Networking

anytime ... anywhere

Your Elevator Speech
first, …a 60-second primer on Networking

What & Why
Networking is not …

- Asking for a job
- Manipulating
- Using People
- Knocking on Doors
Networking is …

Contacting people with whom you already have some connection (either directly or indirectly)…

or

Creating a new connection through introduction and conversation at a social or business gathering …

and

Sharing your career goals and interests, and using the connection for mutual benefit.
Networking is …

- Contacting people with whom you already have some connection (either directly or indirectly)…
  - or
- Creating a new connection through introduction and conversation at a social or business gathering …
  - for
- Sharing your career goals and interests, and using the connection for mutual benefit.
2 Types of Networking

Informal Conversation:
at a business or social event,
or in a casual social setting;
using your **Elevator Speech**

Planned Process:
target specific individuals to contact;
request and conduct the **Networking Interview**
Why

1. Most job hunters don’t know enough about the jobs they’re pursuing
   Networking informs you and gives you ‘insider information’

2. Hiring is risky and expensive for employers
   You’re a ‘safer bet’ if you are referred by someone the employer knows

3. Most jobs are not advertised or publicized
   Networking uncovers that ‘hidden job market’
Why

Really???
Is it true that most jobs aren’t advertised?

Seriously…
70-80% of job opportunities are never advertised!
There’s one way to stand out from the mass of other job-seekers and also uncover opportunities that aren’t even advertised - networking.

People like to meet and hire people who come recommended by someone they trust.

So, get comfortable with a brief introduction that you can make whenever you meet someone new. Get good at it. And work on your networking skills to win at the interviewing game.

~ Midd alum ’96
senior executive,
commercial real estate
even more ‘Why’

Must, must, must do your networking homework in advance so that when a position opens up, you can have your network contacts proactively vouch for you. Anyone who comes in through a contact associated with our office will get a solid look; but those who do not may get only a 3-second review!

~ Midd alum ’03.5
Deputy Chief of Staff,
U.S. Congressional office
Types of Networking

1. **Informal Conversation**
   - At a business or social event or in a casual social setting.
   - The ‘Elevator Speech’

2. **Planned Process**
   - The ‘Networking Interview’

*see workshop*

**Networking**
- plan & conduct the Networking Interview
Informal Networking

Be prepared for the informal networking conversation at a business or social event, or casual social setting

Anytime that you’re meeting people and can engage in conversation, is a career networking opportunity. This includes business events such as conferences; or social events such as college reunions, weddings, or family gatherings. It includes your social activities: where you worship; where you volunteer; your children’s PTO; the gym; your book club; etc.

Be ready to network anytime or anywhere that you might be asked…

“What do you do?”
Be prepared

1. Get comfortable introducing yourself to new people you meet, in any setting.
   Good eye contact, firm handshake, and smile!

2. Be ready to **RE-introduce yourself** (in the context of your career) to people you already know.
   Cousin Barney, Aunt Sophie, or your old college roommate may all know you in the context of your personal life, but do they know who you are as a professional and what your current career goals and interests are?

3. Prepare your ‘Elevator Speech’ and be ready to use it whenever the opportunity arises.
   Nervous about this? The best remedy for nervousness is preparation and practice. More on this follows …
The ‘Elevator Speech’

- A brief introduction and synopsis of who you are (professionally) what you do or want to do; and what you offer.

- Be ready to use it anytime or anywhere you might be asked… “What do you do?” - or when you have the opportunity to introduce yourself.

- Tailor it slightly to fit the setting: more formal in a business setting; less formal at a family gathering. But use the same core information.

- The goal is to capture the other person’s attention so they want to know more about you.

Imagine finding yourself in an elevator with someone to whom you’d like to introduce yourself and your career interests. You should be able to deliver your introduction in the time it takes for the person to reach their floor destination. This is about 30 seconds… and is your ‘Elevator Speech’!
The ‘Elevator Speech’

✓ 30 seconds! any longer, and it becomes an imposition - they’ll lose interest

✓ Quick summary of who you are; what you want
what you’re currently doing; what you want to do; what you offer

✓ Focused
knowing what you want to say shows good communication skills

✓ Practiced; but be natural
otherwise, you’ll ramble - and they’ll lose interest

✓ Fold it into the normal conversation flow
should be part of the dialogue; not disjointed

✓ Upbeat / positive
convey positive energy; make it count

✓ Be ready to use it anytime
every social interaction is an opportunity to network
How to Inject Your Elevator Speech

