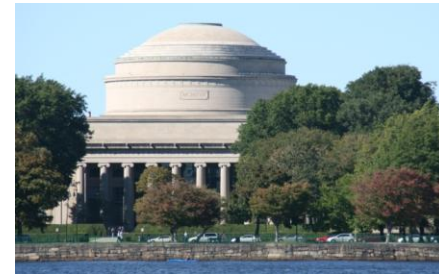


Networking to Enhance Your Career



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Today's Menu

Intended Learning Outcomes:

- **What** is networking? ...and why do it?
- **Where** to network?
- **How** to network?

- Attempt to Eliminate the Mystique_{fear} of Networking

Networking Etiquette

What is Networking?

...and why should I do it?

Networking Defined

- Networking is the process of **discovering and developing connections between people, both Face to Face, and Virtual**
 - Genuine networks stem from academic, friendships or business relationships
 - Everyone knows other people, and thus has a network
- But “Networking” implies **movement *beyond one's immediate network*** and involves tapping into other people's networks, perhaps far removed from one's own
- Networking is ***Building Relationships***

Networking Strategy

Exploration:

What industries/professions interest me?

- Use networking to explore fields of interest
- Get ideas about what might interest you
- Learn about lifestyle, work conditions, job requirements, etc

Focusing:

How to “Break Into” the field

- After you have narrowed down your interests somewhat
- Use networking to expand your knowledge of opportunities and build contacts

Why Network?

- The “**Hidden**” Job Market
 - 70% - 90% of jobs/opportunities are found **informally**, mainly through friends, relatives, direct contacts, and indirect contacts (your network’s network)
- According to NACE and The U.S. Department of Labor, 70% of all workers use informal job search methods... <http://bit.ly/sDiFVE>

Types of Help from Networking

Networking can provide:

- **Information** – about industry and technology trends, upcoming conferences, or trade show dates
- **Contacts** – names of specific people at companies/labs
- **Connections** - your network gives you permission to use their names when making a new contact
- **Referrals** - your networking associate makes the initial contact by calling the referral to introduce you

Networking Venues

Where can I Network?

Networking at MIT

- MIT Alumni Database (ICAN)
 - <http://alum.mit.edu/benefits/CareerGuidance/ICAN/>
 - >7,800 Alumni have signed up to be advisors to alums/students
- Events across MIT
 - bcs.mit.edu/coglunch
 - bcs.mit.edu/newsevents/events.html
 - [MIT Colloquium Series on the Brain and Cognition](http://events.mit.edu/event.html?id=13687011&date=2011/12/07)
<http://events.mit.edu/event.html?id=13687011&date=2011/12/07>
 - <http://events.mit.edu/>
 - web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2005/bcs-dedication.html
 - <http://gsc.mit.edu/about-gsc/>
 - <http://alum.mit.edu/networks/Clubs/>
 - <http://web.mit.edu/life/>
 - <http://web.mit.edu/staff/connect/networking.html>
 - <http://events.mit.edu/event.html?id=14659563&date=2011/12/07> (Weekly Wednesdays-Muddy Charles)

Networking at MIT...cont

- Company Presentations
- Career Fairs and Campus Career Workshops
 - [https://www.myinterfase.com/mit/event search](https://www.myinterfase.com/mit/event_search)
- In Class: Professors & Classmates
- Alumni Association (Alumni Network Services, Clubs and Affiliated Groups, Alumni Magazine and Publications, Events)
- Special Events at MIT (lectures, sporting events)
- Student Groups
- Staff and Each Other (the person sitting beside you)

Networking at MIT...cont

BrainLunch and CogLunch

- BrainLunch is a weekly, student-organized seminar series at which MIT Brain and Cognitive Sciences graduate students (and occasionally postdoctoral or non-BCS students) present their research on brain-related issues. These sessions — both informal and informative — are a long-standing department tradition. CogLunch, which focuses on cognitive science, is another student-organized series presented in a similar format.

MIT Colloquium on the Brain and Cognition

- This lecture series, held weekly during the academic year, features a wide array of speakers from all areas of neuroscience and cognitive science research. The social teas that follow these colloquia bring together students, staff, and faculty to discuss the talk, as well as other research activities within Building 46, at MIT, and around the world. This event is co-sponsored by The Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences, the McGovern Institute for Brain Research and the Picower Institute for Learning and Memory.

