FINDING YOUR DESTINATION
AGENDA

► Researching Companies and People
► Building Strategic Contacts
► Your 30-Second Commercial
► The Informational Interview

PRESENTATION WILL BE UPLOADED TO SMGWorld.BU.EDU/FCC
“TELL ME WHERE I FIT IN...”

DON’T ASK FOR A JOB WHERE YOU CAN FIT IN WHEN YOU CAME TO BU TO STAND OUT
COMPANY POSITIONING

► Website/Annual Reports: How do they position themselves?
► Executive Team: What backgrounds (MBA, BU alum, etc.) do execs have? What networks do they come from? What do they look for?
► Partners: Who do they work with? Other networking ins?

MARKET PERSPECTIVE – ANALYST REPORTS

► How are they perceived from the outside? Strengths? Weaknesses?
► Who are their key competitors?
► Develop informed questions to ask about the state of the business. This is your opportunity to establish your credibility.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

► Do a Lexis/Nexis, Yahoo, Google or CEOExpress search to find recent press (less biased than links from company website).
► Informs you what’s happening NOW, and prepares you for interviews
ROLE RESEARCH

► Marketing: All marketing collateral, marketing emphasis, what are parallel products/services in other categories?
► Finance/Business Analyst: Financial statements, analyst reports, strategic plans
► IT/Project Management: Product specs, platforms, pubs/white papers, conferences
► Review existing job descriptions and job postings for specific language; review and your MBTI to find where your interests and patterns align with these organizations and roles.

PICK UP THE PHONE!

► Recent alums can give you the inside scoop, and be a friendly face when you walk in the door; it’s unprofessional NOT to touch base with them before you go for an interview.
► Learn what the company is looking for and how to position yourself
► Network within the company through your contacts and LinkedIn.
Begin to build your list now. Think of the people you know and consider the circles they travel in and who they may encounter in their daily lives.

Of the people you know, think of five who are most likely to have connections within your target industry. These are strategic contacts because they may already have dynamic relationships from which you can immediately benefit.
Your #1 goal when networking is to make it as easy as possible for the listener to help you. To do that, you need to:

**Be Succinct:** 30 to 45 seconds for your pitch, intended to simply open the door to further conversation.

**Be clear:** Know your audience and appreciate their level of understanding; “When in Rome...speak Roman!”

**Be passionate:** Use “enjoy”, “favorite”, “love most about what I do...”, making you far more memorable.

**Name names:** Provide a List of Target Companies, either specifically or “like” the ones of interest to you.

**Ask for help:** Have a specific request: “I would appreciate if you...”, “Would you be able to...”, “Can you advise me...”.
“Hi, my name is Abby Rhode and I’m currently a graduate student in BU’s MBA program. My background is in advertising and I love developing powerful branding initiatives.

I worked for Arnold Advertising, where I was part of the team responsible for the “Progressive Insurance with Flo” commercials, which won us a Clio Award last year.

I’m looking to grow my career with a consumer package goods firm in Boston or New York. Companies like Dunkin’ Brands, Unilever, Pepperidge Farms and Bose are among my target companies and I would appreciate any suggestions, advice or referrals you may have. Once again, my name is Abby Rhode. Thank you!”
“Hi, my name is Justin Kase and I was a Project Specialist for a medical devices company. I am now an MBA student at Boston University and I am exploring new areas in order to change careers.

What I enjoy most is helping companies to save money by making them more efficient and by turning their problems into profits.

I’m now looking for a Financial Analyst role in biotech, pharma or medical devices and my target companies are ones like Biogen Idec, Millipore, Boston Scientific, and Novartis. I would appreciate any suggestions, advice or referrals you may have. Once again, my name is Justin Kase. Thank you!”
FOR “TBDs” (still unsure on direction)

“Hi, my name is Barb Dwyer. Although my background is in engineering, I’m pursuing an MBA because I’m interested in exploring global finance consulting opportunities in greater Boston and New York City.

