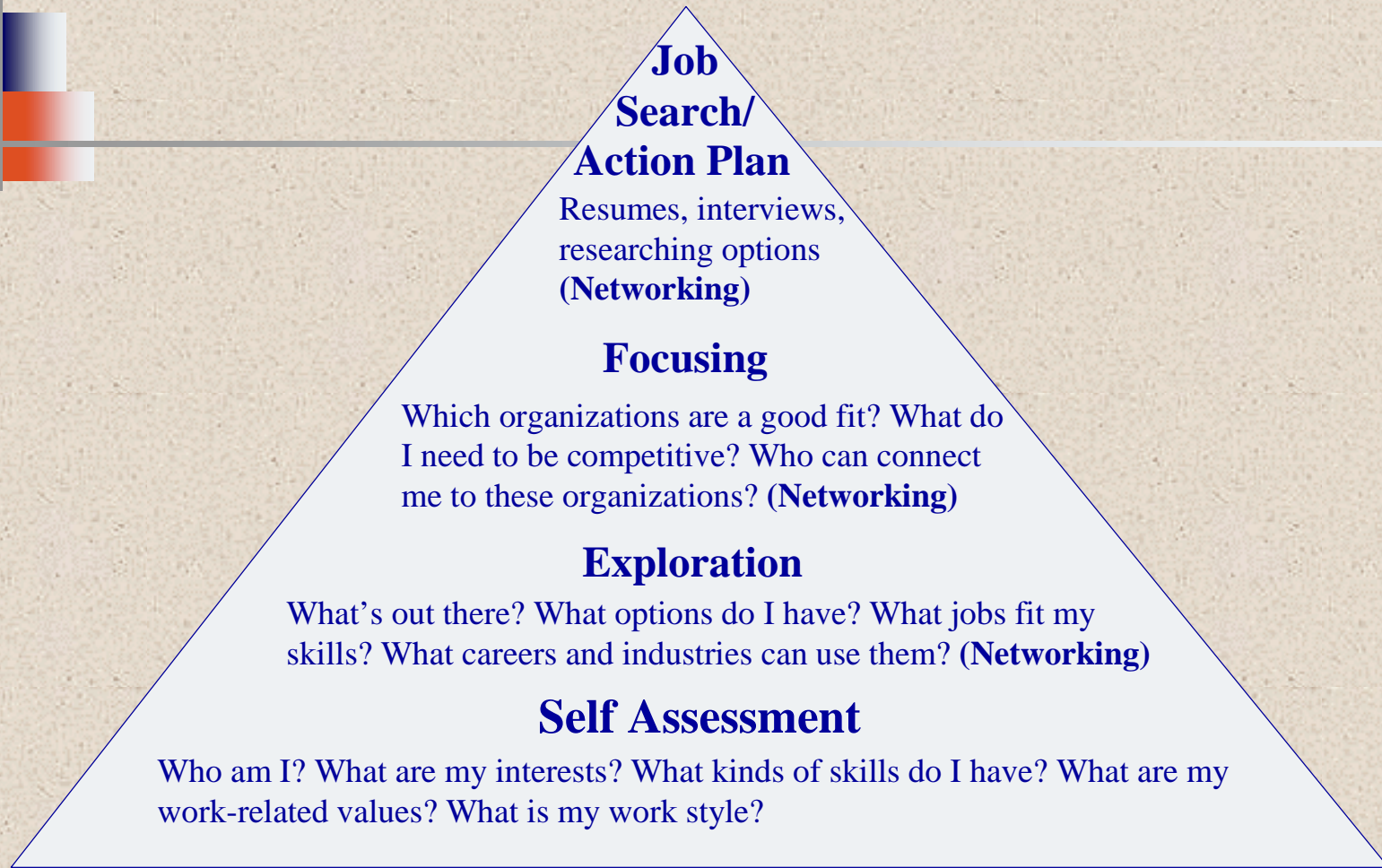
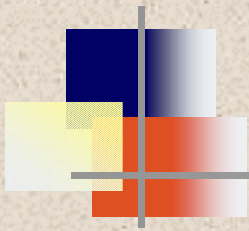
253-4733, Building 12-170



Workshop Goals

1. Teach the concept of networking and how it fits into the career development process
2. Help you identify opportunities to network
3. Offer tips on networking etiquette
4. Practice networking techniques
5. Suggest ways to use informational interviews

Where does Networking Fit?



Adapted from Peter Fiske: To Boldly Go: Practice Career Advice for Scientists, Workshop at MIT, April 1998

Modified from Stanford University Career Planning and Placement Office



What is Networking?

Networking is...

- Discovering and utilizing connections between people.
- Movement *beyond* one's immediate network and involves tapping into other people's networks, perhaps far removed from one's own.



Uses of Networking

- **Exploration: What Is The Field Like?**
Learn about lifestyle, work conditions, job requirements, etc.
- **Focusing: How To “Break Into” A Field**
Expand your knowledge of opportunities in that industry, field or organization, and build contacts.



The #1 Reason To Network

The “Hidden” Job Market

- ...60-90% of jobs are found *informally*, mainly through friends, relatives, direct contacts, and indirect contacts.

The U.S. Department of Labor

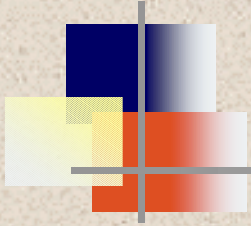
- ...reports that 63.4% of all workers use informal job finding methods.



What You May Not Know About Networking

- Networking is ***not*** aggressively using people for one's own gain.
- Shy people can network
- Networking can be as informal or formal as you like.

