



THE ROCKSTAR APPROACH A BEGINNER'S GUIDE

by Jaymin J. Patel

FOUNDER *of* THE NETWORK *of* ROCKSTARS

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THE
NETWORK *of* ROCKSTARS



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*Dedicated to everyone who wakes up
knowing there is more out there for them
and wants to go get it.*

*And to the city and people
of Santa Fe, NM – for helping
make my dreams a reality.*

THE JOURNEY TO THE DREAM JOB

Now, I've done a lot of crazy things in my life, but probably the craziest of all was when I decided to enter one of the most competitive talent pools in the world at the age of 23 to land my dream job.

That's right, I applied and was accepted to one of the world's top business schools, and soon found myself vying for the top spot among some impressive movers and shakers from around the world, including Foreign Ministers, 10+ year industry veterans, doctors, entrepreneurs, Army Officers, and even Actors and Pilots looking to make a career switch. Very soon, I found out that recruiters were more interested in them than they were in me.

But I got into one of the top business schools in the world... shouldn't I also have a fair chance?

I needed to do something to get noticed by the companies I had dreamt about working for; I had to get noticed to land my dream job. I did four things, and by the end of my business school career, I had interviewed with not just some firms, but *every* firm I was interested in working for.

What were these four things?

FIRST, I observed the networking landscape and understood how

decisions were made... I taught myself the science of networking.

SECOND, I reached out for advice and learned what was required to be successful... by learning from others and from my own successes and failures, I learned about the networking skill sets that are needed to be successful in the business world. I enhanced my confidence and communication skills, and it made all the difference.

THIRD, I got really serious about knowing myself... I knew I wasn't as impressive on paper as some of my classmates, but I knew I had something to offer. After learning about how the Recruiters Decision Mindset (RDM) works, I performed an extremely difficult, yet important self-assessment so that I knew how to create my Personal Networking Strategy (PNS) when interacting with Recruiters or influential individuals who could lead me to my dream job.

AND FOURTH, I took risks and learned via trial and failure to develop and polish the appropriate networking strategies that made me stand out from the crowd and be successful in landing interviews with every company I was interested in.

It took me 2 years to learn the real secrets of success, and I left business school landing my dream job – working as a management consultant at one of the top firms in the world. I was so fascinated by the science of networking, that I quickly joined the recruiting team at my firm so I could learn how a top firm goes about selecting and choosing candidates from a very wide applicant pool that included both students and professionals from industry. I wanted to be “on the other side of the table”.

As a result, I had the opportunity to personally meet and assess hundreds of students and industry professionals at networking events, review hundreds of resumes, and even perform the interview and evaluation for dozens of students and industry professionals vying for a position in my firm. Being on the other side of the table taught me a lot more about networking than I ever imagined.

You don't have to settle for less than your dream job!

So many people out there are stuck in jobs they hate. They are stressed at work and often not valued for their contribution or given opportunities to grow and develop. This stress goes home with them and affects people around them. I want to help these people understand “the game” and enable them to find success in the same way I did.

It's easy to make mistakes, it's easy to go unnoticed, and it's easy to be deterred... *but if you're determined to wake up every morning and be excited about what you do, then I'm determined to help you be successful.*

In my second year of business school, the new first-year students would always seem to corner me in the hallway or at some event and ask me, “Jaymin... you're only 24 years old, how did you end up landing an interview with all these amazing companies?” My response was simple: networking.

The questions would just go on from there. “Well, what did you do?” “What did you talk about?” “How did you reach out and manage to get a response?” “Here's my story... what do you think I should do?”

Eventually I found myself answering these questions often enough that I decided to write a book. I call it [*The MBA Guide to Networking Like a Rockstar*](#). I have shared the Rockstar Approach to Networking with 1000's of students and industry professionals at dozens of organizations around the world, including top business schools like Wharton and Fortune 500 companies like MillerCoors.

The email communication, thank you notes, and on-going updates I get from these students and industry professionals are what I look forward to reading every day in my inbox. It gives me great joy to have learned the secrets of success the hard way, and to be able to share them with these individuals and help them find success and happiness in their lives.

I left my dream job because I found a new one: sharing my message and helping people land their dream job.

The Rockstar Approach to Networking works in intense, competitive environments like Business School, it works for undergraduate students looking for their first job, and it even works for seasoned industry veterans who want to achieve greater success in their careers. All of these people are readers of my book and members of my personal coaching programs.

