
CAREER CREATORS NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 102, ISSUE 02

AUGUST 2010

Developing your Network

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What is 'networking'?

Networking is the process of building mutually beneficial relationships which support both your personal and professional goals. It is a continuous and systematic approach of reaching out to others, developing a broad list of contacts, and using them to your advantage when you need assistance.

Who is included in my 'network'?

- Family, Friends, and Co-workers
- Industry-specific Clubs, Associations, & Organizations
- Current and Former Employers
- Area Chambers of Commerce
- Community Service Agencies

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Image Enhancement

Professional Image & Nonverbal Cues

Linda Wedick

Image Consultant

Knowing how to behave appropriately when interacting with other professionals allows you to feel confident and to put others at ease, so they feel comfortable interacting with you.

When meeting others for the first time; you want to make the most positive, professional impression. If you wish to be viewed as a professional; you must have a professional image.

Image is as equally important as the content of your verbal message. Studies show that nonverbal cues, like image and etiquette, constitute approximately 80% of conveyed messages.

Nonverbal cues augment, reinforce, and clarify verbal messages and include speech, gestures, postures, facial expressions, attitudes, social skills & etiquette, personal image, attire, and appearance.

It is possible to create a positive, professional image and increase your credibility by doing the following:

- Controlling Your Nonverbal Cues
- Behaving According to Cultural Norms
- Dressing Appropriately / Proper Grooming
- Maintain Eye Contact while Conversing
- Making Spontaneous Gestures
- Maintaining an Open and Relaxed Posture
- Speaking Moderately Quickly using a Conversational Style

Utilize these tips for successful networking. ❖

First impressions are formed within 10 seconds or less. You never have a second chance to make a first impression.

- Instructors & University Career Services Departments
- Classmates and Alumni of your College or University
- Religious Organizations

What is the goal of networking?

Have a specific purpose in mind when networking. Your goal is to create a situation where the other party must say, "I owe you a favor."

Where do I go to network?

- Professional Association Meetings
- Professional Industry-specific Events
- Career Fairs
- Social Events & Parties
- Sporting Events, Gym, Park, etc.

Networking can occur anywhere and everywhere. You should ALWAYS be networking.

What do I say when networking?

Spend more time listening than speaking. People like to talk about themselves. Ask questions and be sincerely interested. Develop rapport. Find commonalities with others. Have an *elevator speech* prepared, so you can market yourself at the appropriate time. Ask for the type of referral you need. Do not be shy or introverted.

How do I follow-up when networking?

Networks die if they are not nurtured. Show that you care in a sincere and professional way.

- Keep friendships and other contacts current.
- Have meals with contacts regularly.
- Email and stay connected on social networking sites like www.Linkedin.com.
- Conduct small courtesies:
 - Send birthday and holiday greetings to your contacts.
 - Email your contact an article of interest. ❖

Creating and Delivering Your "Elevator Speech" / Introduction Statement

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An 'elevator speech' is a summary statement that describes how your unique set of knowledge, skills, and abilities benefits a potential employer or client. You should develop, write, and rehearse, the introduction so that it sounds natural.

The speech should be concise and last about 30 seconds to one minute. Do not tell your life story. Stay relevant and keep it appropriate for the venue, situation, and audience.

The 'elevator speech' introduction should include a combination of the following elements:

1. **Explain who you are and describe three relevant differentiating features or strengths that you possess.**
 - State your Full Name
 - Education and Training
 - Specialization or Expertise
 - Work, Internship, & Volunteer Experience
 - Personality Traits & Characteristics
 - Years working in the Industry
 - Other Relevant Background Information
2. **State the name of the company that your work for or the name of the school or university you attended and your major course of study or specialty.**
3. **Describe briefly the product(s) or service(s) that your company sells or what you offer in terms of benefits to an employer or client.**
4. **Explain the specific type of referral for which you are looking. Ask for it.**
 - Politely request what you want / need.
 - Ask permission for the opportunity to follow-up with the contact at a later time.

Use your 'elevator speech' to introduce yourself and to build a solid foundation for networking with potential employers and clients. ❖

SIDEBAR ARTICLE

NETWORKING WHILE VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEERING WILL AFFECT BOTH YOUR PERSONAL LIFE AND YOUR CAREER POSITIVELY. IT IS A WIN-WIN SITUATION FOR ALL PARTIES INVOLVED.

THE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION EARNS SERVICES THAT IT COULD OTHERWISE NOT AFFORD.

YOU GAIN VALUABLE EXPERIENCE AND BUILD YOUR SKILLS & ABILITIES.

IT IS AN INCREDIBLE NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY—YOU MAY MEET MANY PEOPLE WHO COULD ASSIST YOU IN YOUR CAREER DEVELOPMENT.

