

### Session 3 - Network Like a Boss

#### Main points of this session:

- Networking skills are obtainable by anyone, regardless of experience or demographic
  - **Don't fear failure - learn from it**
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#### **Open the session. (5 minutes)**

Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to our most exciting workshop yet!

Over the course of the past two workshop, we've talked about how to use verbal and nonverbal communication in everyday communication. We also heavily emphasize the role failure plays emotionally; nowhere will that be more important than in today's discussion. If you weren't at either the last two workshops, don't worry; you can pick up many of the things we talked about already in today's session!

Today, we turn to the more advanced topic of networking. As students, we need to network to build social connections; first to students in our class, next to friends and certainly, to people in industry. We'll build upon our knowledge of verbal and nonverbal communication to show that anyone has the capacity to network. After that, we'll have a mock networking event to practice the skills we've learned.

It's time to get to know all the wonderful people joining us today! I'd like you all into pairs and introduce yourselves to each other, by stating your name, your degree, and answering this question to your partner:

*If you could be any object, animate or inanimate, for a day, what would you be and why?*

You may have noticed that a few of the spots in this room have some papers upside down on the desks. Feel free to gather around any of these spots to meet your team members and introduce yourself. But whatever you do, do not flip the pieces of paper on the table over. Go ahead now and find a group! If you're not in a group, come talk to me. We will reconvene in 5 minutes. (Should be to introductions by **12:05**).

#### **Reconvene for Speech #1. Special Presentation (with breakouts).**

(At this point, it's a great idea to have a guest speaker, as we had planned.)

Although we may be able to apply what we just learned to networking for work and leisure, university students differ from more senior company members in 3 key ways.

Primarily, we are less experienced. Experience, to an employer, serves two purposes: first, it offers a proven track record of excellence. But, it also offers to an employer that an employee knows “the way of the working worlds”

Secondly, university students don't experience a lot of change in their environment. The power structure of university is very set in stone, whereas roles and responsibilities in the working world are fluid.

Lastly, university students know less people in the working world. They often have short or no careers beyond summer, internship, which makes relationships with people in positions of power less stable.

However, this can be accounted for in 3 ways (these require elaboration, and relate to the first 3 points respectively):

- 1) Focus on your own unique personal strengths.
- 2) Pursue any and all interests you have at university, regardless whether they lie within your discipline or not, whether or not you're “academically” good at them.
- 3) Use personal connection to build working relationships - professors, advisors, other more senior students, campus clubs and on-campus initiatives.

A lack of cohesion between conversational partners could mean we have a bad conversational partner.

It's time to put all of those things we've talked about together, and practise our own networking skills in our breakout session of the day.

**Breakout: Mock Networking Event. (EVEN # MANDATORY)** *(13 minutes, 3 minutes for discussion)*

The session starts obtaining either a “career card” or “skills card”, indicating either a desirable position you have, or a skill you have as an aspiring employee to one of the give careers.

When I give the signal to start, begin talking with each other to find out the kinds of skills and careers that are available.

Some skills will naturally go better with some occupations.

You are not limited exactly within the scope of the career or skill you are given, but try and keep the discussion reasonably close.

The goal of this exercise is to find as much mutual ground with your conversational partners as possible, as well as to use verbal and nonverbal communication tactics we've already talked about.

Here are some tips:

- IF YOU HAVE A CAREER CARD: remember you're trying to entice employees with the skills you want from people working for you; feel free to probe and ask questions. If you are a potential employee, use commanding but respectful body language.
- IF YOU HAVE A SKILL CARD: think about what that skill is useful for, and try and explain it in a way that would appeal to an employer of the given occupation on the career card of your conversational partner.

At one point during the event, I will give a signal to "switch". At that point, if you have a career card, switch it for a skills card, and vice versa. You'll likely have to re-think your approach when selling yourself, but this is what most adults do 6-10 times over the course of their life. The event will conclude without warning.

Are there any questions?

Let's get networking?

10 career cards: (print one copy of each, distinguish the two categories by colour)

- 1) Artificial intelligence researcher.
- 2) Accountant for a large oil company.
- 3) Record company producer.
- 4) Social media consultant.
- 5) Elementary school teacher.
- 6) Indigenous historian.
- 7) Motivational/professional speaker.
- 8) Equestrian.
- 9) Greenpeace spokesperson.
- 10) Auto mechanic.

10 skills cards:

- 1) Able to memorize large volumes of information.
- 2) Exceptional persuasion.
- 3) You're never late...to anything.
- 4) Level-headedness...nothing gets you mad.
- 5) You know 5 languages.
- 6) You're good with your hands.
- 7) You run a small startup.
- 8) Your old boss has whatever job your partner had, and you had a good relationship with them.

9) You have a flawless skincare routine.

10) You had previous experience in whatever job you're applying to.

**Final Debrief + Conclusion.** *(7 minutes)*

Question: *What did you find most difficult about the last exercise. What differentiates a mock networking event from something in the real world?*

That brings us to the end of "Network Like a Boss!"

**Session end.**