I recently completed a very challenging business analytics case at BU for a local company and I really enjoyed the exercise.

To help plan my career path, I hope you would consider referring me to some associates at local consulting companies such as like Bain, McKinsey, Oliver Wyman and BCG, to gain a better understanding of their roles. Once again, my name is Barb Dwyer. Thank you!”
THE HOOK & METAPHOR APPROACH

“Before we get started let me ask you a quick question: Are you familiar with the plant food Miracle-Gro? It makes under-performing plants and shrubs grow to their greatest potential. Well...I’m seeking opportunities to become Organization Miracle-Gro, developing strategies to make underperforming non-profits flourish and become more efficient.

Hi, my name is Emma Nems and as an MBA student at Boston University with skills in both strategy and execution, I want to help non-profits figure out “what’s next” ...and then make it happen for them by managing the change.

I’m seeking a role where I can make a significant impact, and would love to continue a discussion with you. Again, my name is Emma Nems. Thank you!”
1. When meeting someone new, ask them what they do - show interest.

2. Ask intelligent questions - show industry knowledge, but make it about them, not you.

3. Pay them a compliment - make it specific to show further knowledge of the industry.

4. **MOST IMPORTANT!** Wait for them to ask you what you do - if steps #1 - #3 were successful, curiosity will always get the better of them.

5. Launch into 30-Second Commercial - modify pitch based on details they provided to show synergy.

6. If you're speaking to the right person, ask permission to follow up.

7. If you're not speaking to the right person, ask them who is.


For an interactive presentation of this, visit: www.effectiveNetworking.com/content/products.html
Once you identify your strategic contacts, meeting with them is a 5-step process.

The first four steps will guide you from making initial introductions through meeting with key people.

The fifth step is an on-going activity that helps you build and maintain these relationships. It ensures that valuable resources stay with you throughout your career.

The 5 Info interview Activities

- The Approach E-mail
- The Approach Phone Call
- The Informational Meeting
- Thank You!
- Follow-Up
E-mails offer an opportunity to present yourself in a clear, concise manner.

They preclude the possibility of betraying nervousness that we have speaking to someone for the first time.

They can convey your intentions with an economy of words not often found in spoken conversation.

Approach e-mails let you put your best foot forward when making initial contact.

**NEVER** attach an unsolicited résumé to an Approach E-mail!
Dear Ms. Spelling,

**Connection**  
Ed Jukate, whom I know through Rotary International, recommended that I contact you. Ed mentioned that he has known you for several years, values your friendship, and is a great admirer of your work at Spelling LTD.

**Development**  
He suggested that your thoughts and ideas regarding the medical device industry could be helpful as I continue researching my career options, one of which is the financial area of medical devices.

**Reassurance**  
Please understand I am not asking for a job. Rather, I’d like to chat or possibly meet with you to discuss this field and get the benefit of your knowledge.

**Interest Builder**  
My experience is in financial operations, including 4+ years with ABC Company and XYZ Inc., performing multiple financial functions and cost-saving analytics and recommendations.

**Next Step**  
I hope it would be possible for us to have a phone conversation or possibly meet over a cup of coffee; if that simply doesn’t fit your schedule, I completely understand. I look forward to hearing back from you!

Sincerely,

Sue Plychane
A telephone call may be an alternate first step for people you already know.

It is a necessary 2nd step (follow-up) after an Approach E-mail, usually within a week of sending it.

It’s a great way to keep in touch as you build networking relationships throughout your campaign.

The best possible use of the telephone is preparation. Preparation ensures you will present yourself in the best possible manner and increases your confidence.

Your words must be well-chosen before-hand and your delivery practiced and polished.
“Hello, this is Jenny Lee calling. I was a co-worker of Jim Fong’s at Trillium before starting my MBA at Boston University, and he suggested you might be willing to speak with me informally about your role as a financial analyst. I am researching a variety of career paths and hoping we could have a phone conversation or possibly get together for, perhaps, 20 minutes, at your convenience. My phone number is 867-5309 and my e-mail address is...”
Your opportunity to convey information about yourself is maximized when you can meet in person.

