



# Session 9: How to Network

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AITI Entrepreneurship Component

# Entrepreneurship Component

- **Understand the Basics**
  - JOURNEY: How do startups get established and grow?
- **Prepare Your Mind**
  - PSYCHOLOGY: What should be my attitude?
  - ETHICS: How will I honor my values?
- **Define Your Value**
  - PROBLEM: What problem am I solving?
  - MODEL: How will my startup make money?
  - POSITIONING: How can I compete?
- **Build An Organization**
  - TEAMS: How do I choose my co-founders?
  - RECRUITING: How can I attract talent?
  - LEADERSHIP: How can I motivate my team?
- **Build Your Product**
  - TECHNICAL CURRICULUM
- **Sell Your Product**
  - MARKETING: Who exactly is my target customer?
  - SALES: How can I get customers to buy my product?
- **Build Relationships**
  - MENTORS: How do I find advisors who can help?
  - FUNDING: How can I raise money to get started?
  - PARTNERS: How can I negotiate the best partnerships?

# Agenda

- How to network for a job
  - MIT Sloan-style!
- How to network for *you*

# First things

- What are you trying to accomplish?
  - Do you have business cards?
  - Do you follow up via email and phone?
- 
- Okay!

# How to network for a job

- **Aggressive!**
- Talk about something that's not the job
- “What do you want from a candidate?”
- List 2 or 3 matching attributes of yours
  - Give examples
- Observe person's reactions
- Ask for more names.
- Offer to follow-up. Then do it.

# Example

# How to network for you

- Remember, **you are not desperate.**
- You have an attractive, unique idea.
- You are experienced, confident, and will have numerous other opportunities in your future.

# Most important things

- Listen.
- Be sincere.
- “How can I help this person?”



# Why network?

- Find people who you can help
- Find people who can help you
- Mentors, clients, referrals, employees...
  - Maybe you need a good lawyer
  - Maybe you need to hire a programmer
  - Maybe you need to find a contractor
  - Want to find someone who's good!

# Networking takes time

- A network is an investment
  - Effort
  - Time
- It will pay off in the long run

# How to build your networks

- Professors, instructors at university
  - Many have studied/worked overseas!
- Alumni associations (high school, university)
- Your religious group/congregation
- Old friends, relatives
- Volunteering
- Internships
- AITI guest speakers :)

# How to Win Friends

- Smile
- Ask a question
  - DO NOT INTERRUPT
  - Don't offer an opinion
  - (that's my job)
- Listen
- Business cards
- Say the person's name

# Networking

- Listen. Figure out who the person is.
- Get the person to like you
- (Talk about something that's not the job)
- **Pitch** your idea, tailoring it to the person.
- Ask for more names and advice.
- Offer to follow up. Then follow up as promised.

# Networking

- Don't push the conversation too hard.
- Give yourself a graceful exit.
- “It's been really great talking to you. I'll follow up about my experience with web frameworks. Enjoy your afternoon!”

# Venture Capital: Create Value First

- When do you ask for outside money for your company?
  - Only ask for money if your idea is *awesome*
  - Only ask for money if your team is *awesome*
  - Identify your opportunity first, then...
  - Ask for money later

# Networking

- You're confident.
- Never, ever beg.
- There will be other offers.



# What if I'm shy?

- Start small. Find people who look familiar.
- OR! Start big.
- **Ask for introductions.**
  - That really social, loud, outgoing friend? Ask for help. They loooooove being helpful.
- It's easier to talk about something you care about than yourself.
- Don't apologize. You're worth their time.

# Shyness

- Humans aren't shy animals by nature
- We're communal, tribal creatures
- Something's caused us to be shy
  
- Pretend you're wearing a mask, like in theatre
- Practice talking to other people
- You can hide once the event's over :)

# What if the person's shy?

- Ask them some questions about who they are
- Where they live, where they work, what they care about
- See if you have a common interest
- Find how you can connect
- **LISTEN**

# Worried?

- Prepare ahead of time
- Practice!
- It's okay if people tell you no.
- You've told people "no" as well.
  
- The world will not end. Life will go on.

# Following Up

- If you say you'll contact a person, do it
- At the time you specified
- How you specified
- If someone provided you an intro, reply promptly
- "I'm sending this email again in case the original got lost in your inbox..."

# Business cards

- Get some business cards, as well as a case
- PROFESSIONAL EMAIL ADDRESS
- [alessandra.springmann@gmail.com](mailto:alessandra.springmann@gmail.com) versus [sailingchick415@hotmail.com](mailto:sailingchick415@hotmail.com)
- Name, email, phone sufficient
  - Could add “entrepreneur”
- When you receive a card, jot down notes on the person/conversation

# Address books

- Google and Yahoo! have free address books
- Add contact info,
- Birthdays
- Keywords/notes
  - “Kofi not only likes computer science but he’s an auto mechanic.”
  - “Nana is studying to be a doctor but her car breaks down all the time... Hmm...”

# Stay in touch

- Send along articles of interest
- Find out their birthdays
- Do favors
- Be generous
- But don't appear desperate



# Ethics

- Be honest.
- No exaggeration.
- Don't lie.
- Don't manipulate.
- If you don't know the answer, say you'll look it up and get back to the person.
  - Then actually follow up!
  - People love that.

# Networking Online

- LinkedIn
  - A lot of you are online!
  - Is your profile up to date?
  - Are there spelling errors, grammatical problems?
  - Has a friend looked it over?
  - Is it an accurate representation of who you are and what you've accomplished?

# Networking online

- Twitter
  - Everything you say your boss/VC/contact can find!
- Facebook
  - Not for professional networking (as much)
- **Don't say/post stupid things on the Internet.**
- They will come to haunt you.

# Some links

- Networking for introverts: <http://www.businesspundit.com/how-to-network-for-introverts/>
- Networking for shy people:
- [http://www.cio.com/article/164300/How to Network 12 Tips for Shy People](http://www.cio.com/article/164300/How_to_Network_12_Tips_for_Shy_People)

# Now, practice

- Do you not have a team yet?
- Go around, practice talking with people
- Meet 3-5 new people today from AITI
  - Listen/get them to like you
  - Talk about shared interests (problems to solve?)
  - Ask them about their attributes
  - Why they'd be good on your team
  - See if you want to work with them
- Meet some non-AITI people?

- Come back here at 1 pm!!!