



Framingham
STATE COLLEGE

Career Services and
Employer Relations

Networking: How to Guide

Let's Get Started

Be honest with your answers. You will not have to share anything you do not want to.

What two things do you want to get out today's session?

When you think about what comes *after* graduation, how do you **feel**?

What do you think you'll need to create a successful career? How do you define success?

Think about the word Networking. How do YOU define it?

Networking Activity (Part 1): Defining your personal network

It's not what you know, it's who you know! If you believe this cliché, it's time to find out who YOU know and start building your personal network/contact list. Take 10-15 minutes to create a list of **everyone** you know – this will be the beginning of a personal network you can use for years. To get you started, below are examples of people who are *already* in your network.

- **Framingham State College:** professors, administrators, staff, advisors, other students!
- **Present/Former Employment:** your present/former supervisor(s)
- **Family:** Parents/Step-parents, siblings, aunts/uncles, cousins, and friends of the family
- **Other:** doctors, lawyers, landscapers, mail-carrier, neighbors, parents' insurance agent

At first, to complete this sheet and come up with 30 people may seem next to impossible but remember, you should think about all of the people you already know. Can you think of more than 30?

1 _____	16 _____
2 _____	17 _____
3 _____	18 _____
4 _____	19 _____
5 _____	20 _____
6 _____	21 _____
7 _____	22 _____
8 _____	23 _____
9 _____	24 _____
10 _____	25 _____
11 _____	26 _____
12 _____	27 _____
13 _____	28 _____
14 _____	29 _____
15 _____	30 _____

Next Steps: Continue to add to this list and build a database for yourself using your cell phone, email contacts and excel spreadsheet. Be sure to include names, numbers, emails and even notes regarding how you know them and how they might be able to provide you with **advice**.

Why Network?

Learn more about different career options (please choose one of the following):

- I know *exactly* what I want to do for a career
- I have *some idea* what I want to do for a career
- I have *no idea* what I want to do for a career

Networking works for anyone regardless of which situation you find yourself in. If you have no idea what you want to do, networking can help you **learn more**. If you know exactly what you want to do, networking can help you make the next step and perhaps even **land that dream career**.

Uncover the *hidden* job market:

- *Fuzzy Statistics:* 50-80% of all jobs are unadvertised—this may or may not be the case however, a lot of positions do go unadvertised or are not advertised widely
- *Fact:* it is easier to interview and ultimately hire a potential employee through a referral/internal employer connection—automatic built in trust
- *Fact:* you want to be one of those people who knows someone on the *inside*

Build Professional, Mutually Beneficial Relationships

- *Networking is a two way street.* How can you help other people and how can other people help you?
- *Professional Relationships* are intended to **last a lifetime**. Not just a *one-shot* deal

Develop Comfort Level with Job Searching and Interviewing

- If you can network, you can perfect your job search techniques
- If you can network, you can ace every interview you ever have

How to Network

- *Review your Personal Network* contacts from the previous page. How can *each* of these people assist you? What do they do in their careers? Who do *they know* that can assist you? Virtually everyone on your list is willing to give you advice and knows someone else who will do the same.
- *Ask for Advice not for Help!* Everyone is willing to give you some advice. Not everyone is willing to help you. When you ask for help, the person being asked is put on the defensive. The implication is that you're going to take up a lot time. When you ask for advice, the person being asked is put in the position of immediately being the expert in their field (and if they know more than you at the moment, they are the expert).
- *Join and use LinkedIn to Expand your Network* (www.linkedin.com). Facebook is social. LinkedIn is professional networking. They are different and both useful. As they explain it on their website, LinkedIn is an online network of more than 47 million people from over 200 different countries.

Networking Activity (Part 2): Introduce yourself

At the risk of revisiting another cliché, “first impressions last”. First impressions are critical. Whether you are meeting a friend of a friend out at dinner, or interviewing for a job, people judge you by your attitude, composure, handshake, clothing, ability to make appropriate eye contact and the list goes on.

