Informational Interviews and other Networking Tools for your career both beyond and within academia

Career Seminar for Biochemistry, Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology Graduate Group

November 7, 2016

What is Networking?
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Networking is

- **Purposeful** conversations
- Building *relationships* for the mutual benefit of both parties
- A *lifelong* practice that will help you start and grow your career
- It is **NOT** asking everyone you know for a job

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Network to Find Your Next Position

“**Network or NO work!”**

Jeff Oxendine, Associate Dean, UC Berkeley School of Public Health
Networking Facts

- 80% of today’s jobs are not advertised
- Companies rely on their networks to avoid the flood of unqualified candidates when posting online.
  - Reduces time and cost
  - Employers trust acquaintances

Why Network?

- If you have a connection to an individual that the employer consults, it may be YOU who is referred for an open job
- Less competition (if any at all)
- Networking is an essential skill for career success
Networking: How do I begin?

- Create a list of contacts
- Leverage your personal and professional networks for additional contacts of interest
- Formulate questions you can ask your contacts about their industry, career, recent changes, future directions, etc.
- Prepare your introduction or elevator pitch
Ways to Network

- Speak to existing contacts
  - Family, friends, colleagues
- Contact industry professionals for an informational interview or meeting
- Attend seminars, career fairs, and company information sessions
- Join professional organizations; attend professional conferences
- Peers
- Social media (LinkedIn)

Informational Interviews

- Schedule an “informational interview” or “networking meeting” with top contacts
  - 15-30 minute meeting where you ask questions about the contact’s experiences, the career field, and the company
- Email, call or use LinkedIn to set up the meeting

Most contacts will be happy to help!—They get to talk about themselves for 20 minutes!
Informational Interviews

~~ DO ~~

- Research industry & company
- Be prepared with questions
- Dress for the interview
- Shake hands!
- Bring a pen and paper to write notes
- Ask for names and contact information for additional interviews
- Write a thank-you note within days of your meeting
Informational Interviews

~~ DON’T ~~

- Ask for a job
- Ask how much money they make
- Take more than the time you asked for
  - (15 - 30 min)
- Procrastinate

Informational Interviews

Dear Dr. Adams:

I thank you for the time you spent with me yesterday and your willingness to share information with me on your career. Your perspective regarding market developments in the anti-infectives industry was very helpful. I plan to follow up this week on your suggestion to contact Olivia Watson at PDC Bio Corporation.

Again, thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Fred Jones, PhD
Postdoctoral Researcher
Department of Immunology
UCSF

415-555-5555
fred@ucsf.edu

Sample from myIDP.sciencecareers.org
What if They Say No?

Common reasons:

1. "I do not think I can help you/speak to HR"
   Concerned that you are requesting help in finding a job. Say you are simply exploring and want their personal perspective on the industry.

2. "Organization policy does not allow me to discuss inside information with people"
   State that you respect their privacy and you are not seeking any proprietary information. Rather, you are looking to discuss the general profile of the industry.

3. "I do not have time"
   Do not see your request as a priority. Suggest several meeting dates in the future. Suggest meeting for coffee or during lunch. Clarify that you will respect their time and only need 15-20 minutes.

Sample Questions

- [https://icc.ucdavis.edu/find/resources/networking/informational-interviews.htm](https://icc.ucdavis.edu/find/resources/networking/informational-interviews.htm)

- Tailor your questions to organization and industry

- Two important questions:
  - *May I stay in touch with you for help with my strategy along the way?*
  - *Can you recommend one or two other people I could speak to for further insight into the field?*
Prepare Your Elevator Pitch

- **What is it?**
  - 30-second introduction for phone calls
  - 1-2 minute introduction for in person contacts

- **What do you talk about?**
  - Mention your name, affiliation, connection to other person
  - You may choose to mention: educational background, current research (be brief and avoid jargon!), information that demonstrates your qualifications (experiences, skills, etc.), short- and long-term career goals
  - Ask a question!
Prepare Your Elevator Pitch

“Hi, I'm Janice Morand. I'm a graduate student at UC Davis conducting basic research in cell biology.

I'm exploring career options and have recently become very interested in clinical research.