Remember, you requested the meeting, and controlling the content is your responsibility.

Following a five-layer structure will ensure a logical flow for the conversation. Remember, you may only have 20 minutes. Being prepared will help you to optimize this time.

✓ Building rapport
✓ Presenting your background
✓ Information exchange
✓ Asking for specific referrals
✓ Thank-you and next steps
Step 1 - Building Rapport

► Break the ice by mentioning who referred you and why you believe the contact will be of help to you.

► Reconfirm the time allocated for the meeting. If you said “20 minutes" in your Approach Phone Call, reassure the contact that you intend to honor it.

► Set the stage for the rest of the meeting by again reassuring your contact you are not here expecting him/her to have or know of job openings and define what you would like to accomplish in the meeting.

Step 2 - Presenting your Background

► Tell the contact about yourself. Be brief! This is an appropriate place to present a slightly expanded version of your commercial - about 60 - 90 seconds, as opposed to the 30-second version.
Step 3 - Information Exchange

► During this phase, ask questions to enhance your research, and you may be able to share knowledge that you have gathered during your research to-date.

► Begin with questions about the person you are meeting with, and then their industry. The conversation can narrow by discussing industry sectors, actual companies within them, typical or special problems or needs within those companies and ways that companies have tried dealing with them.

► This leads to asking which people can help you more specifically. Make sure that your questions are genuine.

Step 4 - Asking for Specific Referrals

► A major objective of the meeting is to obtain more referrals. You must be prepared to ask for them, and to get specific information about them.

"Now that you know me and my goals a little better, is there anyone you know that you feel may be helpful?"

► The more specific information you get, the more useful the referrals will be to you. A name by itself doesn't usually provide enough information to follow-up with those referrals.
THANK YOU!

► Saying "thank you" is an easy and important step. It shows that you have manners, observe protocol and are appreciative.

► At the end of the meeting, tell the contact what your next steps are, including letting them know when you have met with their referrals. This shows you are thorough, organized and definitely committed to the process.

► Immediately after the meeting, reinforce the good impression you've already created, starting with writing a “thank you” and including a business card. Make contact with someone soon after meeting them, even if you don't yet have a clear idea of how they can help you. It sets a strong tone for future communication.
Follow-up is an on-going activity that keeps you connected to your contacts. It is initiated by a thank-you note you send within 24 hours of the meeting.

It continues as you meet with the individuals to whom you were referred by the contact. Keep your contact informed by phone, email or note, of your follow-up efforts and the value they’ve contributed.

In addition, you can keep your eyes open for articles and information that may interest your contacts.

Through on-going communication and mutual exchanges of information, you will build a strategic network of professional relationships - not just an expanded list of mere acquaintances.

“Networking is like breathing…”
“Ask for a job...get advice; Ask for advice...get a job!”

Suggested reading:

Keith Ferrazzi
SamHornPop.com

Additional info at:
smgworld.bu.edu/fcc
INFO INTERVIEWING
INFO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

General Questions About The Individual
- What is your background, and how did you reach your current position?
- What do you like best about what you do? What do you like least?
- What is a typical day like for you? (Start/stop times, general duties, challenges encountered?)
- What are some of the qualifications that make you successful in your position?
- If you were to start over today, what would you change? What wouldn’t you change?

State of the Industry/Field
- What are some of the key trends/issues in this industry/field?
- Are too many or too few people entering this profession?
- What developments on the horizon could affect future opportunities?
- What industry changes have you seen from inside your company?
- How frequently do layoffs occur?
- Why do people leave this field or company?
- Who are the most important people in this industry/field today?
- Which companies have the best track records for promoting women and minorities?
- Describe some of the opportunities for self-employment in the industry/field.

