

Communication Strategies for Networking

Poole College of Management Career Center

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A successful session

- 1 What we mean by “networking”
- 2 Where you can find people to talk to
- 3 Connecting strategies
- 4 Grow your network through information meetings
- 5 What to say about yourself (aka your pitch)



Plan Your Networking Strategy

1. Who do you need to meet?
2. What is the purpose in meeting with them?
3. What is the best way to meet them?
4. How will you introduce yourself?
5. What questions will you ask?
6. What can you offer in return?
7. How will you stay in touch?

Four Types of Networking Occasions

1. Attending a networking event
2. Talking to people you know
3. Talking to people you don't know (information meetings)
4. Pursuing a job

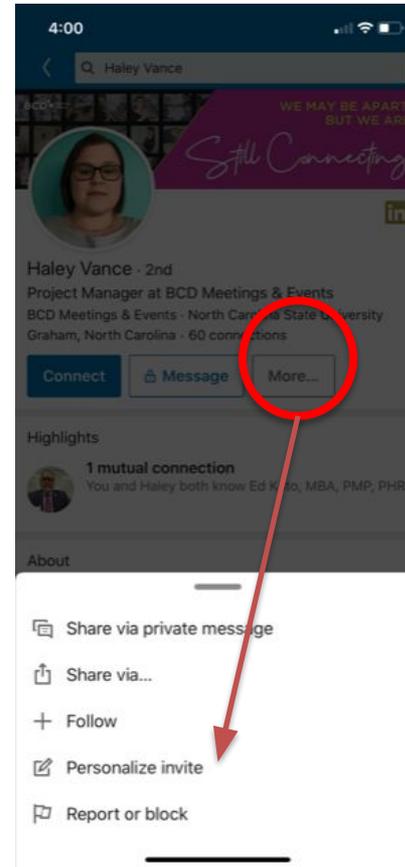
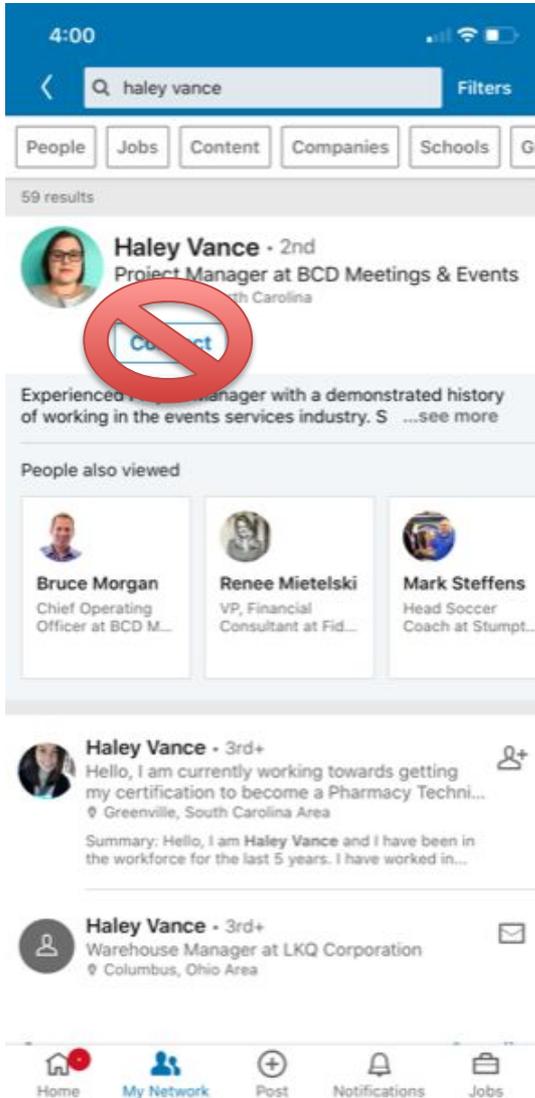
Target Lists of Companies and People

- Top Company Lists
- Your B-School's Employers List
- Industry Lists
- Indeed.com
- Glassdoor
- Company websites
- Company social media accounts
- NCSU Library (Business and Management Databases) - www.lib.ncsu.edu
- LinkedIn and LinkedIn Alumni

Checklist for Research on Target Employers

- What is its history?
- What are its stated values, mission and culture?
- Who are the key players?
- What services or products does it provide?
- Who are the primary clients or customers?
- What are the benefits for users or customers?
- What significant successes has the company had?
- What current news is being shared about the company?
- Who are the main competitors?
- What are the main challenges in this industry?
- What do other people (customers, competitors, employees) say about the company?

