

# Networking 101



A painless guide to making grown-up friends



**CAREER CENTER**  
TEXAS A & M UNIVERSITY

# Presentation Overview



## ☞ Networking

- ☞ Where do I find people?
- ☞ What do I say?

## ☞ All About Etiquette

- ☞ What is it?
- ☞ What does it say about me?

## ☞ Small Talk Information

- ☞ What should I ask?
- ☞ What are general tips?



# Quiz 1:



Did you see the new  
Star Wars movie?

Answer:



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Did you keep a  
yes/no question  
afloat for 30 seconds?

# Networking



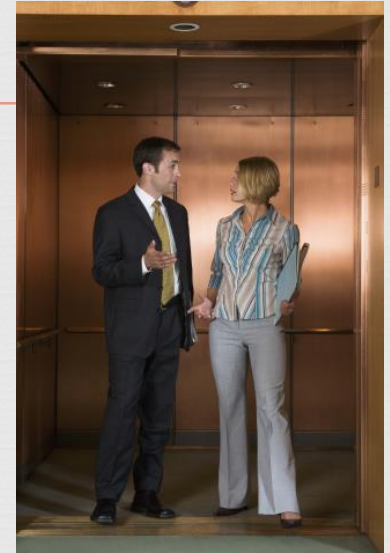
# The Elevator Speech



- ☞ AKA: 30-Second introduction
- ☞ Include:
  - ☞ Who you are
  - ☞ Why you are calling/approaching them
  - ☞ What you want

## ☞ Example:

Hello, I am a Ph.D. student in \_\_\_\_\_, with a focus on \_\_\_\_\_. I expect to defend and graduate in \_\_\_\_\_. My ultimate goal would be to work in the areas of \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ at a \_\_\_\_\_ company. I got your name through \_\_\_\_\_ and I wonder if you would have a moment to speak with me about a career in \_\_\_\_\_.



# Where do I begin?



- ❧ AggieNetwork.com
- ❧ LinkedIn.com
- ❧ Your department
- ❧ Your student orgs
- ❧ Ask Professors
- ❧ Contact Former Students
- ❧ Explore Undergraduate Alumni Lists
- ❧ Attend Conferences and Career Fairs
- ❧ **Blast the Past** (high school, hometown, friends' parents, parents' friends, etc.)



# How Do I Write a Networking Email?

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Dear Ms./Mr. \_\_\_\_\_

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a student at Texas A&M, graduating with a bachelor's/master's/PhD in My Major in August 20xx. I am considering pursuing a career in (industry / job type). [*or "I am currently seeking a job/internship in the \_\_\_\_\_ industry."*] I found your contact information in the Aggie Network online directory. I was wondering if you would have a moment to share with me any advice, ideas, leads or contacts. Any suggestions you could offer would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your time.

Name

Phone #



# What Should I Ask?



1. How did you get to where you are today?
2. What characteristics/skills make for a good \_\_\_\_\_?
3. How would you describe the culture of your organization?
4. If you were starting your career today, what would you do differently?
5. What can I do to make myself marketable for this career?
6. Any myths you want to shatter for me?
7. Where do you see opportunity areas, needs?
8. Who else does this? What other companies? Whom else should I  
    contact?
9. What advice do you have for someone like me?

## Quiz 2:

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How is <sup>o</sup>your reseach  
going at A&M? What  
are you studying  
again?

Answer:

Did your voice and  

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body language stay  
positive when talking  
about stressful  
things?

# Etiquette



# What is Etiquette?

- ☞ Basically: Professional Behavior
- ☞ “Treat others how you would like to be treated”
- ☞ This includes your
  - ☞ Behavior
  - ☞ Manners
  - ☞ Attire
  - ☞ Speech
- ☞ Remember:
  - ☞ Your manners reflect who you are – not your intellect, your professional success, nor your business acumen.



# Social Etiquette



- ∞ Hold a good conversation
- ∞ Be nice and professional to everyone you meet
- ∞ 85% of a successful worker is their soft skills

*Remember: when you are in a social situation, it is important to always be polite and respectful of other guests even if you vehemently disapprove of certain comments or other individuals are not being polite.*



# Social Etiquette Dos and Don'ts

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## The Don'ts

- ❧ Avoid the Five B's
  - ❧ Boys/Girls
  - ❧ Booze
  - ❧ Barack
  - ❧ Bible
  - ❧ Bucks

## The Dos

- ❧ Talk about variety of things
  - ❧ Examples
    - ❧ Sports
    - ❧ Movies
    - ❧ Hobbies
    - ❧ Books
    - ❧ Geography

# Professional Etiquette



- ❧ Arrive on time (for interview = 5-10 minutes early)
- ❧ Turn off your cell phone before entering the event
- ❧ Offer your hand and give a firm handshake
- ❧ Provide ample personal space
- ❧ Think of an opening statement to make as you are shaking hands
  - ❧ "Thank you for taking the time to organize this event, Catherine."
- ❧ Listen attentively!
- ❧ Mind your manners
- ❧ Most importantly: Be prepared to make good small talk that is not "shop talk"! (If you don't know what to say, ask questions about them.)