My goal is to share my message and help you achieve your career goals. If your goal is to successfully obtain a better job that will makes you happier, aligns to your interests and desires, challenges you to grow and develop as a person and a professional, and values you and your time... then read on to learn about the Rockstar Approach to Networking.

WHY IS NETWORKING IMPORTANT?

Networking is, without a doubt, the difference between just landing a job and landing a *dream job* – one that is challenging, interesting, and rewarding (i.e. pays well!).

When you decide to find a job, you typically would work really hard on making a snazzy resume and then send it out to a bunch of companies you really want to work for along with an application. Then the waiting game begins.

Ask someone who absolutely loves their job and only a small percentage of them will say they followed this method. More often than not, the response from these folks is “well, I just happened to meet so and so, and they told me about an awesome opportunity. They introduced me to the right folks and helped me along the way.”

This was also true for me. When I was in business school, I was able to create a personal relationship with a consultant who happened to be a friend of a friend. It was evident that this individual became my champion at that firm and was tremendous in helping me get the interview. In addition, his excitement of wanting to work alongside of me made me more confident when I interacted with members of his firm. I

attribute landing the interview to this synergistic effect.

Another reason networking is important is because it gives you an opportunity to do your due diligence and identify which companies, departments, and jobs are right for you. Would you rather work for a firm that seems like it is really awesome, or would you actually want to get to know what it’s like to work there? You can find profiles and rankings of companies on-line but you only really get to know what it’s like when you connect with current employees. By interacting with them, and by seeing them interact with each other, you can sense what kind of culture the company actually strives to build. This “courtship” lets the company give you a sense of what they offer, and more importantly, lets you convey to the company just how much of a Rockstar you are. The more they think you’re a Rockstar, the better the offer will be.

Additionally, networking is important because it establishes your reputation. At the end of the day, *your reputation is the summary of the experiences people have had interacting with you*. If you are a poor networker and fail to build strong relationships, you won’t hold much water when it comes to decision time in terms of who is selected for the interview. Conversely, if you learn to network effectively – like a ROCKSTAR – then you will easily be top-of-mind when the interview selection occurs.

Don’t be fooled – all recruiters talk to each other very often about candidates. We talk to other members of our own recruiting team when a candidate reaches out to us. “Just got an email from Johnny Rockstar – how was your experience with him?” Further, we also speak with recruiters from other firms. When I was school manager of recruiting for my company at my previous business school, I would very often reach out to previous classmates who had gone onto to different companies and ask them who they were scouting out in the next class as Rockstars.

It’s very typical for a Rockstar candidate to have multiple offers from

a myriad of firms – and it all begins with effective networking. But let me be clear: **networking is work!**

CHAPTER 3:

THE ROCKSTAR APPROACH TO NETWORKING

- ✓ Yes.
- ✗ No.
- ? Maybe.
- ★ Rockstar.

These are four words that you will hear come out of my mouth often. In fact, with the speeches, workshops, seminars, and personal coaching that I do, I say these words almost every single day to people just like you. They sum up everything I have learned about networking.

When a recruiter or influential individual meets you, they will place you in one of those four buckets. The Rockstar Approach to Networking is aimed to make sure you fall into that Rockstar bucket - because people in the Rockstar bucket are the ones who will land the interview. It's then up to you to rock the interview and get the offer.

There are four components to the Rockstar Approach to Networking, and each is incredibly important for you to master in order to get an enriching and fulfilling job:

1. Understand the *Science of Networking*: This includes knowing who to network with, how to build personal relationships, and knowing how to navigate the complex landscape of networking. This also includes understanding how to use networking to land your dream job... not just to expand your network.
2. Learn and Improve *Essential Networking Skill Sets*: Once you understand what networking is really all about, you need to become really good at it. This includes learning and improving the two most important networking skill sets – confidence and communication. Weird to think of those as skills sets, right? Well, you can definitely learn how to get better at both if you follow the Rockstar Approach.
3. *Effectively Self-Assess* and know where to start: Perhaps the most important and most overlooked of all the steps is taking a good look in the mirror and knowing who you really are and what you have to offer. Knowing your own strengths and weaknesses in comparison to the Rockstar attributes that recruiters look for in a candidate helps you develop your story and your Personal Networking Strategy (PNS). It also helps you understand the reality of how likely it is you will find success – by understanding how you stack up against other candidates in your peer set.
4. Develop *Successful Networking Strategies*: Yes, strategy. Very rarely does the dream job just fall into your lap – you need to carefully think about how you will effectively network to successfully land that dream job. This begins with understanding which firms to pursue (by gauging fit), knowing when and how to reach out/start a relationship, and knowing what kind of relationships to build with different types of contacts. The networking landscape can get more complex than you might have ever imagined. I've learned successful strategies via my own success, but via many failures as well.