LI Invite via Mobile App



LI Invite - Ideas of what to say

1. Explain why you want to connect with the person
2. Tell them how you know them — Do you have connections in common?
3. Find something in common — Is it a mutual career field or interest? — Did you attend the same school? Are you in the same LinkedIn Group?
4. Reference something in their profile
5. Thank them in advance for accepting your invitation

LI Invite - Examples of what to say

“It was nice meeting you at the ____ event. I enjoyed talking to you about _____. Let’s be sure to stay in touch.”

“I was looking at your profile and I am very impressed with your accomplishments in _____. Please accept my request to connect, I’d love to talk to you about how you accomplished _____.”

“It’s been a long time since we talked, hope you are doing well. I see you are now working at _____ company, how is that going? Let’s catch up over the phone soon! Do you have time next week?”

Assignment - LI Invite - Invite someone

- John Hutchings
- Ed Kato
- Lisa Batts
- Caren Howley
- Jane Mehringer
- Bev Porter
- Connie Fowler
- Kayla Bethea

A LinkedIn Targeting Shortcut

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/>

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn profile page for the North Carolina State University - College of Management. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for Home, My Network, Jobs, Messaging, Notifications (with a 6 notification badge), Me, Work, and Learning. Below the navigation bar is a search bar and a navigation menu. The main content area features a banner image of a cityscape with a large building. Below the banner is the profile header for "North Carolina State University - College of Management" with 4,819+ alumni and 26,072 followers. A "Visit website" button is visible. To the right, there are options to "Following", "Chat with Lisa works here", and "See all 11 employees on LinkedIn". Below the profile header, there are sections for "Home", "About", "Jobs", "Alumni", and "Videos". The "About" section contains text about the department's history and a "See all" link. The "Recently posted videos" section shows a video thumbnail with the text "#ourpartners EmTech Investment Meeting at Davos (em-tech.org) is a". The "Affiliated pages" section shows "North Carolina State University" with 270,551 followers and a "Following" status. The "Promoted" section shows two profile pictures.

Information Meeting Request – Best Practices

- Ask people you know
- Request information and insight, not a job
- Explain the purpose of the meeting
- Prepare for likely objections
- Be crystal clear, no hidden agendas
- Face-to-face
- Tell them who you are
- Suggest meeting dates

Information Meeting Request Template 1

Subject: Jim Smith recommended I reach out to you

Dear [MR./MS. LAST NAME OF PERSON]:

I received your name through [NAME OF SOURCE] as someone who would be knowledgeable of industry trends and life at [COMPANY NAME]. I am interested in meeting with you to learn about the culture at [NAME OF COMPANY] and what trends you are seeing in your area of expertise [OR SPECIFIC AREA IF KNOWN].

I'm currently attending (or I graduated from) [NAME OF SCHOOL] and am interested in [CONCENTRATION/TYPE OF ROLE].

I've had success [INSERT VALUE PROPOSITION].

I realize your schedule is probably very busy, however, I was hoping you would have 20-30 minutes to meet sometime within the next couple of weeks [OR INSERT A COUPLE OF DATES]. I'm flexible and able to meet at a time and location convenient for you.

I will follow up with you to see what might be convenient, or feel free to reply.

Thank you.

Regards,

Your Name

Your Email

Your Phone number

Your LinkedIn profile URL

Information Meeting Request Template 2

Dear (Insert name):

(Name), a mutual acquaintance of ours, recommended that I contact you. I am interested in learning more about (topic). I would like to schedule a brief 10-15 minute meeting in order to (your agenda).

I am an MBA student at North Carolina State and exploring (???). I am interested in finding out more about the XXXX industry in general and XXXX company in particular.

Are you willing to meet with me briefly or perhaps to talk on the phone about how I can learn more about your ????. I would appreciate any advice you are willing to share as well as any referrals to your colleagues you believe may be helpful. Naturally, I pledge to be discreet in my use of your valuable networking contacts.

