Handshakes, Eye Contact, Small Talk: Networking to Explore Careers

Naledi Saul. Director, Office of Career & Professional Development. UC San Francisco
Our Agenda

1. **Networking in a Nutshell:** You’ll be able to describe what networking is, and the role it plays in exploring careers.

2. **Language & Logistics:** You’ll know how to initiate a conversation or relationship with someone in your professional community.

3. **What You do Next: Tend To Your Garden:** You’ve met them! You’ll understand how do you maintain a professional relationship over time.
Hello. I'm Diana Prince,

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The Concept: Networking in a nutshell

- Conversations you have
- Relationships you build with these people….

…while you’re pursuing your professional goals

CAREER EXPLORATION:

Want to figure out if a career involving communicating science or science policy is for me
It’s easier to start a professional conversation with people you might meet, when you have an articulated and specific career exploration goal in mind.

If Diana is aware of her goals, when an opportunity like this comes along, she’ll be ready to ask about:
- A typical week in the life of a scientist and media pundit
- Their opinions on the biggest issues in the science policy field today
- Advice for PhDs interested in moving into science policy/communications

If she isn’t, she'll probably just ask for a selfie/autograph.

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It’s easier to start a professional conversation with people you might meet, when you have an articulated and specific career exploration goal in mind.

When you’ve identified career exploration goals, networking isn’t about meeting a specific person; it’s about being open and ready to engage whomever you might meet in the pursuit of your goals.

CAREER EXPLORATION:

Want to figure out if a career involving communicating science or science policy is for me...
What are your 1-2 current career exploration goals over the next 6-12 months?

These will be the basis of your conversations and why you establish relationships with individuals in your professional community.
My current career exploration goals are…

- to find out career options for folks interested in working with large data sets
- to talk people who’ve been through the process of leaving academe
- to know about the role and challenges of being a venture capitalist
- to learn the job titles for people who do health outcomes research
- to determine if I’d be happier at a research or research/teaching institution
- to discover the names of organizations where people work in health/science consulting
- to know which professional associations and organizations I should belong to
- to understand current issues in science communication
- to know about careers involving administration and project management where I can skill use my content knowledge in epidemiology
- to learn how professionals get jobs in health/science policy
Now you’ve got goals; let’s talk about meeting people

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3. **What You do Next**: You’ve met them! You know how do you maintain a professional relationship over time.
You’re a **Principal Investigator**!

1. What do you like about your work?
2. What do people like least about this position?
3. What do you do all day? What is a typical day, and week like?
4. What skills or experience does one need to succeed in this type of position?
5. What are positions that open up 5-10 years down the road?
6. What are other titles for this position?
7. How do they find strong candidates for vacancies?
8. What is the interview process like?
9. What is compensation (monetary and otherwise) like?
10. What are trends in the field 5-10 years in the future?

What are you supposed to be talking about when networking?

Data gathering 10 pieces of information
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Language & Logistics:
Initiating a conversation with someone in your professional community

If you’re going to gather data on career options in your professional community there are three things you need to know how to do:

1. Start the conversation
2. Maintain the conversation
3. Exit the conversation, gracefully

“Why will people help you?”
Won’t people feel you’re using them?

“Why will people help you?”
In Your Personal World

Friends & Family
Love
Attraction
Familial Ties & Obligations
Affection
Friendship
Respect

“Why will people help you?”
In Your **Personal World**

- Love
- Attraction
- Friendship
- Respect
- Familial Ties & Obligations
- Affection

In Your **Academic/Professional World**

- Colleagues
- Collegiality
- Productivity
- Curiosity
- Affinity/Connection
- Reciprocity
- Respect

“Why will people help you?”
Initially, you’ll never know why a person chose to help you.

But one of your goals throughout the relationship, if you want to strengthen it, should be to be curious enough to find out what motivated them to help you achieve your goals.

1. Because you’re interesting
2. To share their knowledge
3. Because they have hard won lessons
4. To repay a favor
5. To help a friend
6. They have the time/interest to do so
7. Because they wish someone had helped them
8. Because they consider it part of their job
9. You have an affinity to each other; they see themselves in you
10. Because they like something about you
11. Because you remind them of someone
12. Because you asked respectfully
13. Because you could possibly also forward their goals

“Why will people help you?”
Starting conversations in your professional community

- **Respect:** The farther people are from you, the more important it is to **be clear, concise and focused on them**

- People you know
- People who are the same stage in their career
- People who know your friends or colleagues
- People 1-2 stages ahead in their careers
- People you don’t know at all
- People who are senior in their field
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Let’s Practice!

“Why will people help you?”
Hello. I'm Jessica Drew. I'm a computational biologist completing my postdoc at UCSF. Thank you for participating on the career exploration panel. It was great to hear about your experience. You said, 'get relevant experience'. Can you say a little more about what experiences as a postdoc you think positioned for your job with the Computational Biology Center at IBM?
Hello, I'm Barbara Gordon

I'm in the joint MD/PhD program at UCSF/Cal

I see you work at the Institute for Defense Analysis.

I'm unfamiliar with Science Policy Analyst positions like yours. What does your role entail?

What's a typical day like for you?
Hello, I'm Bruce Banner

I'm in the epidemiology program working under Maria Glymour at at UCSF.

I look at factors influencing PTSD in children and adults who have survived a natural disaster.

How does the speaker’s work relate to your own? Have you heard her present before?
Subject line: Dr. James Rhodes suggested I contact you.

Dear Dr. Crosby,

Dr. Rhodes sends his greetings, and suggested that I contact you. My name is Diana Prince and I’m a 3rd year PhD student in biochemistry at UCSF.