The final note about the Rockstar Approach to Networking is that it will typically require more time and preparation than what you would typically put into finding a new job. Most people I talk to give themselves a 2-3 month window to search for a new job – and very rarely are they ever successful in landing a *dream* job. They end up finding out they aren't getting the response to their resume they expected and then just switch over to one of the first offers they get.

To really land your dream job – and to make the whole process an extremely fulfilling experience in which you truly understand yourself and what your dream job really is – takes time, but I think it's really worth it. The good news is that you can begin the process while you are still in your current job, or in school. I usually recommend my personal coaching clients to begin my 10-step process 5-8 months before they expect to really switch jobs.

Alright, now you know who I am, why networking is important, and what the Rockstar Approach entails. This is a beginner's guide, so that's probably enough to get you interested. But let's dig in and walk through each of the four steps to enable you to start your journey. If you want to get more details and some real examples, along with sample emails/dialogues, you can find those in my first book, [*The MBA Guide to Networking Like a Rockstar*](#).

I worked hard to land my dream job, and then I left it for something better. It makes me feel great that I'm in a position where I can help others achieve their dreams. Getting hundreds of thank you notes and emails from the students and industry professionals I've worked with inspires me to spread my message, and I'm excited to share it with you.

Let's Rock!

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO: UNDERSTANDING THE SCIENCE OF NETWORKING

Imagine if I put you on a dodge ball court but didn't explain the rules to you... or that maybe I only explained some of the rules to you. How would you fare? You might think the system is unfair, or broken, and probably not stay on to win in the game. In the same way, most people don't know how to really land their dream job, or how to find it, *because they don't know the rules of the game.*

People will work and work on their resume, then submit or post it, and then wait around for a response. Believe me, the likelihood of receiving a positive response using this method is very small. Especially when you are looking to land that enriching, challenging role that will make you happy – a dream job.

So let me first give you a succinct yet powerful definition of networking:

Networking is building personal relationships with influential individuals to positively impact career development.

So let's break this down a bit:

FIRST OF ALL: CAREER DEVELOPMENT. What does that mean to you? Networking is not just expanding your network or collecting business cards like baseball cards. Every action you take should be developing and advancing your career. It is very important to first of all think about what career development looks like for you. Sure, you probably have a lot of interests and would be happy doing a variety of different things. But you need to focus your efforts to be successful.

Think about the various functions/roles that interest you. Find out what most people in your position do next, or think about what you want to learn with your new role. What kind of development is important to you? Do you want to become more customer-facing? Do you want to manage others? There are multiple options and choices and filters to apply, so I would highly recommend talking with friends and family – the people who know you best. If it's still a little difficult, or you're not sure – I would highly recommend career coaching.

SECOND: INFLUENTIAL INDIVIDUALS. Do you know who's going to be in a position to help you land that interview? There are two types of people that you need to network with:

1. Recruiters – these are the individuals whose main job function is to find talent for various positions. They are extremely skilled at what they do, and like me, they have reviewed hundreds if not thousands of resumes, and assessed just as many candidates in person.
2. Influential Individuals – these are non-recruiting staff from your dream firm(s), friends or family, members of your school's alumni network, classmates, colleagues, co-workers, and even professors or school staff, who can indirectly influence the Recruiter's Decision Mindset (RDM).

The Recruiter's Decision Mindset (RDM) is a recruiter's conclusion regarding your candidacy with the firm based on a set of facts, assump-

tions and interactions throughout the networking lifecycle. As I mentioned before, the outcome will be one of four:

- ✓ Yes.
- ✗ No.
- ? Maybe.
- ★ Rockstar.

It's hard to land in the Rockstar category, and even harder to stay in it throughout the duration of your relationship – but put the work in, follow the Rockstar Approach, and you'll be sure to fall into the right category.

It's easy to build relationships with the wrong people. Or sometimes the individuals you build relationships with might leave the firm. Either way, you need to identify the right individuals to network with, and make sure you build connections with as many relevant people in the firm as possible.

FINALLY: PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. Ok, so obviously networking is building relationships, but why does it need to be a personal relationship? Well, because recruiters are people too – and they make emotional decisions just as much as anyone else. Recruiters usually have a gut feel of who will be a good fit for the available positions. If you are able to build a personal connection in a professional setting, then the recruiter or influential individual will get to know who you are on a personal level – and this is what will help you stand out from other top-caliber candidates.

