



# The New Professional Image in Public Health



**Bloomberg School of Public Health**

# What is this new image?

- Consists of individuals that are:
  - Network Savvy
  - Professionally Dressed
  - Motivated
  - Willing to go the extra step
  - Starting Early

# Networking

- Understanding and creating your network
  - Goals
  - Ways to build your network
- Prospecting for jobs
- Advancing in your career

# Why would you want to have this image?

- To beat the competition
- To impress potential employers
- To make your life easier
- To build a network for the future
- To find out the real deal
- To be the best at what you do

# Goals of Networking:

- To get a job
- To make a career change
- To increase knowledge and expertise in field of work
- To have skills and expertise more visible to others
- To generate new business and professional contacts
- To make new friends

# Three Ways to Build a Network

- Use existing network for building additional network
- Use organizational meetings, conferences, and events to meet people
- Contact people directly without the aid of a network contact



# The Existing Network

- List everyone that is an acquaintance. Don't overlook anyone.
- Make a plan to telephone these people for advice and referrals.
- The key is contacts. It takes about two or three network contacts to get a solid lead.

# Using Meetings and Conferences

- Networking a room includes:
  - Going to the function with a goal in mind
  - Present yourself as a professional
  - Take business cards, pen, and calendar
  - Enter the room, center yourself, and observe
  - Initiate a conversation
  - Ask good questions and listen
  - Circulate
  - Don't get stuck
  - Follow-up

# Creating a Two Minute Commercial

- **Level:**

How much experience do you have?

How steep is your learning curve?

- **Roles and Functions:**

Exactly what can you do for your next employer?

What is your primary area of competency?

What other skills and abilities can you contribute?

How do you most want to be used?

- **Setting:**

Where have you performed most recently, and how similar was the setting to the one you are now seeking employment?

What earlier settings did you perform in?

# Directly Contacting People

- Get names from trade journals, business articles, directories, etc.
- Contact these people and ask for an informational interview.
- Only ask for information and if they can refer an additional contact person. You are not asking for a job.

# Prospecting Job Leads

- Placement Service
  - College Placement Services
  - Professional Placement Services
- Publications
  - Newspapers
  - Business Magazines
  - Professional Association Publications
- Personal Contacts

The most effective way to find a  
job is through a referral

Seven out of 10 job leads are found  
through networking

# Successful Informational Interviewing

- Be focused. Be self aware. Don't ask the person to make sense of your life
- Be succinct; Don't babble
- Your request should be objective and credible
- What value do you add?
- Explain why you want what you want

# Eight Steps for Information Interviewing

- Contact the person via phone
- Send a confirmation letter to your contact
- Have a list of questions prepared.
  - Keep them open ended
- Listen carefully to what has been said
- Ask for names of additional contacts
- Exchange business cards
- Follow-up with a thank-you
- Record your meeting
- Keep in contact with the person

# Networking for Career Needs

- Most firings could be avoided by strategic networking
- Poor career management decisions could be avoided through effective networking
- The grapevine has an accuracy rate of more than 75% making it a good source of inside information
- Senior level managers on average have had three mentors during their climb to the top
- As you move up the ladder, it is important to become a mentor

# Cross-Cultural

- When speaking to individuals:
  - Keep in mind the person's culture
  - Consider the person's cultural norms
- Be cautious about
  - Eye contact
  - Personal Space
  - Voice volume

# Dress

- Professional Dress is key to your success
  - Business suits for interviews is a must
  - Business Casual attire for seminars/networking presentations
  - Always look to outclass the competition

# Dress for Success

- From head to toe should reflect impeccable grooming. Your hair, collar, tie/scarf and other accessories should be a reflection of the quality person you are.
- It is a fact of life that we do “judge books by their covers.” To be marketable in public health today, your image is as important as what you know.