I will follow up on this e-mail by calling you later today. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Best Regards,
September 19, 2020

Check Your Email Before You Send!

- Ensure perfect spelling and grammar
- Check the subject line as spell-check often misses this line
- Double check spelling of person's name, company name, Jenkins MBA, etc.
- Send unique emails to each person – do not send cookie cutter emails that look mass produced.
- Do not attach your resume!

Check It Again!

Are you really sure you are ready to hit send?



- What does it convey about your brand?
- Does it have a purpose?
- Is it professional?
- Is it clear and concise? (if it will take more than three scrolls on a smartphone, it is too long!)
- Is the person/company name spelled correctly?

Exercise – Send Me An Approach Email

jrhutch2@ncsu.edu

What You Say In Informational Meeting

1. Opening – Intelligent small talk to warm each other up

Use something from your research to start the conversation or you could choose something lighter such as the weather, local events, or the venue where you are meeting. The purpose of this small talk is to start building rapport with the individual you are meeting with. This helps set the tone for the meeting and helps the person begin to understand your personality.

What You Say In Informational Meeting

2. Purpose of meeting – Why you arranged the meeting

“I have a few questions about ??? I found ??? in my research [from external research and other informational interviews]” or “I’m excited about ??? these kind of opportunities, and I need advice on where to focus”

What You Say In Informational Meeting

3. Acknowledgement of interviewee's qualifications – simple statement to show that the person's knowledge and experience would be helpful.

“Your experience with ??? led me to seek your help in evaluating my experience and identify areas of self-development.”

What You Say In Informational Meeting

4. Self-presentation – brief statement of what you believe you offer to the marketplace at this moment (< 2 minutes).

“It may help if I gave a brief description about my background, strengths and career objectives”

What You Say In Informational Meeting

5. Main discussion – Principal subjects you came to talk about. A safe and effective way to approach informational interviews is to ask questions about the contact's career path to current employer. Questions as to their career development may yield helpful insights, resources, and referrals.

- Stay conversational
- Ask follow-up questions
- Take notes

What You Say In Informational Meeting

The TIARA Framework

Trends

- What trends are most impacting your business/field right now?
- How has your business or field changed most since you started?
- How do you think your business or field will change most dramatically in the next several years?

What You Say In Informational Meeting

The TIARA Framework

Insights

- What surprises you most about your job/your field, employer?
- What's the best lesson you've learned on the job?
- What's been your most valuable experience at your employer so far, and why?
- If you had to attribute your success to one skill or trait, what would it be?
- Is that trait shared by many across the organization or is it unique and you've adapted it to your advantage?

What You Say In Informational Meeting

The TIARA Framework

- Advice
 - What can I be doing right now to prepare myself for a career in this field?
 - If I got hired, what should I be sure to do within the first thirty days to ensure I get off to the fastest start possible?
 - What do you know now that you wished you'd known when you were in my position?
 - If you were me, what would you be doing right now to maximize your change of breaking into this industry/field/function?

What You Say In Informational Meeting

The TIARA Framework

Resources

- What resources should I be sure to look into next?
- What next steps would you recommend for someone in my situation?

What You Say In Informational Meeting

The TIARA Framework

Assignments

- What project (s) have you done that you felt added the most value?
- Have any projects increased in popularity recently at your organization?
- Have you had interns/new graduates in the past? If so, what sort of projects have they done?

What You Say In Informational Meeting

6. Thank you and follow-up

Ideally, if the informational interview has gone well, your contact will be ready to volunteer to pass you on to relevant colleagues or other connections within their network or organization. Your next step is to not only follow up on these new connections and suggestions, but also to stay in touch with Informational Interview your contact, letting them know the results of your further actions

*“I’ve taken enough out of your day. You’ve been extremely helpful. I don’t want to take any more of your time. **May I keep you up-to-date on my progress? [Extremely important. You want your contact to acknowledge that you may keep in touch]**”*

Wrap- Up - In Informational Meeting

- Last step: recap your notes as soon as possible
 - Questions and responses
 - What you learned about the person
 - What you learned from shared information
 - People you were referred to
 - Other resources that were suggested
 - Action items based on meeting (meet with referrals, pursue other suggestions)

