Creating Your Professional Network:
Collecting Contacts, Career Stories, and Advice

Shawn E Nordell (she/her/hers), PhD
Career Development Consultant
Washington University Career Center
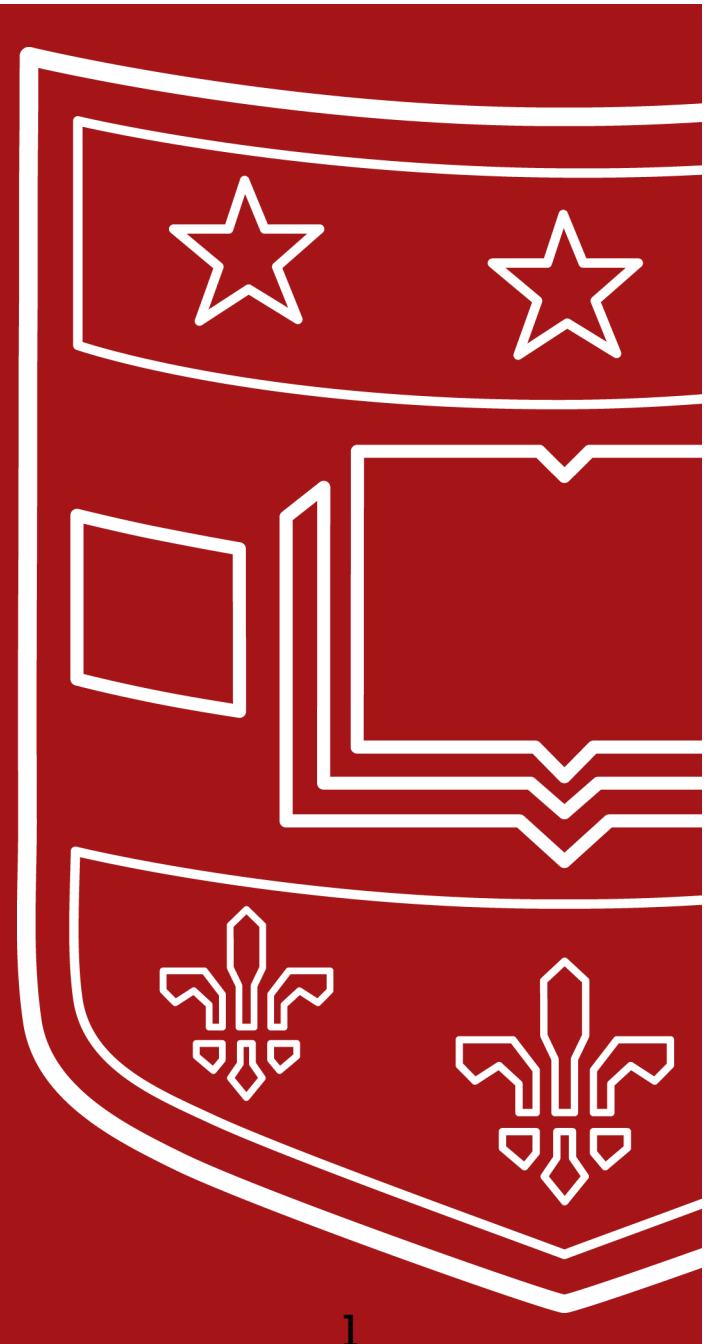shawn.nordell@wustl.edu

Stacia Burd (she/her/hers), M.S.
Graduate Education Specialist
Division of Biology and Biomedical Sciences
Washington University in St. Louis
staciaburd@wustl.edu