Ever hear of the “airport test”? It simply refers to a situation where you might take a business trip with the recruiter or influential individual you are networking with and the plane is delayed. Now they are stuck with you in the airport for a few hours – will the time fly by while you

grab a drink together, or will it drag on as you awkwardly sit there?

See why I tell my clients to start 5-8 months before they really want to switch to their dream job? Articulating your own career development, identifying influential individuals, and building personal relationships takes a lot of time to develop – this process will, however, guide you towards your dream job.

Work through the questions I pose in each section of this chapter and begin your journey towards your dream job.

LEARNING LESSONS THE HARD WAY

When I was a first-year MBA student – before I learned the science behind networking – I had an opportunity to participate in a “case challenge competition,” which was hosted by a consulting firm on our campus. Great, I thought! It's hard to stand out with my resume, so I'll make some connections during the case challenge competition! And sure enough, my team came in 2nd place in the challenge, and many of the Partners of the consulting firm were the judges – they got to see my skills first hand, and I had a chance to connect with them. There was one Partner specifically that I connected with who had noticed me in the competition and was very supportive of me. Over time I built a relationship with this Partner, and as we neared the winter break, he began to talk about the project he was going to be working on that summer in New York, and what kind of role he saw me playing in the project as a summer intern. It almost was too good to be true – a Partner from this firm was already acting like I had the offer in hand. This definitely helped my confidence coming into the interviewing season.

After the winter break, I came back to campus and interview lists were posted for all the major firms. With a certain air of confidence, I searched the list to see when my interview was scheduled... but to my surprise, and to my chagrin – my name was not on the list!

Immediately, I reached out to my contact – he was after all a Partner in the firm and really supported me – and told him the situation. He looked into it, and found out that the Recruiting Manager did look at my resume, but didn't think I had enough years of work experience and thus didn't save a spot for me in the interview calendar. I was just devastated. The Partner said he would 'work on things' and get back to me.

Luckily, I was on the interview list of a few other companies, and was able to get an offer with all of these other firms. By the time I finished that process, the Partner finally got back to me and said "hey, we can do a special interview for you." But it had taken so long for them to internally discuss the situation and find a solution that I had already accepted another offer due to a deadline. I had to graciously decline. Today, that Partner and I still maintain our relationship, and we can laugh about the situation – but at the time I learned some very valuable lessons:

- 1. If you are hoping to interview with a firm, build relationships with as many people as possible. Had I also built a relationship with the Recruiting Manager, I probably would have made the interview list and worked alongside that Partner in NYC as we had planned.*
- 2. Always cast your net wide – when I didn't get an interview with this firm, I was lucky to have had built relationships with other individuals at other firms, which ended up*

offering me an interview spot. Once I had made the decision I wanted to do consulting, I connected with every consulting firm – not just the "big names". As I learned more about each one through the process – I clearly began to see that some of the other, smaller firms were probably a better fit for me.

Don't make the same mistakes I did – build personal connections with all the influential individuals who are available to you... and make sure they all can positively impact your career development.

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO LEARNING AND IMPROVING ESSENTIAL NETWORKING SKILL SETS

Let's go back to that game of dodge ball. I've finally explained the rules to you, so you know what you need to do. But you probably also want to be good at the game, right? Especially if winning means getting your dream job? What's the first thing you'd probably do? *Start practicing.* Running, dodging, throwing, catching - all these will help you be prepared for the game when it begins. All that practice will also get you mentally ready for any challenges you face.

When it comes to networking, practice truly makes perfect. Each scenario, each interaction, and each influential individual you network with is so unique, that you can never be totally prepared. But you can be ready.

There are two types of skills sets that I think are paramount to effective networking. Skill sets that every Rockstar needs to check off in order for a Recruiter to place them in that category. Those skills sets are confidence and communication.

FIRST, CONFIDENCE. You need to build and convey confidence in interacting with Recruiters and Influential Individuals. This can typically be difficult for engineers or people who don't have much sales

experience. This is also typically difficult for international candidates who come from cultures that are not used to "boasting their accomplishments." When an Influential Individual or Recruiter assesses you, they will ask questions like:

- Will this candidate perform well in the position?
- Will they impress clients/senior leadership?
- Will they become a leader at the firm?

You need to be confident, but not cocky. Recruiters can easily see through the phony salesman bit, and will ensure you can "walk the walk, not just talk the talk".