# Image Tips for All

- Keep it conservative, but add your personal touch
- Do not wear cologne or perfume
- Be aware of all details (the shine on your shoes, nail polish chips, etc)

# Image Tips for Men

- Suits

- Invest in a conservative color (navy or gray).
- Jacket and trousers should coordinate.
- Check for proper fit.
- Best investment; worsted wool or wool gabardine
- Do the wrinkle test

- Shirts

- Long sleeve white shirt is the best option
- A light blue is an alternative
- Shirts in 100% cotton are a good investment
- Have it professionally ironed for an interview/networking event

# (cont.)

- Belts and Shoes

- Leather belts in black and burgundy to match your shoes are good investments
- Wing-tips portray a more conservative image than tassel loafers
- Wear socks that cover your calf and match your trouser

- Ties

- The smaller the pattern, the more authority you will project.
- Use a power color (yellow or red) in the pattern
- The tip of the tie should barely touch the top of your belt buckle
- The knot should be small

# Image Tips for Women

- Suits

- Navy, gray, taupe and black are all good suit colors to invest in when building a wardrobe
- Skirts should be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee
- Worsted wool is the best

- Dresses

- Suits show more authority but a dress is a second option
- Conservative colors are best
- No shorter than 2 inches above the knee
- Wrinkle free fabric is best
- Keep with classic styles

# Accessories

- Shoes should be darker than the suit and be at least a one inch heel
- Hosiery should be skin tone
- Keep accessories to a minimum
- Hair should be away from your face
- Make-up should look natural
- Choose one; handbag or briefcase not both

# Motivation

- Five Factors Recruiters Look for in a Candidate:
  - Communication skills
  - Realistic career goals
  - Personality congruence
  - Leadership characteristics
  - Motivational achievements

# Your Task:

- Know yourself
- Research the agency/company thoroughly
- Understand the real needs of the agency/company
- Present yourself as someone that can add value

# Preparation for a Public Health Career

- Determine your marketable skills
  - based on your background determine what critical skills you have
- Anticipate tough questions:
  - On your background such as lack of work experience
  - Questions based on analytical abilities and public health knowledge
- Prepare for questions based on critical skills and how you communicate your background related to these questions – use examples

## Research the agency/company: It gives focus to an interview strategy

- It enables you to make a better presentation by focusing on the critical skills that are important to them
- It conveys interest and enthusiasm to potential employers
- It demonstrates thoroughness, competence and emotional readiness to work
- It enhances your ability to make an informed decision

# What Should You Research?

- Location(s)
- Facilities
- Size
- Services
- Financial data
- History
- Mission, vision, strategies and goals
- Management Philosophy
- Executive biography

# Research the Facts

- The facts will allow you to emphasize your relevant strong points
- This information will allow you to interweave your background into what the employer has to offer
- This information allows you to evaluate the employer by being able to discuss relevant information to your situation

# Going the extra step

- Immediately after meeting someone or interviewing with someone, ask how and when you can follow-up the conversation/interview.
- Ask for a business card. More often than not, you will forget the person's name.

# Evaluation

- Immediately following the conversation/interview, write down your evaluation of the conversation/interview.
  - Did you feel that the conversation/interview went well?
  - How do your skills match the employers needs?
  - Did a weakness come up?
  - What is the probable action of the person/employer?
  - Are you still interested in the position?
- Write down the follow-up method and timeline for the decision-making process.

# Thank-you notes

- Send a thank-you note within 24 hours of the conversation/interview.
- It may be sent email, if the employer has given you the address. You can also follow-up with snail mail.
- Thank-you notes are brief and should be individualized.
- One note for each person that spoke to you.
- Can be handwritten or typed. Typed is the safest method.

# Sections of the Thank-you note

- The first section should express your continuing interest in the position.
  - Restate the date of the conversation/interview.
- The second section is a chance to sell yourself.
  - Individualize this section for each interviewer.
- Close by stating the mentioned follow-up action.
  - Include your number for follow-up questions.

# Start Early

- The typical jobs takes 3-6 months to obtain
- Public Health agencies come to campus as early as the end of September to recruit
- Many internships and fellowships have fall or winter deadlines
- Many networking events occur in the fall and winter