BCS Faculty Breakfast Talk Series:

- bcs.mit.edu/docs/newsevents/newsletters/bcsnewsletter

Network Beyond MIT

- Professional Associations and Conferences
 - <http://web.mit.edu/career/www/jobs/proforg.html>
- Mass Biotechnology council - www.massbio.org/careers
- Career Fairs Beyond MIT
- Community Groups (Public Service Center)
- Events in Cambridge and surrounding Boston area
- Trade Publications / Industry News
- Online (list-serves, newsgroups/special interest groups) Job Clubs or Networking Groups
- Prior co-workers/advisors/bosses/labmates
- Family Parties (Weddings, Reunions, Holiday Celebrations)
- Other Parties in local area
- Your previous College and University Alumni

Network Beyond MIT

Know what's happening in your industry:

Mass Biotechnology council - www.massbio.org/careers

- **Investment in Mass Healthcare sector for Q2 & Q3 2011 was \$553 Million, the largest in the US. Silicon Valley was \$485 Million for same period**
- **More than a million square feet of biotechnology-related construction is underway for next year**
- **Larger companies are driving the construction – Biogen Idec, Pfizer, Vertex Pharmaceuticals...may push smaller firms to the suburbs for lab space**

Networking Exercise

- Who is in your Network?

Lets take ~5 minutes and create a preliminary list of contacts

Networking Know-How

How do I Network?

If you Start with the Phone

Know what you want to get out of it

- What are your goals?
 - An in-office meeting with the person
 - A phone meeting if that is the only reasonable option
 - A referral to additional contacts
- Develop an outline of what you want to say
 - Create a short script, including your goals
- Prepare an "objection" response
 - What to say if contact responds negatively
- Practice your introduction and closing

If You Make Contact by Email

- Subject line might be: ***Question from (“an MIT BCS Post Doc” or “a friend of Bob Dolan”)***
- Introduce yourself, e.g., ***“I’m a BCS Post Doc at MIT studying “computational perception.....”***
- State how you heard about the person – mention who referred you
- Explain why you are writing – e.g., exploring options, etc.
- May include a brief summary of your related skills/experience
- Ask to set up a brief meeting (20-30 minutes) to talk
- Mention some general time slots when you might be available

Sample Email

Dear Dr./Mr./Ms. _____,

I'm an MIT Post Doc studying computational perception, with specific research in image memorability. I'm focused on the concept of memorability, examining what qualities and characteristics make an image memorable. I'm exploring careers in the Neuroscience field, and one area that particularly interests me is automatic recognition of visual environments. [I found your name on the Alumni Directory at MIT, and was interested to see that you are working with ABC Lab.] or [Your colleague Hairy Microbe suggested I contact you because he thought you would be an excellent source of information and advice for me.]

I'm writing to ask if we might have a brief conversation about your work and your experience within the Neuroscience field. I've been active in my research at MIT, and have worked on a number of interesting projects related to computational perception. It would be very helpful to me to get your perspective as well.

Would that be possible? My time is flexible most afternoons after 2:00 pm, and I can be available at other times as well. I'd be happy to come to your office or talk by phone if that is more convenient. Thank you for your consideration.

Your Name & Contact Information

Four Part Informational Interview

1. Ask the person about him/herself, experience, industry, company, etc
2. Ask the person to give you advice about what you are interested in doing
3. Ask the person for additional contacts - people they respect in areas of your interest, who you could talk with
4. Write a thank you note!
- 4+ [Also write a follow-up note to the person who referred you to this person]

Tips for 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
- Have specific questions

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

Your goal is to obtain information

Networking Blunders

Try This:

- I'm very interested in your field
- I was impressed by your company's on campus presentation
- I've been successful with my work in X field and I want to apply my strong research background to problems in Y field
- I'd welcome your advice about coursework or other experience I might seek that would help me make the transition into Y field

NOT This:

- I hear __ field pays well
- I heard you're hiring a lot of people now
- I really can't stand lab work any more
- I thought it would be great to meet someone who made it out of the lab and finally got a well paying job
- I need a job, can you help me
- I'm doing my 8th Post Doc...help!

