Networking
Build and Optimize Your Professional Network

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Professional Network
- Network of relationships
  - Within & outside your particular area of expertise
  - Senior, peer, junior connections
- Dynamic entity
  - Requires regular maintenance & development

Benefits of a Network
- Help others with your time, resources, contacts, expertise
  - GIVE >> RECEIVE
- Facilitates hiring/job hunting, sales, productivity, creativity, ingenuity
  - For example - 80-85% of available jobs are not posted!
- 2nd degree people in network often most helpful to you

Developing a Network
Join & Get Involved!
- Professional organization, hobby, charity, gym
- Social activities, community/neighborhood functions
- Volunteer (event, committee, executive board)
- Get to know people

Developing a Network
Be proactive about meetings
- Review attendee/speaker list beforehand, if possible
- Prepare questions and comments for those people you’d like to meet
  - Read up on presenters (posters, oral)
  - Approach during social and poster sessions
  - Ask PI/mentor/friend to introduce you
- Don’t be a stump near your poster
  - Introduce yourself, offer to guide people through it
- Ask questions during oral sessions
  - One question per session
  - ALWAYS clearly state your name and where your work!
  - Be courteous
  - Any questions???

Developing a Network
Get out there!
- Give talks
  - Toastmasters, community, industry, charity, university
  - Volunteer
- Participate in Study Sections for granting agencies
  - Volunteer, if possible
  - Get to know other members
Developing a Network

- Regularly attend networking events
  - Keep up with networking strategies and groups
  - Within & outside your industry
  - SDBN, Leadership Builder, AWIS San Diego, BIOCOM
- Be patient & allow time for developing relationships
- People who know you well may make connections for you without being asked!

Remote Networking

- Post a website
- Start a blog
- Join discussion boards online
- Write an email newsletter
- Email introductions
  - Friend, PI, mentor, co-worker
- LinkedIn, Facebook - are YOU LinkedIn??
  - Don’t ask to LinkIn with people you don’t know

Maintaining a Network - 1

- “In person” communication is critical
  - Meal times, events, sports/entertainment
- Regularly offer your assistance
  - IF you think it will be helpful
- Facilitate connections between people
  - Keeps you in the recent memory of your network

Maintaining a Network - 2

- Protect your reputation & the trust of your network
  - Use caution when making referrals
- Spend your time judiciously
- Take interactions/projects with your network seriously
  - Network relationships & their perceptions of you are on the line

Networking Events

- Organized for brief introductions/interviews
- Share business cards, backgrounds, expertise, offer contacts
- Ever been to one??

Networking Steps & Tips - 1

- Make a good first impression
  - Good FIRM handshake (no dead fish!)
  - Use your right hand (hold drinks in left hand)
  - Make eye contact while shaking (note eye color)
- Focus and listen carefully
  - Don’t interrupt, let people talk, ask questions
    - Cut in if necessary (“May I share my thoughts?”)
- Speak clearly & confidently
  - Start with “elevator speech”
- Say goodbye (verbal & nonverbal), express appreciation, ask permission to follow-up
- Practice with a friend!!
Networking Steps & Tips - 2

► Start with the end in mind
  ▪ Use networking as a catalyst event
  ▪ Try to connect with each person
    ▪ Don’t focus on “bagging the big one”

► Interactions like mini-informational interviews
  ▪ Learn about/from people you meet
  ▪ Note their goals and interests

► Don’t focus on “bagging the big one”

Interactions like mini-informational interviews

► Elevator Speech

► Personal statement of introduction
  ▪ Goal IS to start a conversation & generate interest
  ▪ Goal IS NOT to describe yourself in full
  ▪ 7 sec to 2 min
  ▪ Adapt length & content for situation

► When to use?
  ▪ Networking, elevator, taxi, business dinner, seminar event, professional meeting, cocktail party, lunch line, walking

Business Cards

► A must!

► Take 20+ to events

► Keep in your car, desk, pocket, wallet

► Use back side for a single line of text
  ▪ Mission, expertise

► Non-glossy

► Write info about people you meet on back
  ▪ Date, event name

► Got cards? Got pockets?

Networking Do’s

► Bring lots of business cards (have them in pockets)

► Dress professionally
  ▪ What are the people you want to meet wearing?

► Have a practiced elevator speech

► LISTEN to your partner
  ▪ Get to know their background & needs

► Offer assistance to your partner
  ▪ Make GIVING a priority over TAKING

► Wear name tag high up on right side – why?

Networking Don’ts

► Don’t bring packets of information or pass out unsolicited resumes/CVs

► Don’t dominate the conversation

► Don’t assume your partner is interested in your skill set (or knows someone who is) – Ask first

► Don’t attend with an empty stomach! Why not?

How might you help out your contact(s)?

► Who do you know that might need this person’s help?

► Who has similar interests and/or may wish to exchange ideas with this person?

► Can you introduce this person to anyone who can help them?
Stay Connected with your Network

- Networking is only useful if you build and maintain your network
- Develop relationships with a variety of people (even if you seem to have nothing in common)
- Follow up with new acquaintances 1-2 weeks after the event
  - Suggest a second meeting (lunch/coffee?)
- Add new contacts to address books
  - Outlook, LinkedIn

Summary

- Networking is an essential component of a successful career
- Focus - what can you do to help others??
- Be proactive in developing a diverse network
- Maintain your network – stay connected!

Association for Women in Science

- Support the career development of women in STEM fields
- Open House Oct 25th
- www.awissd.org

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