Body Language (Non-Verbal)

- Smile
- Make eye contact
- Confident posture
- Firm but not bone crushing handshake

Delivery (Verbal)

- Create and practice a brief introduction
- Must convey your name, your goal, confidence and enthusiasm in less than 20 seconds

Here are a few samples of a brief introduction:

My name is Janelle Smith, I’m a Fashion Design and Retail student at Framingham State College. My concentration is in Merchandising and my ultimate goal is to become a buyer.

My name is Robert Jones, I’m a Communications Studies major at Framingham State College with skill and passion for radio production, especially in sports. My goal is to become a producer of a top 10 sports radio show in the Northeast.

My name is Tracy Wright and I’m looking to combine my degree in English and Professional Writing with my strong interest in technology. My goal is to become a technical writer for a global software company.

It’s your turn to write your introduction here:

Informational Interviewing: Asking for Advice

In college and in your career, you will introduce yourself to countless people. It's important to get into the habit of introducing yourself with confidence and this exercise will help you get started. The goal is for you to learn more about what the people you know REALLY do in their careers. Even if one of your network contacts is a teacher, lawyer, doctor, something that seems obvious, do you REALLY know what they do?

Step 1: Think about what you want to know

- Please tell me more about what you do in your job/career
- What did you major in? How did your major help (or not help) you get your first and/or current job?
- How did you get to your current position? (what other jobs did you have before this one?)
- What is a "typical" day like?
- What type of training/education is needed to get into this type of career?
- What do you like most about it? What do you like least?
- What advice would you give someone considering this type of career/job?
- Potential starting salary for this career/job?
- *Insert your own question(s) here...*

You'll notice that **none** of these questions are simply "yes" or "no" (they all require a more involved response). Simply put, most people love to talk about themselves and give advice—this is both good and positive. Even if you have a relative or family friend who doesn't usually like to talk about themselves, they will often be willing to answer questions about their career/job.

Step 2: Reaching out to your network and ask them questions

- Start with "safe" contacts such as your parents and/or relatives, then move on to other people on your network/contact list
- Make it clear that you are a student at Framingham State College exploring career options, and you'd like to speak with them for 20-30 minutes about what they do
- Try to make the conversation an actual conversation. The questions in Step 1 are meant to help get things started. Take time to LISTEN to the answers and ask whatever follow-up questions come naturally

Step 3: What did you learn?

- Take the time to write down what you learned from each person you spoke with
- Does what these people do sound interesting to you? Have you discovered a potential career you had never considered before? Did you learn something that convinces you no amount of money would be worth it? Is there anyone you spoke with that loves what they do and perhaps has inspired you to consider it?
- Include their name and contact information because you never know, you may be back in touch with them in the near future
- Always remember to thank the people you spoke with by writing a nice note or email (yes, even your parents and relatives—they will be impressed and truly appreciate your effort)

Informational Interviewing: Making Contact

Sample first email or phone call:

There are many potential ways to create your first email, or place that first phone call to a networking contact. Here are some basic ideas to help get you started. Keep in mind this is an introduction—the first time you're connecting with this person. They don't know you and you don't know them so you have to do some quick explaining as to who you are and what you want. The following is written as an email but you can easily adapt it to a phone call.

To: stephanie.smith@organization.com
Subject: Framingham State College Student Seeking Career Advice

Be sure to include a clear **Subject** line otherwise your message might be deleted or misinterpreted as spam

Dear Ms. Smith: ← Until told otherwise, keep it formal.

My name is Ryan Jones and I'm a Senior at Framingham State College majoring in _____. I was given your name and contact information by _____ and I'm seeking your career advice.

Quick introduction.

Establish who you are and what you want.

I'm interested in learning more about the _____ industry and would appreciate a few moments of your time. Some of my immediate questions include:

- What advice would you give to someone wanting to enter this field?
- How did you get started with this organization?
- What is the market outlook for this industry?

← Further define what you want and begin asking your questions.

We can continue to communicate via email or perhaps we can arrange a time to speak for 15 – 20 minutes at your convenience. I can be reached at rjones@student.framingham.edu or 508-626-4625. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Ryan Jones

← Share your contact information and be flexible to this person's communication style. Go with their preference, phone or email.