Career Center

Washington University in St. Louis
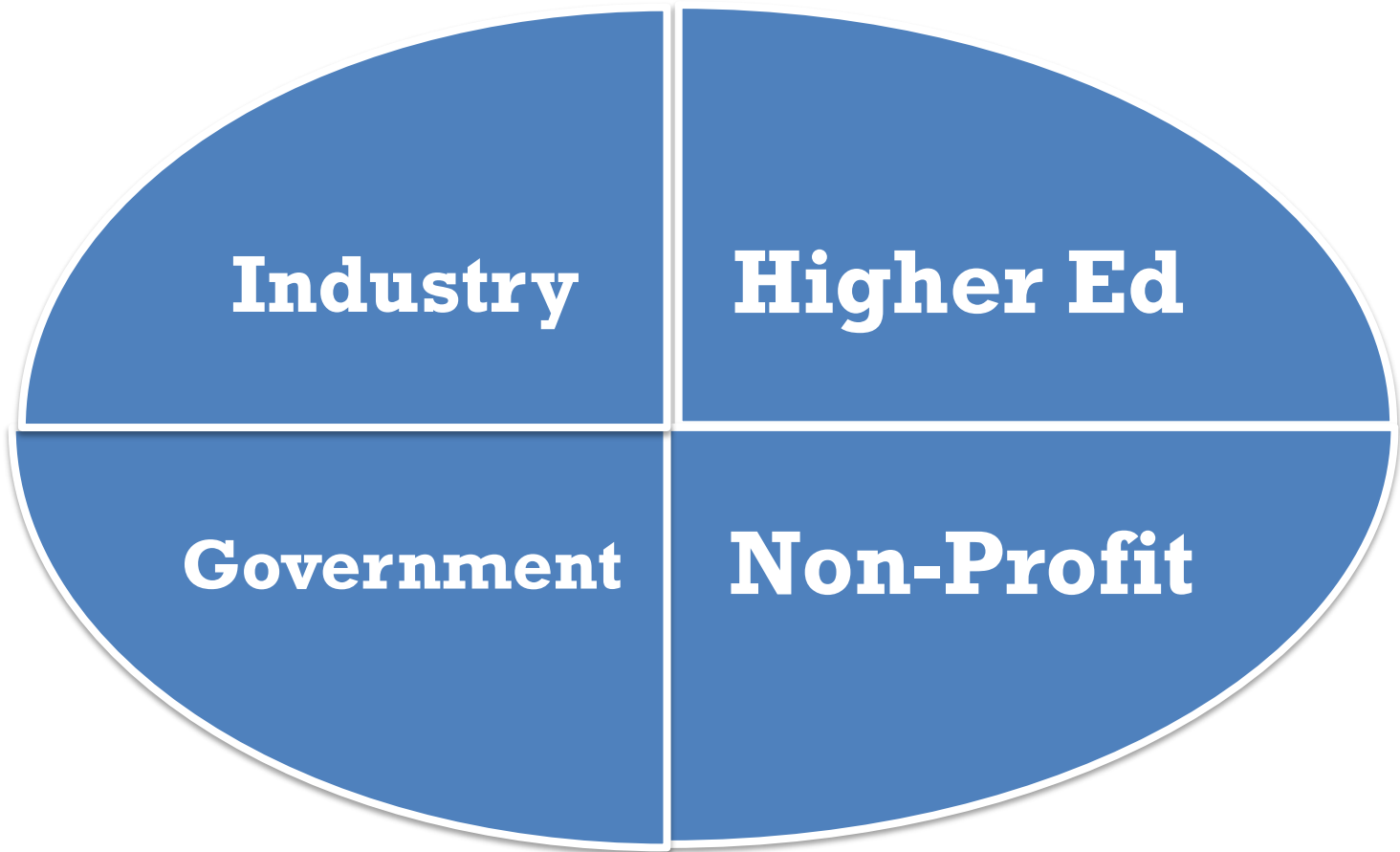
1

https://careercenter.wustl.edu/

Objectives:

At the end of this workshop you should be able to:

- Develop a plan for creating relationships
- Create a list of potential contacts (alumni, LinkedIn)
- Compose a professional self-introduction
- Compose a set of informal conversation/ informational interview questions

Please put a stamp next to appropriate area

Please put a stamp next to appropriate area

Already on the job market

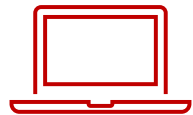Getting ready for the job market

Mid Stage

Just starting out

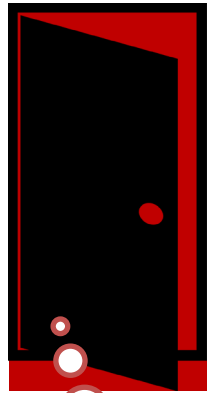# What is a network?
Why have a network?

