Networking

INTRODUCTIONS
- Name, Company, Undergrad, Grad
- Organization, Emphasis
- Personal insight (i.e., reading, sports, etc.)
- Expectations of the discussion...
- Encourage students to ask questions...

WHAT
Network
- Collection of interconnected nodes.
- Nodes = People
- Connections = Relationships

Networking (in terms of people)
- Creating, building, and exchanging personal relationships.

Connected
- To own a large number of relationships.

My opinion...
- Creating, building, and exchanging relationships are absolutely necessary.
- Relationships are WORK!
- Relationships are like a garden...need attention (water)

WHEN
- At least 5 opportunities per day...
  - Breakfast, mid-morning, Lunch, mid-afternoon, and Dinner
- At special events
- At speaking engagements
- At religious organizations
  - ...any time that you are around other people.

WHY
History Lesson # 1
- Rugged Individualism – 19th and 20th century
  - Goin’ it on your own; bootstrapping
  - Includes information – Do you believe that books in the 1970s recommended hoarding information in order to gain power?
- This all changed in our recent history...
  - Today power is achieved through networks...
  - Metcalf’s Law

Economics / Work
- $$$; Trade
- Life is about work; Work is about life, and both are about people.

Opportunity
- Careers; Options

Health of People & Society
- People
  - Social scientists are finding that those who are connected live longer, happier lives.
- Society
  - Schools are better; crime is lower; economic growth is higher

Contribution
- The ideal – real – objective of networking is the benefit of others.

...the opportunity to open doors for others as many have done for you...the opportunity to make a difference.

WHY NOT
Fear of the unknown
- Personal behavior—change behavior then change results.
- Fear and anxiety are the same feeling as excitement.
- Find a personal behavior coach to help w/shyness

Personal Ambiguity
- Not being aware or not caring about being aware of you.
- Know yourself
  1. Find your passion.
     - Live with intention – give yourself direction.
  2. Define your strengths and constraints.
  3. Develop a purpose, convictions, values, and principles.
  4. Develop a personal brand.
     - The mental picture and associated thoughts and feelings that are generated when someone hears your name.
     - Robin Ryan (@ CMConf)
- Develop your visions.
- Develop your goals.
- Take action everyday!!

HOW NOT TO
Do not try to pretend knowledge you don't have
- CEO of firm told him at first job – say "I don't know."

Do not gossip.
- “Simple minds talk about people. Great minds talk about ideas.”

Do schmooze.
- Have something to say and say it with passion.

HOW
- How do you go from a one-node show to being connected?

Use Your Family
- Talk to your parent, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, their boss, their boss’s boss, etc....
- Talk to them about your goals.
- Ask them if there is anyone they know who may be able to help benefit you achieving your goals.

Use Business / Networking Cards
- Leave an impression on those you meet.
- Create your own or obtain an online template
  - Use the front and back. Back = mini-resume.
- Take them with you and take many.
- Receiving – write down key information on the back.

Take Advantage of Your Hobbies
- Use what you enjoy or love to develop a common foundation with other people.
- Don’t sit around - you have to get involved.
- Find the organizations that appeal to you and get inside.

Find the Open Doors
- Many executives / partners leaves their does open for a reason. (Recount E&Y’s story of Mark Bocheloh).
- Talk to those in the senior roles.
- Don’t hang out with those in your crowd – get over there and talk to the executives.
Networking

The secret to the “paid lunch”...
- Invite the executives or partners to lunch...9 times out of 10 they will buy the lunch.
- This sounds terrible – but it is true; good executives love to teach, mentor, and tell stories.
- The key is – honesty – don’t expect the executive to pay for the lunch...and be prepared to do so or go dutch...and do so often.

Find Mentors
- Those who have “been there and done that”.
- Don’t ask what you can do for me...indicate what you can do for them.
- Establish clear expectations for the relationship.

Don’t Keep Score
- Don’t worry about whether it is your lunch or theirs.
- Don’t worry about who owes who a favor – just do them.
- Just be generous – and don’t keep track.

Get Online
- There are a number of online applications that foster the creation, building, and exchange of social and professional relationships.
- These include LinkedIn, Spoke, Plaxo, and Ryze.
- There is also Facebook and MySpace.

Organize Your Network
- Create a tracking system for you contacts.
- KISS – It must be easy to maintain.

  1. Find a tool
     - Pen and paper; MS Outlook; other
  2. Segment your contacts
     - Personal, customers, prospects, aspirational contacts
  3. Rate each contact in terms of how often you will keep in touch with them.
     - 1 – 1x / month
     - 2 – 1x / quarter
     - 3 – 1x / year
  4. Create call lists
     - By rating, geography, industry, or university

Create a RAP (Relationship Action Plan)
- Create and work a plan to meet the key people who will help you achieve your goals.

  1. Define 90-day, 1 year, and 3 year goals.
  2. For each goal, identify the most important people and decision makers whom you need to know.
     - Look at your current network.
     - Be specific – not just organizations.
  3. Use your call lists.

Find a Coach
- If after trying all the above...
- A coach is someone who specializes in positively affecting your behavior and performance within a process that facilitates awareness, responsibility, and growth through specific planned actions.
- Coaches who specialize in Relationships...

BOOKS TO READ ON NETWORKING
- Never Eat Alone by Keith Ferrazzi
- Winning With People by John Maxwell

Students, Peers, & Alumni

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How many of you thought that you came to college get an education?
What if I told you that 2, 5, or 10 years down the road just one person in this room could pay for your entire college tuition?
- It is possible! (Briefly explain project between Austin & Alan.)
- Many of you will leave this university with only a handful of contacts to leverage in the next 5-10 years.
  - Take advantage of the people in your major.
  - ...in your organizations.
  - ...in this room!!

Now there is something special here...THE AGGIE NETWORK.
- The Ring...
- The Alumni Foundation...
- Local associations...The Reveille Club (Houston)