- GET INVOLVED WITH A NON-PROFIT RELATED TO YOUR INDUSTRY OR AREA OF EXPERTISE.
- BE ACTIVE & VISIBLE.
- DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS & STAY CONNECTED. ❖

Networking Tips & Tactics

The Basic How-to Guide

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1. **Be prepared to network at anytime, anyplace, and with everyone.** You never know who you might meet or where you might meet them. Be open.
2. **Focus on quality not quantity.** It is better to have 3 to 5 new quality contacts from each event that you attend rather than 20 brief introductions.
3. **Talk to everyone.** Greet contacts on the way in to the event, at the sign-in table, at the buffet, at the bar, in the restrooms, and on the way out to your car. **Do not be shy or introverted.**
4. **Politely greet those contacts that you already know.** Ask them to introduce you to someone that you do not know. **Keep moving.**
5. **Stay organized.** Keep your business cards in your left jacket or pant pocket and place the business cards of new contacts into your right pocket. This way you will not mix them up.
6. **Keep your right hand free** and available to shake hands with new contacts that you meet.
7. **Write something personal on your business card.** People are more likely to remember you and less likely to toss the card when you include a personal, hand-written note or phone number.
8. **Do bring several copies of your general resume, references, and cover letter**--just in case.
9. **Keep track of your contacts.** Use a spreadsheet or electronic address book to maintain a list of contacts. Keep it updated.
10. **Follow-up.** Stay in touch with your contacts regularly—not just when you need help. Call, write, email, send birthday and holiday greetings, and invite contacts to events to stay connected.
11. **Be patient.** Networking is a slow, continuous process which takes time to develop, nurture, and grow. It takes patience, effort, and persistence to be successful. ❖

OTHER RESOURCES:

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE:

THE PROTOCOL & ETIQUETTE ACADEMY

[HTTP://AUSTINPROTOCOL.COM/INDEX/](http://austinprotocol.com/index/)

THE PROTOCOL SCHOOL OF TEXAS

[HTTP://WWW.PROTOCOLSCHOOLOFTEXAS.COM/](http://www.protocolsofTEXAS.com/)

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT NETWORKING:

[HTTP://HOTJOBS.YAHOO.COM/CAREER-
ARTICLES-](http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/career-articles-)

[SOCIAL NETWORKING BASICS FOR JOB HUNTERS-918](http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/career-articles-)

[HTTP://HOTJOBS.YAHOO.COM/CAREER-
ARTICLES-](http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/career-articles-)

[THE 10 PEOPLE YOU NEED IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL NETWORK-1381](http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/career-articles-)

The Golden Rules of Networking

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1. **Be prepared.**—Learn as much as you can about the group, organization, members, speaker, etc. Know who you need to meet and what info you want to convey in that meeting.
2. **Dress appropriately.**—Dress for success. Always best to be over-dressed than under-dressed. Choose conservative clothing styles.
3. **Introduce yourself, shake hands, and exchange contact information.**—Do not wait until the end of the conversation to exchange business cards...you may forget.
4. **Always be kind, polite, and interact well with others.**— Practice your soft skills and improve your emotional quotient. Mirror others behaviors, mannerisms, and style of speech. Make polite introductions.
5. **Listen more than you speak.**—Often we are more concerned about what we are going to say and do not listen to what is being said by others. Listening allows you to discover commonalities and to connect the dots. Ask open ended questions to gather as much information as possible.
6. **Keep moving. Do not monopolize the time of others.**—Speak with each contact for about five minutes and then excuse yourself.
7. **Always follow through.**—Do what you say you are going to do. This will demonstrate that you are reliable and credible. Send a thank you note or email and include information that you discussed with the contact to personalize your correspondence.
8. **Nurture your network.**—Reach out to each contact a minimum of four times per year to stay connected. Ask what you can do for them. ❖

Choose carefully when deciding which networking events and organizations to join. Use your time wisely & make the most of it.

FREE CAREER ADVICE

Listen to the 55 minute audio & visual presentations with Q & A sessions:

“Acing the Interview Process”

<https://meeting.austin.utexas.edu/p83189528/>

“Win-Win Negotiations”

<https://meeting.austin.utexas.edu/p67654174/>

“Tips & Tactics for Career Success”

<https://meeting.austin.utexas.edu/p64675740/>

“Navigating the Job Search Process”

<https://meeting.austin.utexas.edu/p31133638/>

View this series of webinars and download the MS PowerPoint presentations by clicking on the following link and then choosing the webinar from the list:

<http://www.mcombs.utexas.edu/alumni/careers/programming/>

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, ASSISTANCE, OR TO BE REMOVED FROM THE MAILING LIST—PLEASE CONTACT US DIRECTLY:



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