Over the past two months, I’ve been speaking with scientists about their experience working in the biotech field. Dr. Rhodes mentioned that as a student, you took steps during your training that successfully positioned yourself for this career path. Would you be willing to chat with me for about 30 minutes about how your time at UCSD prepared you for a career as a medical science liaison?

I’m sharing my LinkedIn page, to give you a bit of information about myself. www.linkedin/dianaprince

Regards,

Diana Prince
Hi, I'm Diana Prince

I'm completing my PhD in immunology at UCSF

Your Turn:
Start a conversation

Name

Organization (affiliation)

What do you want to talk about?

I see you work at X/where do you work? What’s that like?

One of my goals at this mixer is to ask everyone what they think is most difficult about exploring careers. What do you think?

How are you finding the session so far?
Language & Logistics: Having a great conversation

If you’re going to network at a mixer, there are three things you need to know how to do:

1. Start the conversation
2. Maintain the conversation
3. Exit the conversation, gracefully

Let’s Practice!
Don’t Be a Conversational Vampire!
The top 2 reasons people stop wanting to talk to you

1. **You slide:** you slip from a ‘conversation’ to a ‘career counseling appointment’
### A Conversation

1. What is a typical week like as a global health consultant at McKinsey?
2. What skills and experiences prepared you for your current role?
3. What type of professional opportunities interest you 5-10 years down the road?
4. How did you enter the policy field from an academic postdoc? Is that a common path?
5. In your experience, how have people found opportunities with your organization?
6. What is the average salary range for Medical Science Liaison positions?

### A Counseling Appointment

1. How do you suggest I find contacts in your organization?
2. How can I best make it clear that I have the skills and interest to pursue a career in industry?
3. I know a career path that is financially stable is important to me. What other jobs would be a good fit for me?
4. What’s a compelling way for me to talk about why I’m leaving academe?
5. How do you suggest I find contacts in your organization?
6. How much should I ask for in salary?
Hi, I'm Diana Prince

I'm completing my PhD in immunology at UCSF

Your Turn:
Start a conversation….and focus on other person!

Name

Organization (affiliation)

I'm completing my PhD in immunology at UCSF

What do you want to talk about?

What do you like about your work?

What career path are you interested in pursuing?

What the one thing people really don’t know about X (consulting)?

Have you ever heard Naledi present before/attended other career development events? Which ones did you find useful?
If you’re going to network at a mixer, there are three things you need to know how to do:

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Let’s Practice!
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1. **You slide:** you slip from a ‘conversation’ to a ‘career counseling appointment’

2. **You overwhelm:** you try to get all your questions answered at once.
   - Your first conversation is like a first date. Chat for 10-15 minutes and end.
   - If you don’t suck them dry the first time, you’ll have a reason to contact them later….which is the beginning of building a long term professional relationship.)
When winding down the conversation, Diana waits for a pause and says:

Well, thank you for our conversation. It was a pleasure speaking with you.
(PAUSE)
I hope the meeting is productive for you.

The pause is to give the other person a moment to register the end of the conversation and shift gears.
Your Turn: Here are 6 graceful exits.
Start, maintain and end a conversation, gracefully ....in 5 minutes!

A general ending:

1. It was great talking with you. I hope you have a very productive time at the conference/I hope you find this meeting useful.

2. I’m sorry to interrupt (because this is quite interesting), but I need to connect with Bruce Banner before he leaves. It was great to speak with you. I hope we will run into each other again.

Ending if the person offered you advice:

3. *(Express appreciation)* Well, it was great to meet you. Thanks so much for your advice. I really appreciate it.

4. *(Be specific)* It was good speaking with you – it was fascinating hearing about what a typical week is like for a venture capitalist. Thank you.

5. *(Got an informational interview!)* Thank you. I look forward to speaking with you tomorrow at 4pm.

6. *(Want to keep in touch)* Thanks for the advice/insight. You’ve given me a lot to think about. I’d like to let you know how it all turns out, if you don’t mind. Is there a good way to keep in touch?
Logistics & Language:
Four fast questions about preparation & etiquette

1. How do I prepare for, and what do I do first, at a networking event?

2. How do I navigate an event with food?

3. How do I break into group conversations?
1. How do I prepare for, and what do first, at a networking event?

1. **Take your networking notebook/pen:**
   So you can write down people’s contact info, how you met them, what you talked about & impressions.

2. **Case the joint:**
   Before you start talking, look around. Who is here? What is the set up? What’s the vibe? Who’s ‘open/closed’? Who’s ‘in the center, on the edges’?

3. **Take a wing person:**
   Approach people together, tag team conversations with senior individuals, speak well of each other.

4. **Use your nametag:**
   Help people remember you!
2. How do I navigate an event with food?

1. While in line, make preliminary eye contact, smile, and talk to people in front and behind you.
2. Always have one hand free (beverage OR plate)
3. Small plate: 4 items – don’t crowd the plate!
4. Go back for seconds / thirds
5. If you’re taking home a plate – cover with a napkin.
6. Hungry? Eat first and then start networking
3. How do I break into conversations?

1. **Be considerate**: Assess if the conversation is ‘open’ or ‘closed’

2. **Be graceful**: Enter in the line of sight of the person speaking or slide in right next your friend

3. **Don’t fight/ follow up**: If one person is dominating the conversation, consider following up with the key person later

4. **Be a host**: Recognize others and invite them into the conversation with introductions/ getting them up to speed; don’t dominate the conversation
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Tending to Your Professional Network:
How often do I keep in touch?

1. Every time something the person said helps you
2. Any time you see something of interest or would help the person
3. 6 months to one year & milestones

Let people follow your adventure
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<th>Month</th>
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Our Agenda & Learning Outcomes

Thank you. Questions?

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Want more help? Career.ucsf.edu
Career.ucsf.edu/listervs
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