Money and Advancement
- What would be my earnings potential if I entered this field?
- Describe some typical career paths and time frames for advancement in this field/industry.
- How did you get your job?
- If you could start all over again, how might you change your career path?
- What is the background of most senior-level executives in this industry/field/company?
Skills and Experience

- What educational prep would you recommend for someone who wants to advance in this field?
- What qualifications do you seek in a new hire?
- How do most people enter this profession?
- Which of my skills are strong compared to other job hunters in this field?
- What do you think of my experience? For what types of positions would it qualify me?
- Can you recommend any courses I should take before proceeding further with my job search?
- What companies might be interested in hiring someone with my background?

What the Work Is Like

- Could you describe a typical workday for me?
- What skills are required in your position on a day-to-day basis?
- What parts of your job do you find most challenging?
- Despite these challenges, what motivates you to remain? What do you find most enjoyable?
- Are there dangers I should be aware of?
- How often do you work past 6 p.m. and on weekends?
- Which seasons of the year are toughest in your job?
- I’d like to walk through and see where the work is done. Can that be arranged?
INFO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Fitting In

- Considering my background, how well do you think I would fit in this industry/profession/company?
- How does your company compare with others we’ve discussed?
- Describe the lifestyle typical of people in this industry/field/company, e.g., frequency of travel, acceptance of community/family involvement, etc.
- Considering all the people you’ve met in your field/industry, what personal attributes are essential for success?
- Taking into account my skills education and experience, what other career paths would you suggest I explore?

More Information

- Where would you suggest I look for current information on salaries, employers and industry issues?
- What professional journals and organizations have you found valuable?
- Is there anything else you think I need to know or investigate?
- Who else would you recommend I speak with? For what kinds of information? When I contact this person, may I use your name? What is the best way to get in touch?
1. If your networking target is someone you have never met, you may send an e-mail first, stating your purpose and mentioning the name of the person who referred you.

2. When telephoning to set a time to meet, always ask if your target has a moment to talk. If not, ask when a better time to call back is.

3. Begin your conversation by briefly reviewing your reason for calling: "As you may recall from the letter I sent, I am in the process of researching new career paths, and John Smith suggested you might be able to give me some advice..."

4. When you meet in person, always explain again your reason for meeting. Do this right away to eliminate any confusion and to reassure your new contact that you are not there asking for a job.

5. Bring a prepared list of questions, and paper and pen or iPad for note-taking (a laptop is “too much” and presents a barrier). Ask: "Is it all right if I jot down some notes as we talk?" And be prepared to stop doing so if the contact seems uncomfortable.

6. Ask some questions about the person to whom you are speaking. You can help establish good rapport by getting people to talk about themselves.

7. If you asked for 20 minutes, keep it to 20 minutes. Say something like: "I promised you that I would only take 20 minutes, and our time is just about up." You will get a sense of whether or not the contact is willing give you longer.
8. If you are asked for a résumé during the meeting, use your judgment. The contact might actually be getting quite interested in you and you could look ill-prepared if you did not have such a vital job-hunting tool with you.

9. When ending the meeting, give the appropriate thanks and inquire if there is anyone else they could recommend who might be useful for you to contact for additional advice and information. Be prepared to prompt for names by offering categories of people or the names of companies you’re targeting. When others are suggested, ask if it is appropriate for you to use your contact's name when calling this person.

10. Send a personal thank-you letter immediately after your meeting! It provides an additional opportunity to maintain contact with the individual. It also is useful to thank your source for the introduction, and tell him you have made contact and how it went.

11. If your networking contact is located out of town, you may have to speak by telephone instead of arranging a personal meeting.

12. A personal meeting is almost always preferable to a telephone conversation, even with people you know well. It is a more effective way to build relationships needed to enlist the help of others in your job search.
QUESTIONS?

Please COMPLETE your Feedback Surveys and turn them in as you exit the Auditorium.

THANK YOU!