

Conference & Recruiting

Megan Thomas

Northwestern | Kellogg

The bottom right corner of the slide features a decorative graphic composed of several overlapping triangles in various shades of purple, ranging from light lavender to dark indigo.

Recap of Objectives for Conference

- Expand your network
 - with both companies and other students
- Make a few strong, key contacts with your top firms
- Engage in substantive networking conversations
- Some students will choose to:
 - Interview (optional)
 - Get a job offer (optional)

Recap of Steps to Achieve Objectives

Step 1: Figure out where you want to go

Step 2: Work on your resume

Step 3: Work on your networking skills

Step 4: Company Research

Step 5 (optional): Work on your interview skills

Step 6: Conference action plan, logistics & follow-up

Networking: 30 Second Pitch

Who you are



What you did before Kellogg



What relevant skills/experience you have



What you want to do now

Networking: Pitch Example

Poor

“Before Kellogg, I was an engineer. I identified defective parts and presented new solutions, and now I want to change my career to investment banking.”



Better

“Before Kellogg, I was an engineer, so I’m highly analytical by nature, and I love working in teams to drive towards results. That’s why I’m interested in investment banking.”



Best

“Before Kellogg, I was an engineer at a tech startup. When our company was acquired by a larger firm, I became fascinated with mergers and acquisitions. I became more interested in banking as a career path once I realized that what I liked about the job was that it was really analytical.”

Interviewing: Use the STAR Method

Structure

- **S**ituation – The background
- **T**ask – What you did/were asked to do
- **A**ction – What you specifically did
- **R**esult – What was the outcome of your action

Keep It Short

- 1 Bullet
- 1 Bullet
- 3 Bullets
- 1 Bullet

Interviewing: Sample Matrix

	Job #1	Job #2	Edu #1	Edu #2	Community Service
Leadership	Situation Task Action Result			Situation Task Action Result	
Analytics		Situation Task Action Result			Situation Task Action Result
Problem Solving	Situation Task Action Result			Situation Task Action Result	
Ability to Influence	Situation Task Action Result		Situation Task Action Result		Situation Task Action Result

Interviewing: Before each interview

What is the company looking for?

- Skills
- Experiences
- Culture fit

Create your agenda

- 3 (transferable) skills/experiences you have
 - *Examples of each*
- Gaps or red flags
 - *How you plan to develop*

Why are you interested in them?

- Why would you add value, how you fit
- NOT what they can do for you, but what you can do for them

Interviewing: Answering 'Failure'

- Focus on what you learned from it
- Put in STARL format
 - Situation
 - Task
 - Action
 - Result (this time, it's not positive)
 - **Learned from it**
- If relevant, say the next time I did it differently and was successful...
- Take responsibility for your mistakes

Interviewing: Closing The Interview

- Express interest in position
- Ask for next steps
- Get a business card from them
- Give them your business card
- Thank them

Conference: What to Bring

- Padfolio
- Pen
- Resumes
- Target list of companies + where they will be located/any events they are hosting
- List of questions for each company
- List of questions written down
- Business Cards
- Business professional attire
- Comfortable shoes

Conference: At the conference

DO:

- Study the career fair map
- Get an early start and go to your top company first
- Be prepared to wait in line
- Approach confidently -with enthusiasm and energy
- Use your introduction to start a genuine conversation
- Manage your time, and the recruiter's time effectively
- Ask for a business card to follow up on something specific
 - Write notes about your interaction (afterward!)
- Keep your business cards in an easily accessible location (padfolio)
- After each table, leave the tabling area to make notes
- Attend events where your top companies are represented
- Make a few strong, key contacts with your top firms – focus!

Conference: At the conference

DO *NOT*:

- Walk around and talk with companies you are not prepared to speak with
- Monopolize a company rep's time with others in line, include those around you in the discussion when possible.
- Judge a contact based on their title or level, everyone at the conference is potentially an ally
- Come across as too relaxed; especially during non-evaluative times; everything is an evaluation
- Some companies will sponsor evening social events:
 - Don't commit too early to evening events; see how you're feeling and if the company is coming to campus to recruit (prioritize those that are not)
 - The purpose of these events is not for you to eat and drink; it is to evaluate you
 - You are not only representing your brand but also the Kellogg brand

Conference: At the conference

DO *NOT*:

- Sometimes you're not clicking with a recruiter; don't let this throw you off your game
- Don't get intimidated or discouraged if a booth is overly crowded; be patient and wait for your turn if it is a top company for you
- No eating/drinking when making the rounds. Okay to have a bottle of water, as long as discreet about it
- There will be lots of giveaways at the conferences. Don't be tempted to take a lot of stuff you won't ever use. Remember, you have to be able to get it home.
- Wear perfume or cologne that might overpower a small space

Conference: After the conference

- DO:
 - Send immediate thank you emails to any interviewers
 - Send thank you emails to any *substantive* contacts
 - Narrow your list of top companies
 - Attend company-sponsored events on campus
 - Include names and interactions in your cover letter
- DO NOT:
 - Send meaningless/empty emails to recruiters or alums
 - Chase after more companies than you can realistically juggle

Company Research

Information matters. That's why we teach you how to use high quality information sources to help you grow your career.

Learn:

Library Small Groups

Find companies and networking opportunities
Explore industries and functions
Excel in the interview process

Browse:

**Research
Databases and
Guides**

Topical research guides
Business and news databases

Borrow:

**Career-focused
Books and
Magazines**

Interview prep
Networking
Cover letters, resumes

- ☐ **Library Small Groups: Sign up in CMS**
- ☐ **Drop-in hours: Monday – Friday, 12 – 3 PM**
- ☐ **Email us: cmclibrary@kellogg.northwestern.edu**

Appendix

Resume: Create Impact Statements



Led a cross
functional
team

to develop and
launch 3 new
products

increasing
sales by 17%

Resume: Broaden your definition of results

Quantify

- Increased (sales, profits, value)
- Decreased (costs, inefficiencies, errors)

Designed and implemented new volunteer model in Tanzania, expanding volunteer base by 200%

Scope

- Define Size (team, budget, business)
- Number Impacted (people, businesses)

Managed \$82M divestiture of division with over \$30M in revenue and 100 employees

Qualify

- Presented to (senior management, client)
- Delivered (on time, early, under budget)
- Implemented recommendation
- A company first
- Adopted across business units

Presented final recommendation to CFO, recommendation ultimately implemented by client

Where to begin?

- Prepare to engage in **substantive** networking conversations
 - Identify, rank and research your top firms
 - Research what companies will be attending the conference
 - If you have a large number, you may want to focus your energy on companies that do not recruit on campus at Kellogg.
 - At the conference you are looking for quality interactions – not quantity
 - Write questions for each firm

What's the value in using the resources?

Company Facts

- # of employees
- Yearly sales
- Key Executives
- Competition
- Mission Statement
- Brands
- Product categories

Company Characteristics

- SWOT
- Unique traits
- Products / Services I like
- Products / Services I would change
- New Products / Services
- Why the company / industry?
- What trends do you see?

Develop Questions for target companies:

- Not something easily found on the website
- Your questions will evolve with every interaction
- Create an agenda around your intention
- Take cues from them – adapt
- Make it a conversation

Typical topics

Job
Content

Industry
Trends

Career
Paths

Their
Background

Company
Challenges

Why Their
Firm

Current
Projects

Firm
Structure

Questions about an Industry

- How has the industry changed over the time you have been in it?
- Who do you compare yourselves to in the industry? (You already know their competitors and so preface the question with that data.) Has that changed?
- Are there professional organizations or social networks that you'd recommend within the industry?
- Where do you see the future of this function going?
Industry's future?

Questions about a Company

- How has the company changed? What drove those changes?
- What are some back burner projects you wish you could do, but don't have the time? (Could be a project you might do voluntarily to prove yourself.)
- When people leave this area where do they usually go? (Gives you a sense of internal promotion.)
- What is the amount of time it takes to move to the next level and the one after that?
- How are people evaluated, how frequently and by whom?
- Ask a question about company culture that is important to you – community service, flexible work, training, etc
- What values do you see exhibited in the firm?
- Are there people in the company who are acknowledged as “heroes”? What is their story?
- How involved is corporate in decision making on a daily basis?
- How is continuing education encouraged?
- How frequently do international assignments occur for US domestics or internationals assigned to the US?
- How do you see the firm expanding or contracting?

Questions about a Function

- How has the MBA prepared you for this function?
- What percentage of your time is spent on _____ or _____ or _____? (Top skills and tasks that you know are a part of this function.)
- What percentage of your time is spent with cross functional teams, such as _____ or _____ or _____? (Typical ones that you know).
- Where do you see the future of this function going?
Industry's future?

Questions about a Person/Employee

- What are the best parts of your job?
- What provides the most challenges?
- What experiences helped you the most, to get to where you are?
- What professional journals, magazines, and web sites would you recommend?