# Appearance Etiquette



- ❧ Hygiene, hygiene, hygiene!
- ❧ Hair clean & neat
- ❧ Facial hair optional, but must be tidy
- ❧ Jewelry & makeup natural/minimal, NOT distracting
- ❧ Smell = neutral (deodorant yes, but no cologne/perfume)
- ❧ Business professional for formal interviews, conf. presentations
- ❧ Business casual for other conference activities, networking events, etc.
- ❧ Clothes should be clean, tidy, and fit well
  - ❧ No stains
  - ❧ No rips/tears, loose threads, missing buttons, etc.
  - ❧ No bagging, pinching, or gaping

## BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL



LIGHT BUTTON-UP SHIRT

PORTFOLIO

PRESSED SUIT

APPROPRIATE LENGTH SKIRT

POLISHED, CLOSED-TOE SHOES

## BUSINESS CASUAL



NATURAL LOOKING MAKEUP

NICE BLOUSE

NO BULKY JEWELRY

## BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL



FRESH HAIRCUT

PRESSED SUIT

PORTFOLIO

APPROPRIATE TIE

POLISHED SHOES

## BUSINESS CASUAL



CLEAN SHAVEN

BUTTON-UP SHIRT

MATCHING BELT AND SHOES

PRESSED SLACKS

# What to wear?

This guide demonstrates acceptable Business Professional and Business Casual Attire for your upcoming career events.  
**NOTE:** For interviews, always choose Business Professional attire.

# Quiz 3:



So...how about those  
Eagles fans?

Can you believe this?

Answer:

Are you prepared to talk  
about topical news?

(Have you spent 5  
minutes today reading  
the headlines?)

# Small Talk



# Why is Small Talk Important?



- ❧ It is a great way to get to know someone.
- ❧ Small talk forges valuable networking connection.
- ❧ It is a way to show your personality.
- ❧ Creates a quick sense of rapport with current/future colleagues.
- ❧ Allows you to create a sense of trust between you and another person.
- ❧ Small talks helps you avoid awkward silences between you and another.
- ❧ Provides insight into the company's environment.

# Three Categories of Small Talk

## ☞ Category 1: The Immediate Situation

- ☞ The music
- ☞ The people
- ☞ The location
- ☞ The Drinks/food

## ☞ Category 2: External Situation

- ☞ Latest news
- ☞ Sports
- ☞ Movies/Books/TV
- ☞ Celebrities/Big Names in your field

## ☞ Category 3: Communication Situation

- ☞ Topics concentrated on the conversation partner. Ask about..
- ☞ Their hobbies
- ☞ Their career choices/educational background



# Making Small Talk

## ☞ Ask Open-Ended Questions

☞ What do you like best about your job?

## ☞ Ask Questions to encourage other people to talk

☞ “Tell me more, it sounds as if you had a great time.”

☞ “That sounds as if it is similar to...”

## ☞ Spark People’s Imagination

☞ What was your favorite part of Manhattan?

## ☞ Be 3-dimensional. Show your personality.

☞ I just saw \_\_\_\_\_. Has anyone else seen it yet?

## ☞ Be prepared to say “I don’t know”

☞ I haven’t read that book yet, but it sounds interesting. What did you think of it?.....Great! Why don’t you give me your card and we can discuss it after I read it.



# Tips on Small Talk



- ❧ Match the conversational mood of the event
  - ❧ Keep it casual; avoid debates or controversial topics.
  - ❧ Avoid saying something you would not like over-heard.
  - ❧ Do not interrupt others when they are talking.
  
- ❧ Maintain a positive attitude (especially if you think small talk is pointless)
  - ❧ Remember: whether you like it or not, most hiring decisions in America are made based on perceived “fit” with the company, not raw skills or experience.
  - ❧ This conversation can lead to a new connection, a new opportunity or even a new friend.
  - ❧ Be genuine and respectful and you will get the same in return!

Final Exam:

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Can you believe  
what happened to  
Jake Babbage last  
week?

Answer:

Can you keep up a  

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conversation even  
when you have no  
clue what's  
happening?

# Need Assistance? Come to

the



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- ☞ Graduate Student Walk In Hours in Koldus 209:
    - ☞ Monday and Friday: 8:30-11:00 AM
    - ☞ Wednesday: 1:30-4:00 PM
  - ☞ By Appointment (call 979-845-5139 schedule)
  - ☞ Email quick questions: [kstober@mays.tamu.edu](mailto:kstober@mays.tamu.edu)
  - ☞ More info & tips at [HireAggies.com](http://HireAggies.com)