

Networking Skills and Methods

Unit: Employment and Professionalism

Problem Area: Communication Skills

Lesson: Networking Skills and Methods

- **Student Learning Objectives.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

- 1 **Explain the importance of networking.**
- 2 **Identify networking methods and techniques.**

- **Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

E-unit(s) corresponding to this lesson plan. CAERT, Inc.
<http://www.mycart.com>.

Adams, Susan. "Get a Job Using the Hidden Job Market," *Forbes*. Accessed Sept. 10, 2012. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2011/07/05/get-a-job-using-the-hidden-job-market/>.

Cohen, Julie. "Networking Is Not a Dirty Word," *Workbloom*. Accessed Sept. 10, 2012. <http://workbloom.com/networking/networking-not-dirty-word.aspx>.

Crompton, Diane, and Ellen Sautter. *Find a Job Through Social Networking*, 2nd ed. Jist Works, 2011.

"How to Network Effectively," *eHow*. Accessed Sept. 10, 2012.
http://www.ehow.com/how_1382_network-effectively.html.

Levinson, Meridith. "How to Network: 12 Tips for Shy People," *CIO*. Accessed Sept. 10, 2012. http://www.cio.com/article/164300/How_to_Network_12_Tips_for_Shy_People.

Syak, Sally. "How to Find People to Network With," *eHow*. Accessed Sept. 10, 2012. http://www.ehow.com/how_6648715_people-network.html.



■ Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

■ Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- hidden job market
- network
- networking
- social networking

■ Interest Approach. Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

*Ask if any of your students have had jobs as babysitters. Then ask **how** the students got their jobs. They probably watched the children of a neighbor, relative, or family friend. Explain that parents feel better leaving their children in the care of someone they know or someone who was recommended by another trusted individual. Tell students that much of the business world works the same way. "It's not what you know, but who you know." Then allow students to brainstorm for a few minutes on how they can get to know the "right" people.*

CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Explain the importance of networking.

Anticipated Problem: Why is networking important?

- I. **Networking** is the act of building relationships for professional reasons. Having a large **network** (group of people with whom an individual has a professional relationship) provides many benefits for a person's career or business.
 - A. Opportunities for employment
 1. Internships

2. Jobs (or better jobs than the ones they currently have)
 - a. The **hidden job market** is a term used to describe employment opportunities that are never officially advertised.
 - b. Only about 20 percent of jobs are advertised in traditional ways, such as in newspaper ads and on job search websites.
 - c. The other 80 percent of jobs are filled through word-of-mouth, recommendations, and networking connections.
- B. Opportunities for improving business
 1. Clients can be gained through referrals.
 2. Prospective employees can be found.
 3. Recommendations can be received for vendors, contractors, etc.
 4. Potential investors may be found.
- C. Opportunities for professional development
 1. Advice or different perspectives on problems may be received.
 2. Information may be given regarding training opportunities, conferences, and new trends in the business.

Teaching Strategy: Use VM–A to review the benefits of networking. Have students work in small groups to research professional organizations, membership guidelines, and benefits. Explain that students may be able to attend some meetings, and attendance could result in an internship if the right contacts are made.

Objective 2: Identify networking methods and techniques.

Anticipated Problem: What methods and techniques are used in networking?

- II. There are many ways to build a network.
 - A. Networking techniques
 1. Individuals should talk to people anywhere they go.
 2. Individuals should introduce themselves with a smile and a handshake.
 - a. Many networking events serve food and drinks, but attendees should always have one free hand to shake. They can alternate between holding an appetizer and a drink, but they should not hold both at the same time.
 - b. Nametags should be worn on the right side of the chest, so they can be easily seen when shaking hands.
 3. Individuals should ask questions to “break the ice.”
 - a. “Where do you work?”
 - b. “What type of work do you do?”
 4. Individuals should establish a connection. The networkers should point out:
 - a. If they have the same ideas/philosophies

- b. If they went to the same school
 - c. If they have mutual friends/contacts
- 5. They should be good listeners.
- 6. They should keep business cards on hand to pass out as they meet new people.
- 7. They should ask for business cards, or they should jot down names soon after the meeting to serve as a reminder.
- 8. They should offer help, instead of always asking for it.
- 9. They should follow up.
 - a. A note, email, or phone call to touch base after a meeting helps build a relationship.
 - b. Thank-you notes are appropriate if people share information or offer help.
 - c. Networkers should follow through if they promised to send additional information.
- B. Opportunities for networking
 - 1. Community events
 - a. Charity fundraisers
 - b. School functions
 - c. County fair/local festivals
 - d. Performances of the arts (e.g., ballet and theater)
 - 2. Professional clubs and associations
 - 3. Alumni associations
 - 4. Civic organizations
 - 5. Online social networking sites
 - a. **Social networking** is the use of Internet-based programs or websites to build relationships for professional reasons. Like traditional networking, the goal is to build relationships with people whom you may help or who may help you in career advancement.
 - b. *Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn*, and blogs are examples.
- C. Networking goals
 - 1. It is best to find contacts in a variety of fields/types of jobs, as well as a variety of geographic areas.
 - 2. It is important for people to be “visible” to recruiters and human resources professionals.
- D. Obstacles to networking
 - 1. Shyness
 - a. People should practice introducing themselves until it feels comfortable and natural.
 - b. People should join groups that they enjoy and should support causes that are important to them.