Wrap- Up - In Informational Meeting

- Send hand-written thank-you note, professional letter, or **email. Email is faster**; however, handwritten notes are more memorable. Content -
 - Opening in which you state appreciation for meeting
 - Body in which you paraphrase salient points
 - Sentence or two about follow-through on suggestions
 - Closing in which you restate sincere gratitude and intentions to keep in touch.
- Organize and maintain complete list of contacts with title, organization, address, e-mail, phone number, and date of conversations.
- **Drop a line every time a significant development occurs due to the contact.**

Most Commonly Heard Alumni Feedback

Emails

- Students don't research before they email
- Emails are careless / grammar / rambling / not polite
- It's not clear what the students want from me
- Student asks too much of me (do you have a job?)

Meetings

- Students not prepared or structured
- Students ask "basic" questions
- Student is asking directly for a job (not advice)

Most Commonly Heard Alumni Feedback

Follow-Up

- Students don't follow-up after I help them (let the connector know you pursued the connection!)
- Students don't send thank you notes after I help them

General

- Students presume that I will help them and don't act with humility and deference
- Why aren't students reaching out to me if they are interviewing with our firm?
- Why didn't the student attend our corporate presentation / events that we were at if they are interested in us?



**Only connect via LinkedIn AFTER
you've met or talked with
someone.**

Elevator pitch structure

Who Are You?

(Greet & intro)

(5 – 10 seconds)

- “Hi, I’m [name]
- Smile and speak slowly
- Identify your class year and career focus area

What Do You Do? Why
Should They Care?

*(Your background & relevant
skills)*

(10 seconds)

- Relevant skills
- One sentence summary of your prior work experience or significant achievement

What Do You Want?

(Your “ask”)

(10 seconds)

- Outline your career goals
- Share your interest in the industry/organization/role
- Ask

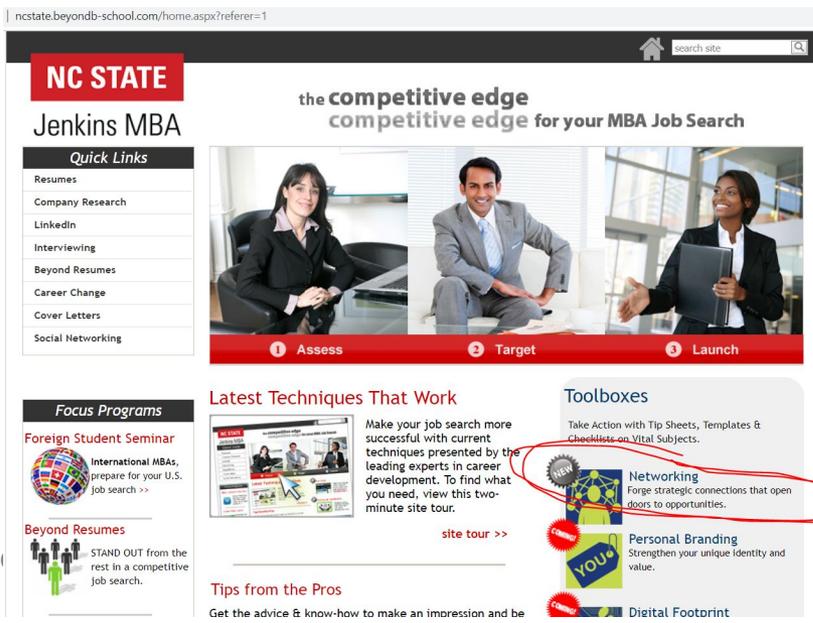
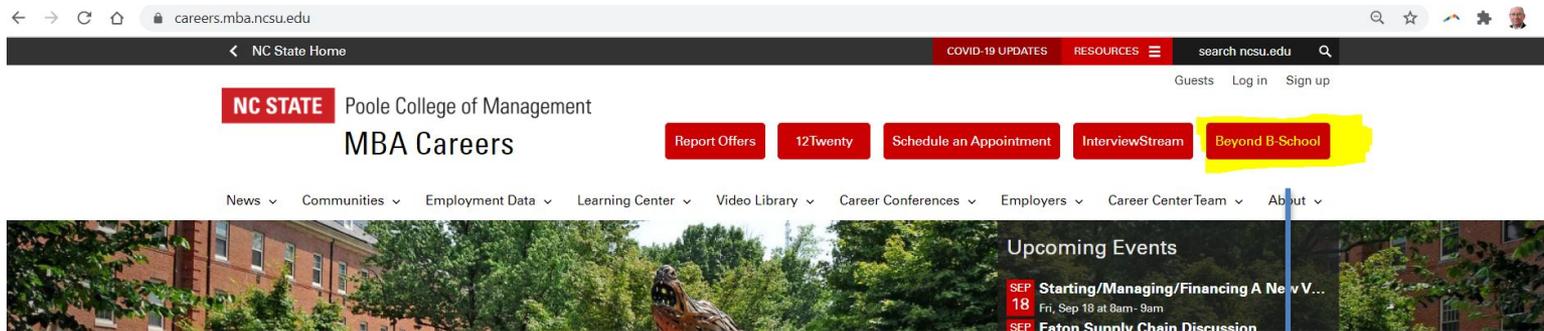
Always be ready for a possible interruption / question