Hiring process has several stages
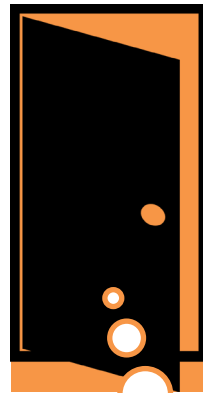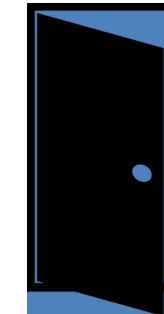
Door #1
Applicant Tracking System

Door #2
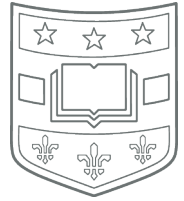**HR or Talent Acquisition Screening Interview (20-30 minutes)**

Doors #3
Panel/ Group Interview Individual Interviews

Resume/ CV with keywords

Review/CV resume Salary range acceptable

Full interview questions Technical, Behavioral, Fit

Networking can lead to referrals

The New York Times

In Hiring, a Friend in Need Is a Prospect, Indeed

Danielle Cosgrove, left, referred Riju Parakh for a job at Ernst & Young. Ms. Parakh was hired within three weeks. Sandy Huffaker for The New York Times

By Nelson D. Schwartz

Jan. 27, 2013

Referrals account for between 30 and 50% of hires in the US. In a paper published earlier this year, researchers from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and MIT studied data from a financial services company, and found that while referrals only made up about 6% of total applications, they resulted in more than a quarter of hires. That's more than the number hired via online job boards, even though those job hunters accounted for 60% of applications and 40% of interviews.

https://qz.com/299923/why-job-referrals-matter/

Brown, M., Setren, E. and Topa, G., 2016. Do informal referrals lead to better matches? Evidence from a firm's employee referral system. *Journal of Labor Economics*, *34*(1), pp.161-209.

7

Referrals:

Get resumes fast-tracked

More productive and have slightly higher wages

More likely to be hired and accept job offers

Reduce time and cost to hire

Less likely to quit

Brown, M., Setren, E. and Topa, G., 2016. Do informal referrals lead to better matches? Evidence from a firm's employee referral system. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 34(1), pp.161-209.

Higher Ed Networking:

Identifies potential collaborators

Creates invitations for showcasing your work (panels, seminars, plenaries, symposia)

Can lead to leadership roles

Can increase your academic audience

Networking also is about gathering career information and contacts

What is the purpose of your conversation?

- Learn more about a job, organization, or career field
- Confirm or challenge any ideas you have about a job or career path
- Learn about skills needed to be competitive
- Grow your professional network
- Discover future job openings

LinkedIn is a Social Network for Professionals of over 500M

LinkedIn Provides Information about:
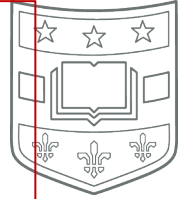
Jobs and Career Pathways of Professionals

Organizations to Build Professional Community

Competencies/Skills to Demonstrate for Careers

People in Positions to Facilitate Introductions or Endorse You

Profiles with headshots are more likely to be viewed

5 Tips for Picking the Right LinkedIn Profile Picture

Lydia Abbot   December 3, 2014

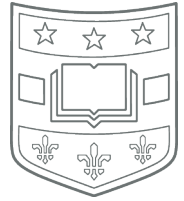in Share   Tweet   Like 3.4K   G+

Your profile picture can be one of the most important elements of your LinkedIn presence. Our research shows that just having a picture makes your profile 14 times more likely to be viewed by others.

Use a professional headshot

- non-distracting background
- dress appropriately for your industry
- choose the mood and expression for your audience

13

Headlines are your professional identity and can identify your skills

Jennifer Sun · 2nd

PhD Researcher | Biomedical Engineering | Cancer Immunotherapy | Cancer Biology | Nanotechnology | Drug Delivery

St Louis, Missouri, United States · 500+ connections ·

Contact info

Pending   Message   More...

Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

Washington University in St. Louis

It all starts with your introduction

What is your professional identity?

- Who are you?

- What do you want folks to know about you?

- What is important to know about you?

- Introductions are situation and audience dependent (30 second and 2 minute version)

PRACTICE

- Where….who….what?