Listen for cues

- “What business are you in?”
- “What have you been up to?”
- “Are you still with XYZ Company?”
- “What have you been doing since graduation?”
- “What brings you to this conference?”
- “Do you commute downtown every day?”
- “How’s your company doing in this economy?”
- Other ‘cue’ questions
How to Inject Your Elevator Speech

Create Your Own Opening

You can also create an opening:

- Open a dialogue by asking about the other person (‘cue’ questions)
- They reciprocate with same questions
- That creates your opening!
- It also makes the interaction mutually beneficial; sharing information.
Example: Poor Networking Interaction

Hi! Good to see you again. What have you been up to?

Not too much.

Where are you working these days?

I'm mostly working the restaurant scene, waiting tables between a couple of jobs I had with some short-run shows. Got to pay the rent, you know! And you know how ridiculous NY rents are!

Dead End
Oh really? Sounds great!

Hi! Good to see you again. What have you been up to?

Living in NY now – and pursuing my career in theater costume design. I worked on two outstanding shows this last year.

It was an incredible experience working with two of the best design people in the business. Both shows were short-run productions, though, and my job was on contract; but it was a great way to break into the field. I learned so much and added some solid design skills to my resume … so now I think I can definitely compete for a regular position with a top-tier theater company.

It’s not easy; but I’m going to persist. I’m also looking in San Francisco and London.

Good for you. But isn’t the competition especially tough in NY for a newcomer?

Really? My sister-in-law is an executive with a theater marketing company in London. She might have some good advice for you.

If you think she could find some time to talk with me and share some advice – I’d really love that! How should I contact her? Thanks!

Now, tell me how things are going with you! Are you enjoying your new job? It sounds exciting…

Example: **Great Networking Interaction**
Hi! Good to see you again. What have you been up to?

Oh really? Sounds great!

Hi! Living in NY now – and pursuing my career in theater costume design. I worked on two outstanding shows this last year.

It was an incredible experience working with two of the best design people in the business. Both shows were short-run productions, though, and my job was on contract; but it was a great way to break into the field. I learned so much and added some solid design skills to my resume … so now I think I can definitely compete for a regular position with a top-tier theater company.

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Now, tell me how things are going with you! Are you enjoying your new job? It sounds exciting…
**Example #2: Great Networking Interaction**

**Other person**
- Hi! Haven't seen you in awhile. How are things at XYZ company?
- Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. How are you holding up?
- But isn't it tough being out of work for this long?
- Well, let me know if I can help in any way.
- My neighbor is at ABC - but not in marketing.
- OK. Her name is Tamika Jones. I'll ask if she would have some time to talk with you.
- Call me in a few days and I'll let you know.

**You**
- Hello! Actually, I'm not with XYZ company anymore. The economic downturn hit my division hard last spring, and 100 positions were eliminated.
- I'm doing well. This is actually turning out to be a great opportunity for me to take my deep experience in print communications and marketing, and translate that into the new online media arena. Exciting stuff! I think that my 20 years experience in promotion design and client management translate really well into the ability to reach potential customers through online media. So, right now, I'm trying to meet people in the online media field to learn even more about it.
- Well, it's a bit tight financially, but we're managing. But in terms of moving my career forward this is a great time to research the field and meet folks who can share advice and information.
- Thanks! Actually, if you have any contacts in ABC company or Acme Company, those would be great sources of information for me.
- Oh, she'd be a great contact. Even though she's not in marketing; she'll still have helpful info about the company.
- I'll do that! If you could also ask for her email address, I can then email her and introduce myself. Thanks again!
- Now… I'd love to hear what's up with you! How's your practice doing?
Example #2: Great Networking Interaction

**Other person**

Hi! Haven’t seen you in awhile. How are things at XYZ company?

Oh, I’m sorry to hear that. How are you holding up?

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Well, let me know if I can help in any way.

My neighbor is at ABC - but not in marketing.

OK. Her name is Tamika Jones. I’ll ask if she would have some time to talk with you. Call me in a few days and I’ll let you know.

**You**

Hello! Actually, I’m not with XYZ company anymore. The economic downturn hit my division hard last spring, and 100 positions were eliminated.

I’m doing well. This is actually turning out to be a great opportunity for me to take my deep experience in print communications and marketing, and translate that into the new online media arena. Exciting stuff! I think that my 20 years experience in promotion design and client management translate really well into the ability to reach potential customers through online media. So, right now, I’m trying to meet people in the online media field to learn even more about it.

