Phase 1 — Problem Understanding & Industry Analysis

Goal: understand networking challenges, define scope & success criteria.

Steps

1. **Requirement Gathering:**

- Students want access to mentorship, guidance, jobs
  - Survey students to understand the specific support they seek, such as personalized career advice, referrals, interview preparation, and access to alumni working in their target industries.
  - Students value one-on-one mentorship, which enables them to clarify academic choices, internship applications, and career decisions.

- Alumni want to engage via events, donations, networking
  - Gather input from alumni on preferred methods of interaction, like participating in career panels, giving guest lectures, making donations, and joining networking events.
  - Alumni also want streamlined ways to reconnect with peers and contribute their expertise to help current students.

- Admin needs a unified platform for managing data
  - College administrators require tools to maintain accurate student and alumni records and automate communications.
  - The ideal platform should enable easy organization of events, donations, and networking opportunities with centralized, up-to-date data.

2. **Stakeholder Analysis: Students, Alumni, College Admins, Placement Officers.**

- Identify all the groups affected by the project: students, alumni, college administrators, and placement officers.

- Each stakeholder group is analyzed for their needs and influence. For instance, placement officers focus on job integration, while students prioritize mentorship, and alumni value continued involvement with the institution.

- Establish channels to regularly collect feedback from every stakeholder category and use it throughout the development cycle.

3. **Business Process Mapping: Current system is manual (spreadsheets, emails).**

- Document and analyze the current systems and workflows used for alumni-student interaction.

- This typically reveals manual efforts like spreadsheets and emails, which are prone to errors, duplication, and inefficiency.

- Map existing processes to uncover bottlenecks and opportunities for automation (such as automating event invites or donation tracking).

4. **Use Case Examples:**

- Directory Search: Students and alumni want to locate peers based on criteria like graduation year, industry, or location.

- Chat: Enable secure messaging for students and alumni to communicate directly, ask questions, or seek advice.

- Event Invitations: Automate event reminders and RSVP management for webinars, reunions, or panel discussions.

- Donation Management: Integrate fundraising features for tracking contributions and recognizing donors.

5. **AppExchange Exploration: Check for existing community templates / Nonprofit Cloud apps.**

- Research available solutions, such as Salesforce community templates or Nonprofit Cloud apps, to avoid reinventing the wheel.

- Assess existing tools to determine what can be adapted or integrated with the new platform, comparing their suitability against the requirements collected earlier.