Pre Networking Prep

- Know yourself
 - Have your “*Tell Me About Yourself*” script ready
- Bring your CV/Resume, and business card if you use one
- Know the person and/or company with whom you are meeting
 - Don’t ask questions that are answered on their website
- Prepare a list of open-ended questions to ask
 - See handout of questions to ask in Networking Meetings

Pre Networking Prep

Sample Question (almost always asked)

- ***“Tell me about yourself”***
 - Consider responding in the following manner
 - I am a
 - With interest/expertise in
 - I have had internships in; project work on; worked for.....
 - My strengths include *skill, skill, skill*

Your response should highlight your skills and competencies, specifically in their areas of interest

Pre Networking Prep

I am a Post Doctoral Fellow at MIT with expertise in optogenetics/biophotonics.

My areas of interest are in optics, microscopy and image processing/analysis, with particular emphasis on the technical requirements related to optogenetic applications.

I have worked in several labs and have lead the design and implementation of hardware necessary to grow the biophotonics capabilities in general, and optogenetic in particular. I have also had access to a broad range of sophisticated instruments and assisted in the design and construction of new hardware/software to develop unique and customized imaging capabilities.

As a Scientist at the Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory and Laboratory for Nuclear Science at MIT, my research has enabled me to develop skills in XYZ

Pre Networking Prep

Actual example of an M.Eng targeting an I.T. role at Google:

I am a candidate for a Masters in Engineering in Computer Science & Electrical Engineering and will graduate in June 20xx.

My areas of interest are in software development and systems design. My expertise is focused on understanding the user's needs, and to provide solutions to solve problems, improve product quality or increase productivity in the workplace.

I interned with IBM and was a member of the research team that designed, prototyped, and implemented a successful multi-user enterprise web application to visualize and manage collaborative projects and work activities. Additionally, I was able to strengthen my skills in Java and JavaScript and work closely with highly experienced, world-class engineers.

I have additional strengths in natural language processing, artificial intelligence, distributed computing and proficient with Windows environments, C++, information retrieval and TCP/IP. I will also complete my BS in Mathematics upon graduation this June.

Note: Words underlined appeared in the Google job description

Pre Networking Prep Exercise

Let's write a ***“Tell Me About Yourself”***
script....

Use the handout or make one of your own

“Tell me about yourself” Practice Response

I am a _____

With interest/expertise in _____

I have had internships in; project work on; worked for _____

My strengths include _____

Take a couple of minutes and write your Positioning Statement

Networking Know-How

How do I Network?

Networking Using Social Media

- Be Careful...keep it business only
- Many people use LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.
 - LinkedIn is used mostly for professional contacts
- Many companies use social to media to learn more about you...and make judgments
- Many companies use social media to recruit and update candidates during the recruiting cycle
- What is acceptable to you and your friends may not be acceptable to employers/hiring managers

Social Media – Networking & Recruiting

Social Media is a fundamental shift in the way we communicate...
Percent of employers who reported using social networking sites to research job candidates in Jobvite 2011 survey (n=800)

- **89% of employers use social media to recruit**
- **55% will spend more time on social recruiting**
- **64% use 2 or more social networks for recruiting**
- **78% expect increased competition for hires**

Informational Interview - Tips

Non-Verbal Communication:

- Body Language often can speak louder than words
- Do not fidget or play with your hair (if you have hair)
- Shake your contact's hand firmly...hello and goodbye
- Make comfortable eye contact
- Do not rock from side to side
- Stay attentive
- Smile... *the shortest distance between two people*
- Do not chew gum
- Be enthusiastic and positive...high energy is contagious

Networking for the Shy Person

If your nervousness is compounded by wondering why any busy professional would take time to talk with you, keep in mind that:

- They were once where you are and have empathy
- People enjoy helping others: Information and advice are free to give, jobs aren't
- People enjoy talking about themselves, their ideas, and opinions
- Very few people are so busy that they don't have time for you
- Practice introducing yourself to people, explore ways to discuss mutually interesting topics with them

Networking for the Shy Person...cont

- View your job search as a personal research project on a compelling subject - your own future!
 - You'll find it easier to collect critical information and ideas
- Create a structured plan and stick to it
- Make contact when your energy is highest
- Take time to replenish yourself
- Practice what to say beforehand, perhaps even writing down the important points you want to mention
- Practice the process with a low priority person/organization or in an area where you feel you have nothing to lose

Maintain Your Network

Keep in Touch

- Keep your contacts warm
- Stay in contact - meet for lunch, coffee, etc.
- Send emails occasionally, birthday or seasons greetings
- Inform them of your results, especially when you used them for one of their contacts

Take the time to say **Thank You**

The Power of Networking

It's Networking



or *Not*working !