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Oh, she’d be a great contact. Even though she’s not in marketing; she’ll still have helpful info about the company.

I’ll do that! If you could also ask for her email address, I can then email her and introduce myself. Thanks again!

Now… I’d love to hear what’s up with you! How’s your practice doing?
Tips for Networking at an Event

1. Reach Out. Optimize the Opportunity
   Don’t stay only with your friends or the people you came with. Extend yourself and reach out to people you don’t know or haven’t met.

2. Break the Ice
   Use neutral ‘small talk’ to get the conversation going. You can use the event as a topic: “I thought the speaker was quite animated; what did you think of her remarks?”; “This is the first of these conferences I’ve attended. How about you?”; “I really appreciated your comments in the workshop. Can you tell me more about your work in that field?”; “Well, the hockey team is young this year, but I think their prospects look good – what do you think?”

3. Introduce Yourself
   ‘Small talk’ is only for breaking the ice and getting started – don’t dwell there forever. Good eye contact, firm handshake, give your first and last name, …smile!

4. Be Generous. Make it Mutual
   Share information; ask about the other person’s interests; make it a mutually enjoyable (and useful) conversation. Give your Elevator Speech – and allow the other person to give theirs.

5. Be Yourself. Be Genuine
   Connect. Making a few genuine connections is better than making many shallow ones. It is not the goal to collect as many business cards as possible.

6. Use your Elevator Speech!
   Talking only about the weather or the Red Sox will not advance your career goals (unless you want to be a meteorologist or centerfielder for the Red Sox!)
Hello! I'm Sylvia Hernandez.

Do you work in this field?

Hi Sylvia. I'm Felix Wilson - it's good to meet you.

Definitely. I liked what she had to say about new media.

Yes. I've been with FirstRate Media for about 5 years. I'm a finance manager there. How about you?

True! My best friend made a similar transition a couple of years ago.

Well, I hope to be working in the field soon. I'm a print editor with 8 years at NewLook magazine, and I'm researching how to transfer that experience into online media. I'm learning how similar the skills are – just a different medium!

As a matter of fact, he's here at the conference. I'll try to find him and introduce the two of you.

Oh, good! It's great to hear success stories! I'm trying to talk to as many 'career transitioners' as I can to learn more about the process.

As a matter of fact, he's here at the conference. I'll try to find him and introduce the two of you.

How nice of you; that would be great! Here's my business card, just in case we don't re-connect today; I'd really appreciate the opportunity to talk with him at a later date, perhaps a brief phone chat.

Sure! Sounds good.

Thank you, Felix. Now... I'm curious about the finance perspective on new media. What do you think about the speaker's predictions about bottom line impact?

...
Example #3: **Great Networking Interaction**

**You**

Hello! I’m Sylvia Hernandez.

Good to meet you too, Felix. Are you enjoying the conference? I thought the last speaker had some provocative ideas.

Do you work in this field?

Well, I hope to be working in the field soon. I’m a print editor with 8 years at NewLook magazine, and I’m researching how to transfer that experience into online media. I’m learning how similar the skills are – just a different medium!

How nice of you; that would be great! Here’s my business card, just in case we don’t re-connect today; I’d really appreciate the opportunity to talk with him at a later date, perhaps a brief phone chat.

Thank you, Felix. Now… I’m curious about the finance perspective on new media. What do you think about the speaker’s predictions about bottom line impact?

**Other Person**

Hi Sylvia. I’m Felix Wilson - it’s good to meet you.

Definitely. I liked what she had to say about new media.

Yes. I’ve been with FirstRate Media for about 5 years. I’m a finance manager there. How about you?

True! My best friend made a similar transition a couple of years ago.

As a matter of fact, he’s here at the conference. I’ll try to find him and introduce the two of you.

Sure! Sounds good.

...
Special Tips for Introverts

- **Start Small and Personal**
  Start with gatherings of friends, family, acquaintances, and ‘known’ contacts. Get comfortable with this before branching out to other events.

- **Attend Gatherings That Interest You**
  It’s easier to start a conversation when you have some connection or common interest with others - for example: college alumni events; conferences in your career field; gatherings centered around a hobby or interest such as sports, political, religious, reading groups, etc.

- **Be Yourself**
  Effective networking is not defined by how gregarious or outgoing you are. It is the ability to make a genuine connection. Two essential ingredients of good networking are **listening** and **curiosity** (interest in the other person). These are particular strengths for most introverts.