- Be sure to show your passion for your work.

The summary tells your professional identity

About

PhD Candidate in Electrical Engineering (expecting to graduate in November 2020) with 5 years of applied machine learning and statistical modeling experience. My doctoral research is in neuroscience, focusing on adaptive computations that undergo in neural circuits. In addition to working with high-dimensional neural data, I am also passionate about solving problems in computer vision.

About

Joint Ph.D. in Germanic Languages and Literatures and Comparative Literature with 10+ years experience in higher education and corporate roles, including global communications and partnerships, workforce development, teaching, student advising, and study abroad recruitment.

Serving Daimler Mobility AG's Global Cybersecurity Program by leading global communications and educational outreach, as well as designing and implementing team development initiatives and supporting global partnerships.

Extensive experience with designing and facilitating international collaborations, professional development workshops, and student-centered programming.

Create a Summary that:

- Efficiently indicates your specialty

- Speaks directly to "your" audience

- Uses discipline/ industry specific keywords (but not too many)

- Is creative and shows your excitement

- Is specific

- Does NOT begin with "recent graduate"
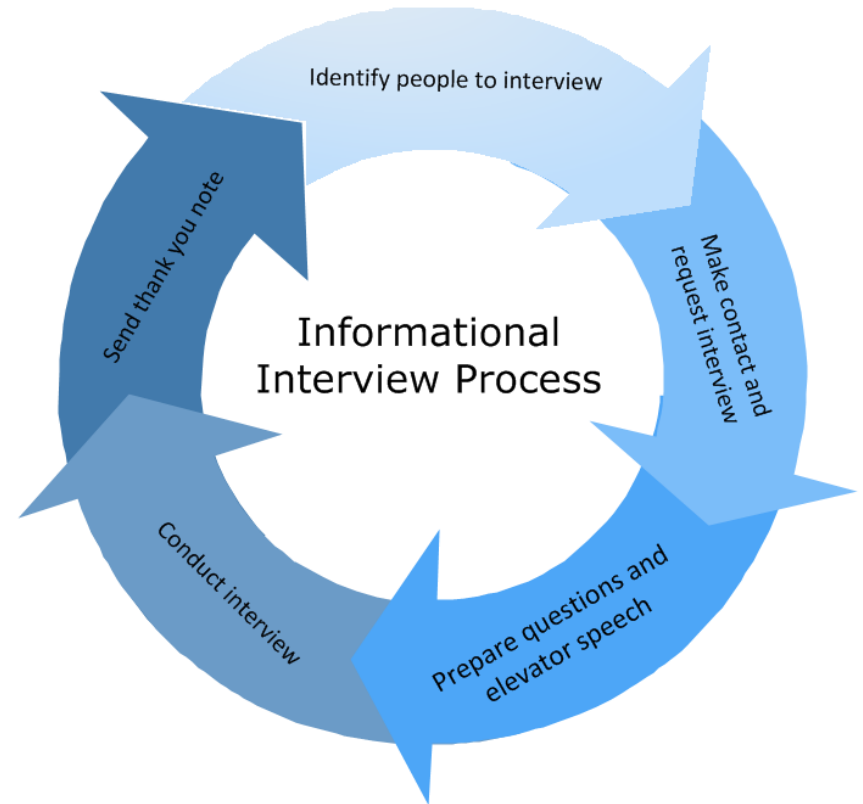
Create a Comprehensive Profile

- List your relevant work experiences, full and part-time, indicate what you learned

- Add your skills (focused list – not too many), your connections can publicly endorse you

- Include your education

- Describe your volunteer work

- Show off honors and awards, organizations, and projects

Informational interviews are an effective research and networking tool

Informational interviews:

- Short (20-30 minute) informal conversation about a career

- Lead to career development and connections

Informational Interview Process

- Identify people to interview
- Make contact and request interview
- Prepare questions and elevator speech
- Conduct interview
- Send thank you note

Request a short career related conversation

- Introduce self and **identify why you are contacting them** (and how you found them)
- **Ask** for a short 20-30 minute conversation about their interesting career path
- Give them some potential days and times available
- Provide your phone and email (offer phone call, zoom, etc.)
- It's a GREAT TIME TO REACH OUT!