A Common Myth about Networking



Myth	Reality
<p>I do not know anyone in the field of _____.</p> <p>I am not connected!</p>	<p>You probably know someone who knows someone in your target field.</p>



Benefits of Networking

- Focus your choice of major or career direction
- Advice about your job search
- Validation about your choice of career
- Refinement your interviewing skills
- Information about a specific employer or job
- Connection to professionals in your chosen career



Tips On Effective Networking

ETIQUETTE

- Remember - your contacts are busy.
- You must be focused.
- Always ask, “Is this a good time to reach you, or would you like me to call back later.
- Avoid talking for too long.
- Don’t alienate HR reps but try to reach the professionals you want to meet.

STRATEGY

- Start with the closest acquaintances to gain practice and build your confidence.
- It is okay to use email providing you keep your inquiries brief, but focused.
- Attend professional association meetings to expand your contacts.



Networking Blunders to Avoid

Try This...	NOT This...
I was impressed by your company's on-campus presentation.	I heard you're hiring a lot of people right now.
I've been successful in my work in X field and I want to apply my strong quantitative background to problems in Y field.	I really can't stand lab work anymore. I thought it would be great to meet someone who made it out of the lab and finally got a well paid job.
I'd welcome your advice about coursework or other experience I might seek that would help me make the transition into Y field.	I need a job. Can you help me out?



Making Contact By Phone

1. What are your primary goals?
2. Develop an outline of what you want to say
3. Prepare an "objection" card (what to say if contact responds negatively).
4. Practice your introduction before you call.
5. Final Tips: if you get an answering machine, leave one message saying that you called, but try calling again another day until you reach your contact.
Try to arrange an in-person meeting.



Networking Exercise

Develop a 30-60-second (approx. 30 word) script.

MENTION

- Your name
- Your program at MIT
- Who referred you, or how you got the contact's name
- When you're graduating (or if you're seeking an internship, what year of your program you're in)
- Your area of interest and how your background relates to that area.



Different Networking “Pitches”

EXPLORING

“I have a strong background in statistical analysis and modeling stochastic processes, and I’m trying to learn more about what quantitative analysts on Wall Street do.”

FOCUSING

“I have a strong background in statistical analysis and modeling stochastic processes, and I’ve decided to pursue a quantitative analyst position on Wall Street. I’d like to learn about the work ‘quants’ you do in your department, and any advice you might have that could help me in my job search.”



Informational Interviewing

“A relatively formal process of speaking with someone in a career or job that interests you and asking them specific questions related to their work or organization. It usually is best to do this by going to their place of work.”

--Peter Fiske

- **TIP: Don't ask for basic information that is available on the web site, corporate directories, etc.**

See handout: “Forty Questions to Ask in Networking Meetings.”



Pre-Meeting Preparation

- **Know yourself**
- **Know the person and/or company with whom you are meeting**
- **Prepare a list of open-ended questions to ask during the meeting.**
- **DO NOT be afraid to speak slowly and clearly to get your point across!**



Tips For Non-Verbal Communication

Body Language often can speak louder than the spoken words:

- Do not fidget, play with your hair.
- Shake your contact's hand firmly.
- Do not rock from side to side.
- Make comfortable eye contact.
- Do not look around when talking or being spoken to.
- Smile.
- Do not chew gum.

***Be enthusiastic and positive. High energy is contagious!!!**



Informational Interviews

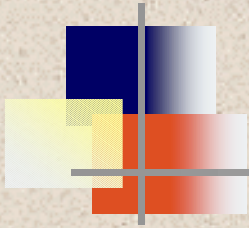
Reflection

- What positive impressions do you now have about this area of work?
- How well does it match YOUR interests, skills, values, goals?
- What negative impressions do you have?
- How did this interview help you to clarify your career or job objective? If it was not helpful in this respect, why not?
- What are your "next steps"? Who else do you plan to talk with? What other steps do you plan to take based upon the advice of your interviewee?



Building Your Networking Database

- Determine the field, organization, or role you're interested in.
- List all the people you know who work in related areas (colleagues, friends, lab co-workers, roommates, friends of friends, alumni of MIT, faculty, advisors, etc,)
- Generate a a few relevant questions and give your contacts a call.



Developing Your Network

Write down 3 people who immediately come to mind in each category.

School (faculty, students, administrators)	Work	Activities /Hobbies	Family/ Friends	Community



Final Networking Tips

- Create your script
- View your job search as a personal research project
- Create a structured plan and stick to it.
- Make calls when your energy is highest.
- Practice what to say before you call, perhaps even jotting down the important points you want to mention.
- Prioritize who to network with and when



Next Steps

- Create an Action Plan indicating specific ways you can implement what you've learned.
- Attend other workshops (Job Search, Interviewing).
- Make an appointment with a career counselor at 12-170 by calling 3-4733.
- Practice with friends, colleagues, and family members



Networking Hot Spots at MIT

- Company Presentations
- Career Fairs
- Professors & Classmates
- In Lab
- Staff at MIT
- OCSPA: Company Card File
- Career Workshops
- ICAN (Institute Career Assistance Network)
- MIT Alumni Association
- Special Events at MIT
- MIT Student Groups
- MIT Dormitories
- OCSPA Career Workshops



Networking Outside of MIT

- Professional Associations and Conferences
- Career Fairs Beyond MIT
- Community Groups (Public Service Center)
- Events in Boston and Surrounding Areas
- Trade Publications / Industry News
- Family Parties (Weddings, Reunions, Holiday Celebrations)
- Professional Service Providers (such as vendors - they may have clients in the industry you are targeting)