SECOND, COMMUNICATION. Over the course of your relationship with Influential Individuals and Recruiters, you will have numerous interactions via various modes of communication such as email, phone, web chat, in- person meetings, and via your resume. It's imperative to enhance the efficacy of the written and oral components for each type of interaction you have with a recruiter throughout your relationship. These interactions and communications include but are not limited to:

- Resume/Application Submission
- Cold-calling
- Corporate Presentations/Networking Receptions
- Follow-up emails
- Phone chat requests
- Phone Chats/Coffee Chats/Informal interviews
- Feedback requests
- And hopefully... Interview selection communications

There are specific rules for each one of these types of interactions which I explain in [*The MBA Guide to Networking Like a Rockstar*](#). However, those can get quite complex. As you begin, you cannot go wrong if you keep in mind the Rockstar's 5 Rules to Interacting with Influential Individuals and Recruiters:

1. Be courteous to the schedule and timings of the Influential Individual or Recruiter you are interacting with.
2. Prepare for each interaction with ample time and with a personal approach to the specific individual.
3. NEVER copy/paste in written communication or recite from memory in oral communication.
4. Default to formality until the opposite party introduces opportunities for informality.
5. Design each interaction to help you advance through the relationship hierarchy until you achieve Support, with a capital S.

I believe you can build confidence through practice. Practice with friends, classmates, or work colleagues. Understand what is required of you and dispel the “mystery” behind communications. Review best practices and prepare effectively to be successful. Finally, seek out and learn various structures to interacting that can help you be confident in approaching any situation. Most of all, stay genuine – it’s important to convey YOU. Recruiters want to hire YOU, so don’t just take someone else’s thoughts or ideas; make them your own. Put your own signature on the Rockstar Approach and shine.

Here is a prime example of a structure I introduce with the Rockstar Approach. I provide this guidance based on my experience delivering the 30-second intro to recruiters as a student, and hearing it hundreds of times from students as a recruiter.

What is the 30-second intro? Originally, the concept was something along the lines of “The person who will hire you for your next job just walked into the elevator with you, and you have 30 seconds to let them know who you are and why they should hire you.” A lot of pressure right? Plus that is basically impossible. You can probably start a relationship in the elevator, but like I said before – it takes time to build a personal connection with influential individuals to positively impact

your career development.

So, my take on it is, don’t get overwhelmed. Use the 30-second intro as a way to help yourself articulate who and what you really are. You can prepare your 30-second intro by using the following structure – articulate in 30 seconds:

WHO: you are

WHAT: you’ve done

WHERE: you’re going

WHY: you deserve it

In your head, you can probably do this, but try saying it aloud to someone else. Much harder, right? This is why you need to understand the structure of the 30-second intro, practice it, and be prepared for when the opportunity comes.

Remember, the point is not to sound like a robot who has practiced this 100’s of times. The point is to build confidence in being able to communicate “you” to an Influential Individual or Recruiter when the time comes.

I believe examples are really helpful in “dispelling the mystery,” so here is one for me:

“Hi, I’m Jaymin Patel, and over the past 7 years I’ve spent a lot of time learning how to navigate the complex landscape of networking and landed my dream job as a management consultant. I’ve learned a lot along the way and I want to share my message on a full time basis as an author, public speaker, and career coach. I’ve already shared my message with 1000s of students and industry professionals, and would like to help you land your dream job.”

Lets break it down using the 30-second intro structure introduced in the Rockstar Approach:

WHO: you are - “Hi, I’m Jaymin Patel”

WHAT: you’ve done - “over the past 7 years I’ve spent a lot of time learning how to navigate the complex landscape of networking and landed my dream job as a management consultant.”

WHERE: you’re going - “I want to share my message on a full time basis as an author, public speaker, and career coach”

WHY: you deserve it - “I’ve shared my message with 1000s of students and industry professionals”

You’ll notice I added a bit more at the end – that’s just my personal style. To some people this might seem a bit robotic – but its the way I talk, and it works for me. Use this structure and combine it with your style to find your own 30-second intro that flows naturally and articulates who you are succinctly.

It’s really important to be genuine, so use my pointers as a guide to help you be a more confident and effective communicator. Adjust the style, order or format to something that fits you best... but as you practice be sure you can articulate all four of those points clearly and succinctly. This structure has been proven to work over and over, and I’m sure it will work for you as you begin your journey.