I believe a career in this area will allow me to use my analytical skills, my ability to communicate effectively and my strong desire to advance treatments for metabolic disorders such as obesity and diabetes.”

How to Shake Hands
Practice!

Practice introducing yourself to another student.

Don’t forget: Smile, eye contact, firm handshake.

Hints for Successful Networking

- Be sincere and interested in others
- Ask questions
- Be prepared
- Be respectful of other people’s schedules
- Stay in contact with the people in your network
Build your contacts and expand your network! Some of the best ways to find contact information include:

- Direct referral from primary contact
- Publications
- Company web sites
- LinkedIn

Hints for Successful Networking

Don’t know any contacts in a career path? You may need to do some investigating!

To find company contacts:

- Step 1: Find the names of professionals at company/institution; look at publications
- Step 2: “Crack the Code” for email addresses
Companies often have a standard format for email addresses. If you know the format, you know everyone’s address:

- For example, Great Research Group: 
  firstinitiallastname@greatresearchgroup.com

- Google using the person’s name and
  @greatresearchgroup.com
LinkedIn

- Web-based professional networking tool
- Find individuals you may not have access to otherwise
  - More than 360 million users
- Some companies recruit exclusively with LinkedIn

Connect to the ICC on LinkedIn!

Explore Careers of UC Davis Alumni
Other Ways to Connect on LinkedIn

- Use search engines to locate key people or companies within your field
- Join Groups
- Connect to people in the same group as you
- Follow companies for up-to-date information
  - See who else is connected to the company

- Be Impressive: Post information, articles, data, etc. on group pages. This will increase your visibility in LinkedIn.

Resources for LinkedIn

- LinkedIn Learning Center: http://learn.linkedin.com/
- About.com: LinkedIn
  http://jobsearch.about.com/od/networking/a/linkedin2.htm
- LinkedIn Learning Webinars
  https://help.linkedin.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/530/~/linkedin-learning-webinars
ONLINE: make a 30-minute, confidential appointment.

For careers both within and beyond academia. Our team can help you:

- Get started on career planning and setting goals
- Develop your resume, CV, cover letter, LinkedIn profile
- Practice and prepare for an interview
- Negotiate an offer

Schedule and advising appointment using Aggie Job Link (AJL)
https://icc.ucdavis.edu/find/resources/ajl.htm

ICC Electronic Resources

- GradCareers Listserv
  - https://icc.ucdavis.edu/services/connect.htm

- Podcasts

- Website, resources for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars
ICC Website for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Scholars

Workshops and Events throughout the year!

Upcoming Workshops and Events

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2016-17 Career Fairs & Networking Events

https://icc.ucdavis.edu/services/fair.htm

Fall Internship & Career Fair
   Wednesday, October 19 (10:00am to 2:00pm)
   ARC Pavilion (main floor)
Community Service and Non-Profit Internship and Career Fair
   Tuesday, October 25 (1:00pm to 4:00pm)
   ARC Ballroom A
Engineering & Physical Sciences
   Wednesday, January 25 (10:00am to 2:00pm)
   ARC Pavilion (main floor)
Winter Internship & Career Fair
   Wednesday, March 1 (10:00am to 2:00pm)
   ARC Pavilion (main floor)
Spring Internship & Career Fair
   Thursday, April 12 (10:00am to 2:00pm)
   ARC Pavilion (main floor)
Two Exploration Tracks

Applications Accepted: September 12 to November 14, 2016

**FUTURE Certificate Track**

- Professional Development Workshops
- Individual Development Plan
- Career Exploration Activities
- Internship/Externship
- Certificate

**Registration Open: Ongoing**

**FUTURE Self-Directed Track**

- Register
- Prepare
- Access
- Explore
- Share

- Register at FUTURE.ucdavis.edu
- Attend “Career Gear Up” workshop
- Access FUTURE member benefits
- Engage in career exploration opportunities
- Share reviews of career exploration activities

**ELIGIBILITY:** Ph.D. candidates and postdocs conducting research related to the advancement of health

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**THANK YOU!**

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Internship and Career Center  
Visit us on the 2nd Floor of South Hall  
icc.ucdavis.edu