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

Seriously…
70-80% of job opportunities are never advertised!
more ‘Why’

What works? Personal referral and networking above all else. Meet someone, ask to get in the door; then flourish and be outrageously prepared to take advantage of that moment.

~ Midd parent ’05, ’08.5
managing partner, advertising
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 professional events such as conferences; or social events such as family gatherings, weddings, or Fall Family Weekend or Homecoming Weekend at Middlebury. It includes your social activities; where you worship; where you volunteer; where you do your internship; etc.

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

“What do you do?” or “What do you want to 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 high school friends, may all know you in the context of your personal life, but do they know who you want to be as a professional and what your 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 want to do; and what you offer.

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

- Tailor it slightly to fit the setting: more formal in a professional 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/studying; 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’s your major?”
- “What have you been up to?”
- “Are you still at Middlebury?”
- “What brings you to this conference?”
- “So, what are you going to do after you graduate?”
- Other ‘cue’ questions
How to Inject Your Elevator Speech

Create Your Own 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

Other person

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

Are you still at Middlebury?

You

Not too much.

I’m graduating in May – probably will be waiting tables in NY after that until I find a job. Got to pay the rent, …and you know how ridiculous NY rents are!

Dead End
Example 1: Great Networking Interaction

Other person

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

Oh really? Sounds great.

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

Really? My sister-in-law works for some theater marketing company in London. She might have some good advice for you.

You

I’ll be graduating from Middlebury in May – and plan to move to NY to search for a job in theater costume design. I had an amazing internship last year and am really interested in this as a career.

Yeah – my internship was an incredible experience working with two of the best design people in the business. Even though the internship was just for the summer, I learned so much and added some solid design skills to my resume. Now I think I can definitely compete for a job after I graduate.

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

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

**Other person**

Hello, good to meet you. So, you’re from Middlebury College?

What kinds of jobs are you looking for?

Excellent but why not apply to law school now?

I’m the CEO of a environmental start-up, and my Co-founder went to Stanford. I can put you in touch with her, if you’d like more information about their program.

**You**

Yes – in fact, I’ll be graduating from Middlebury in May. My senior year has been pretty busy – especially because of the time I’m putting into my job search.

I’m interested in the legal field, especially public interest law – and have been applying for paralegal positions in hopes of then applying to law school in a couple of years. As a student I’ve already had 2 great internships with Jones & Jones in NY and the Human Rights Campaign in Washington DC.

I need some time to save money, plus I think that more experience as a paralegal will strengthen my chances of getting into my top choice programs, Stanford and NYU.

That would be great – Thank you very much! What is the best way for me to contact her?

What is the name of your company? I’d love to hear more about it…
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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.

Hello Sylvia. I’m Felix - good to meet you.

Good to meet you too, Felix. Excellent conference, don’t you think? I thought the last speaker had some provocative ideas.

Definitely. She is one of the leading ‘gurus’ on the topic of new media.

Do you work in this field?

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

Good for you. Sounds like a fascination combination: psych and linguistics.

Well, I’m really interested in working in the field after graduation. I’m a senior at Middlebury College, majoring in Psychology and minoring in Linguistics.

Good for you. Sounds like a fascination combination: psych and linguistics.

It is! And I think a good background for working in a marketing and social media company. Actually, I did an internship with TripleStar Media in NY last year – and got some awesome experience there.

Excellent company. I know several people there.

Yeah, really great folks – I learned so much from them. Since you’re in the business, would you have advice about other companies that I should think about applying to?

Sure – I’d be happy to talk with you. Looks like the next conference speaker is starting now,… so why don’t I give you my business card and you can contact me when you’d like to talk. I’m sure we can arrange a phone conversation.

Thank you so much, Felix. I will definitely be in touch within the next few days! Hope you enjoy the rest of the conference!
Example #3: **Great Networking Interaction**

**You**

Hello! I’m Sylvia Hernandez.

Good to meet you too, Felix. Excellent conference, don’t you think? I thought the last speaker had some provocative ideas.

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**Other Person**

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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 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 it into the normal flow of the conversation.
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   The ‘Networking Interview’

see workshop
Check out all the career clips in the ‘Job Search’ series

Networking
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  Your Elevator Speech
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The Resume
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  Make Your Resume Count
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Interviewing
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  Ace the Interview
Networking
anytime ... anywhere
Your Elevator Speech