Creating a conversation plan reduces stress!

Potential topics:

Focus	Topics
A. Their Present	Ask about their current responsibilities. Information about the organization they work for.
B. Their Past	Discuss their academic and professional background. Transitional experiences that helped them reach their current job and what the interview process was like.
C. Their Future	Where they see themselves in 5-10 years. if you're interested in the specific organization, ask about the future of the organization
D. Their Advice	Their suggestions on individuals or organizations to meet/research. Advice on how to enter the field.

There are many ways and places to network

Where to network?

- Seminars (your department and discipline adjacent departments)
  - Ask to talk to speaker (that day or later)
- Conferences (local/ regional/ national)
- Non-academic conferences (professional associations)
- Create a virtual "coffee room" folks can stop in and chat
- Local Networking Events
- Alumni !!!!!!!!!!!

Venture Café St Louis creates networking opportunities for innovators

https://venturecafestl.org/

STEM Networking Resources List

https://womeninscience.nih.gov/professionalcareer-development-tools-resources#network-op

Alumni connections are invaluable to start your network!

https://www.linkedin.com/school/washington-university-in-st-louis/mycompany/
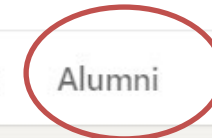
Tips for Networking at (Virtual) Events

- Publicize your attendance pre- , during and post-event
  - Twitter, LinkedIn
  - Post thoughts on presentations (ALWAYS GIVE PRESENTERS NAMES!!!!!!!)
- Register on the event guide/ mobile event app
  - Submit a bio, contact info, professional photo
  - Use event platform to post notes to attendees
  - Look for virtual hangout events
- Create goals
  - Trade emails with 5 people
  - Introduce yourself to 5 people
- Review attendee list prior to event
  - Use filters to identify networking targets
- Engage in real-time messaging during presentations
  - Can private message individuals
- Create virtual happy hours/ networking times
- Follow up with your new connections

What is your network plan for the next week and month?

If you only listen to one podcast…. This is it:

fesciencemarketingradio.com/podcast/conversation-skills

LIFE SCIENCE MARKETING RADIO

HOME   ABOUT   PODCAST PRODUCTION   CONTACT   **THE LSMR PODCAST**   in

https://www.lifesciencemarketingradio.com/podcast/conversation-skills

Conversation Skills You Need to Get What You Want

JANUARY 23, 2018

> Conversation Skills You Need to Get What You Want
> Chris Conner

LIFE SCIENCE MARKETING RADIO – CHRIS CONNER

…conversations lead to relationships, relationships create opportunities, opportunities lead to sales…-Phil M Jones

I find a conversations challenging in some situations. Hosting this podcast has helped, but I still struggle sometimes.

In this episode, Phil Jones walks me through some situations (networking, selling, persuading your boss) and how to guide those conversations to get mutually beneficial outcomes.

It's all about permissions and controls. There is an art to setting boundaries for a conversation to ensure it goes in the direction you would like.

Phil talks about:

- The best way to talk about what you do (story-based answers)
- The one thing everyone (especially your boss) want to give you
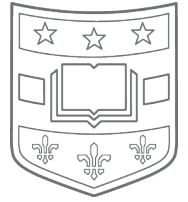- Why calling individuals can get a faster result than texting the whole group

Your Host: Chris Conner

The podcast where marketing leaders inside and outside the sciences share their creative ideas and practical approaches to increasing your marketing ROI.

Promptly Send a Thank You

- Remind them of conversation
- Thank them for something <u>specific</u> in the conversation
- Let them know your next steps

Practice, Practice, Practice

- STOP texting, call your friends and talk.
- Talk to seminar speakers.
- Engage in a brief conversation with someone you don't know.
- Do practice sessions.

Keeping Your Contacts Warm

Examples:

- Connect with Twitter or Linkedin

    - Link with me and see what I share on LinkedIn!

- Send articles of interest
- Update with good news
- Introduce to colleagues
- Share events

Next Steps

- Identify a networking goal for your next conference
- Seek out opportunities to expand your connections
- Practice conversations with friends, peers, family
- Start to build relationships

- Thanks so much!