Confidence and communication are the key to being placed in the Rockstar category by an Influential Individual or Recruiter. You can never work on these skill sets too much – they can often be the “make or break” of networking. One wrong move, and you can easily slide from the “Yes” or “Rockstar” category to the “No” category – I’ve had it happen with a few slip ups of my own and learned it the hard way.

So, practice, practice, practice! Prepare, prepare, prepare!

BEGINNER’S GUIDE TO: EFFECTIVELY SELF-ASSESSING AND KNOWING WHERE TO START

If I told you there will be only one victor of the dodge ball game, and that person will get their dream job, would you take some time to scope out your competition? Most likely, yes. There are so many attributes that define a successful dodge ball player: speed, agility, strength, etc. By knowing how you stack up against your competitors, you’ll know where you stand in terms of finding success on the field.

The same is true for networking. You know who you are: you’re a Rockstar. But not everyone knows that already, especially the Influential Individuals and Recruiters with whom you are interacting. You need to first and foremost let them know that if you are anything at all, you are self-aware.

If you try to “sell” yourself to a recruiter, they will see right through it. That’s why it’s important to self-assess and know where you stand, then create a Personal Networking Strategy (PNS) that is based on your strengths and weaknesses across the attributes that Recruiters look for in a Rockstar Candidate.

What are these attributes? They largely span 3 categories:

- Educational Benchmarks

- Work History Characteristics
- Skills Sets/Experience

FIRST, EDUCATIONAL BENCHMARKS. Remember how everyone told you it's important to get good grades in school? They were right to an extent – depending on the role and function, and the company and industry you are interested in, Recruiters will first do an assessment of your education benchmarks. They want to know what kind of student you were so they can learn what kind of person you are.

For example, if a recruiter sees a high GPA (e.g. 3.8 or above), they will associate this with a person who is ambitious, determined and hard-working. Maintaining focus on performing well in class is usually associated with a specific type of person.

In terms of education benchmarks, a recruiter might ask him/herself the following questions:

- What is the candidate's GPA? What does this tell me about him/her?
- What are the candidate's test scores? How does that compare to a typical successful candidate at this company?
- Which school did the candidate attend? What do I know about this school?
- What was the candidate's major? How does that compare to a typical successful candidate at this company?
- Was the candidate involved in any relevant activities or clubs?
- Did the candidate receive any honors or accolades?

SECOND, WORK HISTORY CHARACTERISTICS. It's important for a recruiter to ascertain your career potential at their firm. They have a specific type in mind when recruiting, and will seek the best fit. A recruiter might ask him/herself the following questions:

- What kind of work experience does the candidate have?
- If in college, did the candidate work any internships?

- If a seasoned industry veteran, did the candidate work at one company or many companies?
- What firm(s) has the candidate worked for? What do I know about these firms?
- What kind of roles did the candidate hold? How does that compare to a typical successful candidate at this company?
- Does it seem like this position is a logical next step for the candidate?
- Will the candidate be successful and committed over the longer term?

AND FINALLY, SKILL SETS/EXPERIENCE. Recruiters will have in mind the specific skill sets they are looking for in a candidate. In fact, most job descriptions will list these out! How do you stack up against the skill sets required for the job? What is your experience like?

Remember, these skill sets are pretty typical across industries, but there will also be specific skill sets for each industry. For example, for a banking position, financial skill sets will be assessed in detail. For a position in Information Technology, certain certificates might be required.

A recruiter might ask him/herself the following questions:

- What examples does the candidate exhibit in terms of leadership experience?
- Does the candidate showcase analytical skills?
- What can I tell about the candidate in terms of the type of contributor s/he is on teams?
- Does the candidate have strong communication skills?

When you put yourself in the Recruiter's shoes and ask yourself these questions, you will begin to get a good idea of your candidacy and how you stack up against the competition. Take time to perform the self assessment and understand your strengths and weaknesses so you know where to start. Then, start filling the gaps and sharing your story with

the right people with confidence!

If you are interested in doing a full self-assessment, I offer strong examples of each of these Rockstar Attributes that I have seen as a Recruiter—as well as weak examples – in [*The MBA Guide to Networking Like a Rockstar*](#). This assessment was developed after evaluating hundreds of students and industry professionals – see how you stack up against the strong and weak examples.

Also, keep in mind that a Rockstar candidate does not need to be strong in all of these attributes to be successful. You can actually use some weaknesses in these categories to your advantage as you articulate your story and Personal Networking Strategy (PNS). While each case is unique and different, the fact is that being self-aware and knowing where to start will get you on your way to being a Rockstar – and to landing that dream job.