- c. People should look for smaller groups if they are shy.
- d. People may ask someone to introduce them to others.
- 2. Lack of time
 - a. It is important to view time spent networking as an investment into a career.
 - b. It is essential to schedule time for networking and to follow up.

■ **Teaching Strategy:** Use VM–B and VM–C during a class discussion. Assign LS–A. ■

■ **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. Questions at the ends of chapters in the textbook may be used in the Review/Summary.

■ **Application.** Use the included visual master(s) and lab sheet(s) to apply the information presented in the lesson.

■ **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

■ **Answers to Sample Test:**

Part One: Completion

- 1. Networking
- 2. hidden
- 3. Social
- 4. 80
- 5. connection
- 6. listener

Part Two: True/False

- 1. F
- 2. T
- 3. F
- 4. T
- 5. T
- 6. F

Part Three: Short Answer

1. Answers may vary but should include three of the following points: To overcome shyness when networking, you could practice introducing yourself until it feels comfortable and natural; join groups that you enjoy and support causes that are important to you; look for smaller groups to join; or ask someone to introduce you to others.
2. Answers may vary but should include three of the following points: You may find networking opportunities at charity fundraisers, school functions, county fair/local festivals, and performances of the arts.
3. Answers may vary but should include some of the following points: Networking provides opportunities to get an internship, get a job or advance to a better job, build or improve business, find vendors or contractors, find good employees, gain clients, find investors, get advice, and learn about training opportunities.

Networking Skills and Methods

► Part One: Completion

Instructions: Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.

1. _____ is the act of building relationships for professional reasons.
2. The _____ job market is a term used to describe employment opportunities that are never officially advertised.
3. _____ networking is the use of Internet-based programs or websites to build relationships for professional reasons.
4. Experts estimate that _____ percent of jobs are never advertised.
5. Networkers should try to establish a _____ with the people they meet by pointing out things they have in common.
6. Two keys to networking are to ask questions and to be a good _____.

► Part Two: True/False

Instructions: Write *T* for true or *F* for false.

- _____ 1. The majority of jobs are advertised in the newspaper classified section.
- _____ 2. One goal of networking is to make yourself “visible” to recruiters or human resources professionals.
- _____ 3. Online social networking eliminates the need for traditional networking.
- _____ 4. It is important to follow up by calling or emailing a contact you met through networking.
- _____ 5. Networkers should keep business cards on hand to pass out as they meet new people.
- _____ 6. You only need contacts in your line of work.



► Part Three: Short Answer

Instructions: Answer the following.

1. List three ways an individual can overcome shyness to feel more comfortable networking.
2. List three examples of community events that may offer networking opportunities.
3. Briefly explain the benefits of networking.

BENEFITS OF NETWORKING

◆ Opportunities for employment

- Networking may lead to internships.
- Networking may lead to jobs.
- Networking may lead to advancement for better jobs.

◆ Opportunities for improving business

- Clients can be gained through referrals.
- Prospective employees may be found.
- Recommendations for vendors, contractors, etc. may be received.
- Potential investors may be found.

◆ Opportunities for professional development

- Advice or different perspectives on problems may be received.
- It is possible to learn about training opportunities or conferences.
- It is possible to learn about new trends in the business.



HIDDEN JOB MARKET

Hidden job market is a term used to describe employment opportunities that are never officially advertised.

- ◆ Only about 20 percent of jobs are advertised in traditional ways, such as newspaper ads and job search websites.
- ◆ The other 80 percent of jobs are filled through word-of-mouth, recommendations, and networking connections.
- ◆ You should still read help-wanted ads, but networking is the key to getting a chance at the unadvertised 80 percent of employment opportunities.



NETWORKING TECHNIQUES

- ◆ Talk to people anywhere you go.
- ◆ Introduce yourself with a smile and a handshake.
- ◆ Ask questions to “break the ice.”
- ◆ Establish a connection.
- ◆ Be a good listener.
- ◆ Keep business cards on hand to pass out as you meet new people.
- ◆ Ask for business cards, or jot down names soon after the meeting to serve as a reminder.
- ◆ Offer help instead of always asking for it.
- ◆ Follow up to continue building a relationship with the people you meet.



Networking Skills in Action

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to practice networking skills.

Objective

Demonstrate networking techniques.

Materials

- ◆ writing utensil
- ◆ paper
- ◆ computer with printer

Procedure

1. Write a brief introduction of yourself, and practice reciting it until you feel comfortable. Be sure to include your name and information about your school or business.
2. Create business cards. These can be as simple as your name, title, and phone number hand-written on a piece of paper, or you can create a card on the computer and print it.
3. For a mock networking event in your classroom, walk around the room and introduce yourself to at least three classmates. Remember to shake hands and to offer a friendly smile. Ask questions, and try to find a connection with that person (something other than being in the same class). Offer your help to the classmate, and exchange business cards.
4. After the exercise, write short follow-up notes to the three people with whom you talked at the event. Mention something you discussed, thank them for advice, or offer your help in the future.

