

Module 3 – Preparation and practicalities
Topic 6 – Networking

Bullet points from MC's talk on networking

M's background

- ex Daily Record journalist
- has experienced being between jobs herself
- recognises that “we don't know where help is going to come from”
- has learnt to gain confidence through trying and to learn from setbacks but...
- not easy

Why network

- you don't know where help will come from
- example of talking with former client and discovering that they know a Disney animator – ties in with son wishing to do animation
- example of friend between jobs in financial sector – lunch with M just after a bank had contacted M looking for staff at very short notice – provided CV and job offer all in very short order – but because friend was actually out there and networking
- networking is a two way process – expect to give in any given interaction but also expect to receive – the two are irretrievably tied together
- example of M's own firm currently recruiting – only time to interview four people – this means that two (who have been networking already and, for example, doing unpaid work experience) will be interviewed with only two further slots for speculative CVs – shorten the odds

How

- there is a lot of help for the asking – dare to ask, dare to do, dare to try
- example of networking into Westminster parliament – M picked up hints from former student colleagues, from friends etc – now “pen-pals” with well known MPs
- don't cold call on phone – can't see you, will judge quickly based on your voice, may have taken them unawares at an awkward time
- emails are better – letters are best – they allow a considered approach by the sender and a considered response from the recipient – letters “demand” a response (especially from MPs)
- don't write looking for a problem to be solved – rather ask for something the recipient can do/give easily in the short term (for example advice) and, if you can, offer them something that is of value or importance to them – this may even be information or a potential contact
- speak to people – cast your net as widely as you can
- read the newspapers – it may point you to who might help you in what area
- have a “2-minute autobiography” prepared and in your head so that if you are chatting with someone and are asked to summarise yourself briefly you can – especially useful in busy formal networking situations
- CAVEAT – it is not easy but you do raise your confidence levels back up by a success and this in turn boosts your self respect



Where

- any time, any place, any how!
- example of mother and toddler group where, to M's surprise, there was much to be given/received – not just in professional circles
- when you go into a room go and talk to someone – look interesting – you will then be the “hub” of a networking chat and draw in others
- example of two contrasting responses – engagement and rejection – it will happen – walk away and start all over again

Bullet points from CH's talk on networking

C's background

- left university wanting to work with people/technology
- worked in IT recruitment for a time – a “satisfactory” job
- had some “career coaching” from someone who he met through networking
- saw, applied for and got a job with Pilotlight
- part of the preparation for the interviews was helped/guided by advice/info obtained through networking

So what is networking?

- networking is a skill for life
- it's all about getting to know people and building relationships

Comments from NFG attendees after trying C's exercise

- Once you've started it's OK
- Having a common interest/being in a common situation helps

One of C's passions – motor racing – imagine meeting Lewis Hamilton or Jensen Button

- if you only have two minutes what do you say? (known as the elevator pitch)
 - firstly who you are
 - secondly some point of credibility which will encourage them to listen to you
 - thirdly what can you offer the person you are talking with
 - NOT Hi I'm C and I'd like you to give me a job – rather you are looking for advice/help/introduction

Be different

- what is it that **you** bring?
- how do you pitch yourself? – rather think of how others will see you than how you see yourself
- aim high – take the Scots bit out of yourself (if you are Scottish of course!)
- let yourself dream

Help others

- helping is a two-way street
- things come back around to help you

Integrity

- you need to demonstrate this
- you need to build trust and the relationship



Sustained activity

- it's all about building relationships over time
- don't stop networking just because you have got a job/achieved your goal

Use relevant targeting

- who is it that you want to network with?
- where are they going to be?
- plan/prepare/apply focussed effort

Follow up and keep to commitments

- drop the note, make the call
- respond to folk who refer people to you