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO: DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL NETWORKING STRATEGIES

If we were back in Chapter 4, and I had put you in a dodge ball game without telling you the rules, without letting you practice your skills, and without letting you assess your chances of success but asked you “what’s your strategy?” What would be your answer? You probably wouldn’t have one.

Similarly, without knowing your specific career goals (e.g. what is your dream job?), your skills sets, or without knowing where you stand amongst your peer set, it’s hard to create a strategy. And it’s hard for me to give you specific advice on what can directly help YOU be successful. Every week I get on the phone with people like you and we get into the nitty gritty details and find a pathway to success – we develop strategies that lead my clients to 6-figure jobs!

So, while it’s hard for me to share specific details to help you take the next step, I’m definitely happy to point you in the right direction and tell you what I cover in my “10-step Dream Job Career Coaching Series.” As you begin to develop your Personal Networking Strategy (PNS), ask yourself these 10 questions (one for each step of my coaching program):

1. Resume Review: “How effective is your resume in conveying

your candidacy to a recruiter?”

2. Personal Assessment: “Would you hire yourself?”
3. Gauging Fit – “Did you do your homework on the industries, companies, functions, and positions you want to pursue?”
4. Articulating your Story: – “Have you developed a succinct articulation of who you are that will let everyone know you are a Rockstar?”
5. Developing a Personal Networking Strategy (PNS) – “Have you identified the messaging, approach, and individuals to engage from the firms on your list?”
6. Prepare materials for reaching out/interacting with Recruiters and Influential Individuals – “Do you have effective communications for the various interactions with Influential Individuals and Recruiters?”
7. Practice actual dialogues and strategies – “Are you fully confident and prepared for your interactions with Influential Individuals and Recruiters?”
8. Putting the final touch on your follow-ups – “Will your follow-up communication be the make or break of your networking efforts?”
9. Adjustments to the PNS – “Are you achieving Support with a capital S?”
10. Close the deal – “Have you developed an approach to engage with Influential Individuals and Recruiters in your network to gauge your chances of success and ensure you make the interview list (having the tough conversation)?”

Following these ten steps with proper guidance and insight will not only help you land your dream job, but it will also provide you an opportunity to really get to know yourself, your goals, and your abilities. Beyond all of that, it will make you a Rockstar Networker – enabling you to use these skills for the rest of your career and the rest of your life.

ZOOM IN ON THE DETAILS TO CREATE THE RIGHT STRATEGY FOR YOU

One of my coaching clients was a seasoned industry professional with nearly ten years of experience. We will refer to her as Kareena. Kareena worked in the tech industry, had been with the same company for the majority of her career, and was quickly promoted to high ranking positions. She decided that she wanted to use her momentum and move to another company in the tech industry.

“What kind of companies are you looking to move to, since you already know what industry you want to be in?” I asked her. Confidently she listed them: Google, Apple, Amazon... etc. I really was enjoying our session – such a successful, confident woman will do a great job in achieving her career goals. I found that she was successful for a reason – she was self-aware and knew that after being at one company for so long, she could use some added industry perspective to make her career transition even smoother.

We started with a resume review. And while her content was pretty good, it was not at all positioned for a Recruiter’s eyes. “You know, when you submit a resume, it’s not just a list of what you are... *it’s a story of who you are.* You can actually write a resume so that you can guide a Recruiter’s eyes through it in the way that you want them to see it.” Recruiters have so many candidates who vie for top positions, that they spend less than 30 seconds per resume – that’s not a lot of time if you just submit a laundry list of things you’ve done. Recruiters will get bored and move on.

We decided a skills-based resume would be ideal for her positioning, and worked each bullet point to really give a full picture of not only what she’d done but who she was. She felt more confident

about the document, and thought she was ready to go. I told her the next step was to do an assessment.

“Would you hire yourself,” I asked her.

“Of course,” she replied.

I convinced her about the importance of the self-assessment and we started talking. We walked through the 11 attributes of a Rockstar candidate that I had outlined during my work as a Recruiter. Kareena had every right to be confident – she was successful and on the “fast track” at her company. But her “aha!” moment came as we went through the assessment. In areas where she thought she was really strong, she was about medium from what I had seen in industry. Plus, the fact that she had only worked at one company was both an asset and a drawback to her candidacy. Would she find the same success in a completely different company with a completely different culture? Would she be valued? How would she develop? As these questions unfolded and we zoomed in on the details, the true coaching began.

