



## **VIDEO TRANSCRIPT: Networking**

00:02 Speaker 1: Connecting with others professionally is a key element of managing your career. The Capella University Career Center has created three recorded interactive tutorials about the intersecting components of connecting with others. As the three puzzle pieces show, online social networking, networking, and informational interviewing make up the circle of connecting with others. In this segment, we will address networking.

00:28 S1: Many people hold a false belief that networking is negative, salesy, sleazy, an opportunistic "all about me" way to interact with others. We're here to show you that it's not that, and instead show you what it is. First of all, it is important to recognize that networking is a lifelong activity. Also, chances are good you have already engaged in networking conversations. Have you ever offered recommendations on dentists, hairdressers, or daycare providers? Have you talked about your experience with an employer? If so, you have networked. Networking is about trying out a relationship and looking for ways to help the other while getting your own needs met.

01:11 S1: In this session, we will define networking, recognize the benefits of networking for your career, consider the value of taking risks in networking, identify places you could network and people with whom you'd like to network, prepare for networking conversations, and plan to follow up on your networking efforts. So let's get started by talking about what networking is.

01:36 S1: Networking can be defined as making a connection and sharing information in a genuine and reciprocal relationship. Now, let's spend a moment looking at what networking is not even though it is often perceived in this way, and what it should be. Networking is not all about you. People get turned off very quickly when you only focus on yourself. Networking is about developing a reciprocal relationship, how you can help each other. It is not about just handing out business cards. Networking is about conversations, ask questions, be engaged. Nor is it about using someone to get what you want. Networking is reciprocal, both parties should gain something. And finally, it is not solely about getting a job. Sure, networking can help with that, but first and foremost it is about sharing information and knowledge. Networking is a lifetime activity.

02:32 S1: We recognize that you might feel apprehensive about networking or not see the value. Many hesitations spring from concern about taking a risk. But there are many benefits to stepping outside of your immediate comfort zone, and a higher risk activity like asking a colleague for an introduction often leads to a higher reward. Take a moment to read over these examples.

[pause]

03:00 S1: Now take some time to reflect on a time you took a risk and it paid off.

[pause]

03:08 S1: Oftentimes, people think of big formal networking events when they hear the word "networking." The truth is networking can happen in a variety of settings. Anytime people are together, there's potential to connect and exchange information and ideas. We encourage you to become aware that all of these situations could be viewed as opportunities to make connections.

This awareness is a great first step in effective and efficient networking. The first thing you will want to do is intentionally connect. It's often easiest to start by identifying your direct contacts. Think family, friends, or classmates, for example. By telling them what you are looking for, they will be better able to introduce you to people who can be the most helpful. These are your indirect contacts. These indirect contacts can often give you valuable insight that you wouldn't get from talking with just your friends and family. Remember, you don't know who else they may know.

04:06 S1: Because networking can happen anytime and any place, you'll want to be prepared so that you can effectively connect with others whenever the opportunity arises. Think about what you hope to gain by networking with others. Perhaps meeting people in your field, making a career change. When you can clearly articulate your goals, people can see how they can help. Perhaps you will want to take some time to prepare your introduction, your main points you want to get across. Keep it personal, concise, and targeted. What are you wanting? It is best to end your introduction with an open-ended question. This keeps the conversation going. Make some time to practice your introduction until it feels natural. You may even want to practice it in front of friends to get feedback on how it comes across. You do not want it to appear that you're reading from a script. Take a moment to look over this example to get some ideas for your own.

[pause]

05:08 S1: Now let's cover tips to make the networking conversation go smoothly. Converse. Don't think of networking as a series of questions and answers. It is a conversation and should involve sharing as well as listening. Be reciprocal, offering to help will set you apart from many other networkers. Be respectful of their time and ready to bring the conversation to a close. Never, ever directly ask for a job in a networking conversation. Instead, you might ask questions such as, "What suggestions do you have for me to become a viable candidate for a position at your organization?" Expand your network by asking, "Who else should I be talking to?"

05:50 S1: To bring the conversations to a graceful close, it can be helpful to practice your exit before you need it. Perhaps as with your opening, it would be helpful to first think through what you want to say. Closings should include a gracious thank you for their time and information, a discussion of next steps if you would like to stay connected. Keep in mind, you don't have to stay in touch with everyone you meet. If you made a good connection or would like to talk with the person further, go ahead and ask if you can continue the conversation. If they agree, schedule a coffee meeting or an informational interview in a follow-up email. Review this example closing for more ideas.

[pause]

06:39 S1: After your meeting, a prompt follow-up reflects well on you. Even a quick, "It was nice to meet you and thank you for your time" note can go a long way. If you'd like to keep in touch, consider connecting on LinkedIn. Remember to always use a personalized invitation that reminds them how and where you met. So as you have seen through this presentation, networking is a lifelong activity that can help you proactively manage your career. Done well, it requires reflection, preparation, and follow-up. Networking should be genuine and reciprocal. Unlike what we often think, networking is not all about you, it's about relationships. From time to time, step back and evaluate. How are you doing? Are there things that could improve in your networking? There's always more to learn and share.

07:33 S1: This session was brought to you by the Capella University Career Center, staffed by a

team of master's level counselors. The Career Center supports learners and alumni with all aspects of their career, from exploration to job search to advancement. Watch for the two additional connecting with others pieces. Best of luck.