- **Don’t Feel That You’re Imposing**
  You are not imposing on the other person, you’re simply introducing yourself and asking for information – and offering to share information as well. It’s likely that you also have information that may help or interest the other person!

- **Extend Yourself. Ask for Introductions.**
  You might be most comfortable talking to the one or two people you know at the event. But ask them to also introduce you to others in the group whom they know. ‘Speed Dating’ is not the goal – but neither is it your goal to spend the entire time talking to the one or two ‘safe’ people you already know.

- **Use your Elevator Speech!**
  You’ve prepared it and practiced it. Now you can integrate into the normal flow of the conversation.
Types of Networking

1. Informal Conversation
   At a business or social event
   or in a casual social setting.
   The ‘Elevator Speech’

2. Planned Process
   The ‘Networking Interview’

see workshop

Networking
plan & conduct the
Networking Interview
More Middlebury Resources re: Networking

- **Individual Career Counseling**
  - practice your Elevator Speech or your Networking Interview
  - help with optimizing MiddNet, and with planning your networking campaign
  - review your Resume and Cover Letters
  - practice Job Interviews
  - career counseling and help with career direction

  Contact Career Services to schedule a phone counseling appt: 802-443-5100; careerservices@middlebury.edu

- **5-Minute Career Clips (online workshops)**  www.middlebury.edu/studentlife/eia/alumni/services

  series of brief online workshops with ‘How To’ tips on Networking, Resumes, Cover Letters, and Interviewing

- **Online Tips / Information for Conducting a Job Search**  www.middlebury.edu/studentlife/eia/alumni/services

  articles, videos, online workshops, website links - including subscription websites free to Midd alumni with ID#


  post your resume on password-protected site; searchable by other Midd alumni

- **Search Job Listings on Career Services website**:
    jobs posted by fellow Midd alumni (Middlebury Online Community); searchable by alumni & students
  - **LinkedIn Middlebury Group** - www.middlebury.edu/studentlife/eia/alumni/joblistings
    all jobs listed with Career Services by Midd-friendly employers – we then post on this Midd LinkedIn page.
  - **LACN (Liberal Arts Career Network)** - www.middlebury.edu/studentlife/eia/alumni/joblistings
    Middlebury Career Services is a member of this consortium of 29 top small liberal arts colleges, which pools and shares job listings from all 29 schools.

- **MiddNet**  www.alumniconnections.com/olc/membersonly/MDR/networking/networking.cgi

  searchable online networking database of over 7,400 Midd alumni who have volunteered to offer career advice and info to fellow alumni and students. Search by industry/career area, location, etc.
Additional Resources re: Networking

Books:

**Highly Effective Networking: Meet the Right People and Get a Great Job**
by Orville Pierson; ISBN 978-1-60163-050-6

**How to REALLY use LinkedIn**
by Jan Vermeiren; ISBN 9781439229637

**The Successful Introvert: How to Enhance Your Job Search and Advance Your Career**

**A Foot in the Door: Networking Your Way into the Hidden Job Market**
by Katharine Hansen; ISBN-10: 1580088929

**Make Your Contacts Count (Networking Know-How for Business and Career Success)**
by Ann Barber and Lynne Waymon; ISBN-10: 0-8144-7402-0

Articles / Online:

**Networking for Introverts**; by Evan Carmichael
www.evancarmichael.com/Business-Coach/2467/Networking-for-Introverts.html

**The Art of Career and Job-Search Networking**
www.quintcareers.com/networking.html

Web sites:

- *200 Informational Interview Questions*: [www.quintcareers.com/networking.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/networking.html)
- for a range of job search tips and techniques: [www.quintcareers.com/networking.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/networking.html) [www.gottamentor.com](http://www.gottamentor.com)
- for career-changers, or those re-starting their careers: [www.irelaunch.com/index.asp](http://www.irelaunch.com/index.asp)
Check out all the career clips in the ‘Job Search’ series

Networking
  Networking • 1
  Your Elevator Speech
  Networking • 2
  The Networking Interview

The Resume
  Resume
  Make Your Resume Count
  Cover Letter
  The Right Introduction

Interviewing
  Interviewing • 1
  Prepare to Ace the Interview
  Interviewing • 2
  Handle the Tough Questions
  Interviewing • 3
  Ace the Interview
Networking
anytime ... anywhere

Your Elevator Speech