I’d like you to learn from Kareena’s experience. First of all, we ALL deserve our dream jobs – but we need the right strategies to get known. First we need to know ourselves, then we need to know how to let others know who we are. If you want a job, you could go get a new one in a few month’s time. But if you want your dream job – then it’s going to take a lot more work. Get people you trust and admire to help you along the way, and put yourself in the shoes of the Recruiter. Ask yourself what the Recruiter would think if they saw your resume or spoke to you on the phone. This is often difficult to do, but with the right help, you will be even more successful in landing your dream job.

CHAPTER 8:

IS THE ROCKSTAR APPROACH FOR ME?

So do you need the Rockstar Approach? Maybe not. If you can effortlessly provide solid answers to all of the questions in the last chapter, maybe you’re already ready to Rock. But I can assure you that the aggregation of knowledge and experience contained in the Rockstar Approach will make the whole process way easier and more streamlined for you.

The number one thing I hear from anyone who has read my original book *[The MBA Guide to Networking Like a Rockstar](#)* – whether its an MBA student, and industry professional, or even an undergraduate student – is “I wish I had read this book earlier”.

I personally wish I had an approach and a book like this when I was seeking my dream job – but nothing like it existed. Instead, I had 1,000 conversations with other students, professionals, and whoever else I could get time with to answer all of my 1,000 questions. This approach and this book is the summation of all those 1,000 dialogues packed into one easy-to-reference guide.

I truly learned networking when I was an MBA student, and that’s why I titled my book accordingly. The book is 20-30% focused on the

MBA journey (in case you're curious about it), and 70-80% on general networking strategies and skill sets that have helped numerous people shift into their dream job.

Networking is a life-long skill – I've been using it ever since it crystallized for me in those MBA days, and now I can proudly say that I've shared my message with a range of folks – including some of the most talented students and professionals at the top Fortune 500 companies and business schools in the world. I still attribute a lot of my success to networking.

THE JOURNEY AHEAD OF YOU

They say hindsight is 20/20... well imagine having that hindsight right as you begin your journey. I've taken that hard journey and achieved my goals. Now instead of just moving forward, I'm turning around to show you how to navigate that complex landscape of networking and stand out amongst top-caliber candidates to land your dream job.

Start with all the content and questions provided here in The Beginner's Guide. Once you can provide solid answers to each of the questions, you will be on your way to your dream job. As you move forward, seek input and feedback from individuals whom you look up to professionally and find credible. They can help ensure your self-view matches the external view of you – **this is very important**. If you simply find answers to the questions posed in this book, but they are not solid – you may likely end up not achieving your goals

If you're interested in learning more about the details behind networking, building your confidence and communication skills, assessing yourself amongst the best and worst in the industry, and developing effective networking strategies, I encourage you to pick up [*The MBA Guide to Networking Like a Rockstar*](#).

Now you have a beginner's understanding of The Rockstar Approach to Networking – so begin your journey! If you take anything with you, just remember these four words:

- ✔ Yes.
- ✘ No.
- ❓ Maybe.
- ★ Rockstar.

Now get out there and channel that inner Rockstar! Your dream job awaits you, and I sincerely wish you a successful and fruitful journey to achieving your goals!

THE NETWORK *of* ROCKSTARS

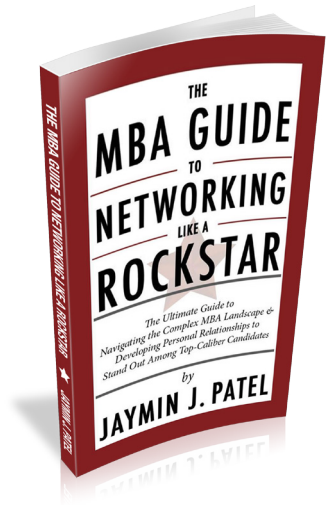


Learn more by visiting
MBAROCKSTAR.COM

THE MBA GUIDE TO NETWORKING LIKE A ROCKSTAR

Here's what else is covered the [The MBA Guide to Networking Like a Rockstar](http://mbarockstar.com) in terms of Developing Networking Strategies to find success:

- Understanding which firms to pursue: gauging fit
- How many companies/positions to pursue
- Knowing what kind of relationships to build with different types of contacts
- Positioning your strengths and weaknesses into a story that will help you get noticed
- When and how to reach out/start a relationship: when is it appropriate
- Off-campus strategies (for those in undergraduate or MBA programs)
- Bouncing back from a failure or setback
- Staying genuine



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THE ROCKSTAR APPROACH **A BEGINNER'S GUIDE**

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