NETWORKING:

It isn’t what you know.
It’s who you know.
Session Objectives:

- Benefits of Networking
- What is important to know about Networking
- Best Practices on Networking
- How to survive a Networking event
WHAT IS NETWORKING?
Networking is....

“Creating a fabric of personal contacts who will provide support, feedback, insight, resources, and information.”


Helen Dickey & Associates
BUT WHY NETWORK?
Because....

- It will benefit your career.
- It will help your job search.
Because....

- 75–95% of available jobs never get advertised
  - Especially the higher paying jobs
- US Department of Labor Statistics on how people get jobs:
  - 29% – direct contact with potential employers
  - 23% – placement services
  - 48% – referrals (NETWORKING)
- Why?
  - Hiring managers prefer someone who has been recommended
  - Bombarded with hundreds of resumes
Networking is ......

A lifestyle change.
BENEFITS OF NETWORKING

- Increasing our sphere of influence
- Staying current on the latest trends in your industry or profession
- Promotes your business
- Building a network of contacts before you need them
- Creates relationships that can help you propel your career in the direction of your overall goals
Networking is NOT....

- It’s not selling yourself / your firm or working a room.
- It’s not “sucking up”.
- It’s not cold calling.
- It’s not collecting business cards.
- It’s not learning about job openings.
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GET STARTED
1. Know yourself and your personal brand.
Your Brand

- Define your brand
  - Who are you?
  - Know what you bring to the table that no one else does.
  - What makes you or your qualifications unique?
  - Ask your peers / friends.

- Ensure your brand is consistent
  - LinkedIn – Your Virtual Resume
  - MySpace
  - Facebook
  - Personal Websites
  - Resume
2. Know what you want.
Know what you want

- Define your career goals.
  - If you are in transition, what is your next career move?
  - If you are employed, where do you want to take your career?
    - What industries?
    - What companies?
    - What location?
    - What position?
    - What career path?
3. Know your target audience.
Types of target audiences

- Specific contacts
- Groups
- Online
Specific target contacts

- Ask yourself:
  - Who would be good to know in your profession or industry?

- Determine best approach to be introduced
  - Professional / social / community service organization
  - Referral
  - Cold Call
  - LinkedIn
Specific group targets

- Join groups that share same interests
- Select groups for:
  - Brainstorming
  - Education
  - Commiserating
  - Creating referral or alliance partners
- Types of groups:
  - Networking groups, online or live
  - Professional business groups
  - Industry and business events
  - Community service organizations / Charity events
  - Social clubs
Specific group targets

- Don’t just showing up.
- Take an active role in the group.
- Know when a group is a great fit for your career or business – and when it is not.
Online target contacts.

- Networking online
  - Chat rooms / Web forums
  - Social Networking Websites
- Check them out before you jump in
- Advantages:
  - Thousands of groups / forums
  - Recruiters are looking
  - “Break the ice” before you meet
  - You can engage or not
- Beware!
  - Online behavior matters.
Remember:

Everywhere you go is a networking opportunity.
4. Know that networking is simply having a conversation with “friends”.
A conversation with friends

- Be prepared. Know how to start a conversation.
- Don’t ask “Yes/No” questions.
- Ask “easy to answer” questions.
  - What brings you here?
  - How did you hear about this? / Who do you know here?
  - What do you do? / How did you get into that?
  - What does your company do?
  - When all else fails – Ask about the weather!
- Have a good topic to discuss.
  - Stay current on local topics via newspaper, Business Journal
  - Seek out common interests and experiences
    - Work, sports, hobbies, kids, movies, restaurants
- Avoid “taboo” topics.

Helen Dickey & Associates
A conversation with friends

- Balance the two-way information exchange
  - Make the other person feel important
  - Ask questions about them
  - Listen
- Watch your body language
  - Firm handshake
  - Smile
- Get their business card; get them yours
- Have a polite exit strategy

Helen Dickey & Associates
5. Know that networking is a two-way street.
It’s a two-way street.

- It is not all about you!
- The more you give, the more you get.
- And
- What goes around, does indeed come around.
Networking is a two-way street.

A good networker:
- Builds a positive, ongoing relationship – business or personal
- Gives (not only takes)
  - Provides information, an introduction
- Yet is not afraid to ask for something
- Maintains notes regarding the contact and your meeting
- Constantly maintains / grows their network
  - Has a system for follow-up
  - Sets target number of contacts / meetings
  - Stays connected

Helen Dickey & Associates
You are ready to go. Now what?
The Steps

- Planning
- Execution
- Wrap-up
Steps to networking – Planning

- Develop an “elevator speech” – 30 seconds
- Develop a quick intro – 10 seconds
- Make it sound unrehearsed
- Make it interesting
  - You want them to remember you
  - You want to stimulate conversation

Practice, practice, practice!
Steps to networking – Planning

- Business cards
- Draft introduction
  - Email
  - Phone
- Update your resume
- Update LinkedIn, etc.
- Email address
Steps to networking – Planning

- Create a plan with goals / metrics
  - How many meetings will you have each week?
  - How many people will you email/phone per week?
  - How many new contacts will you try to meet at each organization meeting?
  - Define your target contacts and your plans to meet with them.
- Create contact tracking system
Steps to networking – Execution

- GOAL: TO SET UP MEETINGS
- Start with your inner circle
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Coworkers
  - Neighbors
  - Children’s contacts (school, activities)
- Join organizations. Become active.
- Expand your circle
  - Friend of a friend
  - Referrals
Steps to Networking – Execution

- The Meeting
  - Don’t take up too much of their time.
  - Remind them of who referred you.
  - Communicate your agenda.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for something.
  - Suggestions on how to expand your network
  - Advice and counsel
- Find ways to reciprocate.
- Create a vehicle for follow-up.
Steps to networking – Wrap–up

- Follow–up
  - Send them a note/email/phone call within 48 hours of meeting
  - Follow through all commitments made
- Add them to your contact information database
- Follow through on next steps
How to Survive a Networking Event
Survival Techniques

- Do your homework on the audience
- Set a goal – how many new people will I introduce myself to
- Arrive early
- Talk to the person behind the registration desk
- Bring someone with you
- Have “ice-breaker” questions ready
- Have your business cards readily available
- Name tags
Enjoy building your network and taking your career to the next level!

Helen Dickey, CPA, CISA
Helen_Dickey@me.com
817–291–4360 – Mobile
Questions?