Capstone Exercise

- Reflect and write about your key skills, summarize your value (5 min)
- Breakout rooms – pairs - practice (15 min)
 - “Student” will information meet with “contact” know company/industry
 - Role-play
 - “Student” pay special attention to self-presentation and TIARA (page 3, 4)
 - https://drive.google.com/file/d/1osW0hrT05_SyhFU41N0_L_KMt0gcLz3n/view?usp=sharing
 - Swap

Video and Toolbox Resources Jenkins MBA Competitive Edge

- <https://careers.mba.ncsu.edu/>



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NETWORKING TOOLBOX

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INTRODUCTION

This Toolbox includes helpful tip sheets, checklists, templates, and sample scripts, pitches and messages, giving you any-time, any-where advice to improve your networking skills. Just click on the titles to access the PDF files and click on the play arrows to watch the videos. Whether you are a beginner or advanced networker, the Toolbox gives you resources to network productively and successfully - and land a job sooner!

OVERVIEW

[Infographic: Get Results Networking](#)[Checklist to Get Results Networking](#)[12 Ways to Overcome Your Aversion to Networking](#)[Networking Your Way to a Great Job](#)[Seven Techniques to Hold Yourself Accountable to Network](#)[!\[\]\(ea57ff504665e85cd71f95260bebf118_img.jpg\) 10 Executive Keys to Make Connections That Open Doors](#)

CONNECT

[Connecting on LinkedIn](#)[Asking Your Network for a Referral or Introduction](#)[The Purpose of the Informational Meeting](#)[Eight Tips to Request the Informational Meeting](#)[!\[\]\(b7ca24b9077817edbbada8eacee699e6_img.jpg\) How to Invite New Contacts to Connect on LinkedIn](#)[!\[\]\(5837591bf92a863653f427f12fa505f6_img.jpg\) How to Find, Connect and Engage Alumni Contacts](#)[!\[\]\(c4ad4b0358d7cc7966ca6d3271275423_img.jpg\) Mining the Web for Great Contacts](#)

TARGET

[How to Build Your Target Employer List](#)[Eight Types of People to Ask for a Meeting](#)[Finding Alumni on LinkedIn](#)[!\[\]\(35e0eebc10cf3a3f0161d09c7f891942_img.jpg\) Target the Right Employers: Four Steps to Build Your List Fast](#)[!\[\]\(88821af5c2330eb736d6dfa302adb705_img.jpg\) Use LinkedIn Search to Find People, Jobs and Companies](#)[!\[\]\(3fbd5f92de5247da6219cbaa82917603_img.jpg\) Using LinkedIn Groups to Find Great Contacts](#)

COMMUNICATE

[How to Create a Great Pitch for Any Occasion](#)[Eight Steps to Prepare for Your Informational Meeting](#)[How to Work a Room](#)[Seven Ways to Have a Blast at a Career Fair](#)[12 Ways to Stay in Touch with Your Network](#)[!\[\]\(508896c01a5ef79b16c16cde0cebf0f7_img.jpg\) How to Communicate with New LinkedIn Contacts](#)[!\[\]\(cc39fddf63ae149bb9161a87050c6a4f_img.jpg\) 20-Minute Networking Meeting Overview](#)

Questions?

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