



MAKE CONNECTIONS THROUGH NETWORKING

LEVEL 3 PROJECT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	Introduction
3	Your Assignment
4	Assess Your Skills
5	Competencies
5	Understand Networking
6	Where to Network
7	Prepare for a Networking Event
8	Prepare to Network
8	How to Network
9	The Networking Event
11	Review and Apply
11	Complete Your Assignment
12	Resources

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

www.toastmasters.org

© 2016 Toastmasters International. All rights reserved.
Toastmasters International, the Toastmasters International logo, and all other
Toastmasters International trademarks and copyrights are the sole property
of Toastmasters International and may be used only with permission.

Rev. 11/2016 Item 8306

INTRODUCTION



Networking with other people provides opportunities to learn from differing points of view and experiences. In return, you may build your reputation as a reliable and supportive person through networking by offering useful information. Networking improves interpersonal communication skills, increases confidence, and strengthens relationships.

In this project, you will learn how to present yourself as friendly and engaging, maintain contact with those in your network, and engage and interact with people to network effectively. You will also learn how to acknowledge the interests of others to cultivate mutually beneficial relationships and behave as a competent and professional ally to all the people in your network.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to develop and practice a personal strategy for building connections through networking.

Overview: Prepare for and attend a networking event. After the event, present a 5- to 7-minute speech to your club. Your speech can include a story or stories about your experience, a description of what you learned, or a discussion on the benefits of networking. Your speech may be personal to you or informational about networking. If you attend a non-Toastmasters event, you must sign the Project Completion Form on page 19 and give it to your vice president education.

For all assignment details and requirements, review the Project Checklist on page 12.



Throughout this project you will see icons in the margins next to the text. These icons indicate additional resources available online.



Video: Sign in to Base Camp to watch a video that supports this project.



Interactive Activity: Sign in to Base Camp to complete an interactive activity.



Resource: Sign in to Base Camp to view this resource online.

ASSESS YOUR SKILLS

Evaluate your current skill level by rating each statement.



Select the appropriate number based on your skills today:

5
EXEMPLARY

4
EXCEL

3
ACCOMPLISHED

2
EMERGING

1
DEVELOPING

Pre-Project					Statement	Post-Project				
5	4	3	2	1	I am friendly and engaging when interacting at a networking event.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I am comfortable engaging and interacting with people to network effectively.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I can effectively maintain contact with people in my network.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I can acknowledge the interests of others to cultivate mutually beneficial relationships.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I am a competent and professional ally to all people in my network.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I recognize how this project applies to my life outside of Toastmasters.	5	4	3	2	1

COMPETENCIES

The following is a list of competencies that you will learn and practice in this project.

- Present yourself as friendly and engaging.
- Engage and interact with people to network effectively.
- Maintain contact with those in your network.
- Acknowledge the interests of others to cultivate mutually beneficial relationships.
- Behave as a competent and professional ally to all people in your network.

UNDERSTAND NETWORKING



Networking is the process of interacting with others to exchange information and develop contacts to create mutually beneficial relationships. The further you go in your Toastmasters journey, the more often you will encounter opportunities to extend your network and practice pertinent interpersonal communication skills.

THE BENEFITS OF NETWORKING

Establishing new contacts and building relationships can give you fresh perspective, advice, and support. Opportunities are created by sharing ideas and knowledge with others through collaboration and partnerships. By networking, you can better understand the ways in which interpersonal communication contributes to personal and professional growth.

WHERE TO NETWORK

Networking can take place at any gathering that allows you the opportunity to connect with others.



SOCIAL EVENTS

These are gatherings organized to celebrate life events and ceremonies. Common social events include anniversaries, weddings, and birthdays. New contacts are often made at these types of events and personal connections can play a powerful role in professional success. Remember to be respectful of the reason for the gathering and be willing to pursue a professional conversation after the event.

COMMUNITY SERVICE EVENTS

Community service clubs meet regularly and provide an excellent opportunity to develop professional relationships. Establishing rapport with like-minded people who share common interests can lead to dynamic associations.

PROFESSIONAL EVENTS

Professional events allow you to cultivate a broad and diverse roster of contacts. Interacting with people in your own field and others who share your professional interests can open up a myriad of opportunities. Professional events may include trade shows, conferences, and conventions.

ONLINE

Social networks give you the ability to connect and communicate with others without geographical barriers. Social media can be used to increase your visibility and establish connections with those you may not have the opportunity to meet face-to-face. Sharing your knowledge and interests can help build your network.

PREPARE FOR A NETWORKING EVENT

When developing your networking plans, consider what you want to accomplish. Aside from the connections you want to make, you also need to make note of the talents, strengths, skill sets, and connections you can offer to others. Effective networking requires preparation and practice.

Prepare Your Elevator Pitch

An elevator pitch is an exceptionally brief, unassuming summary that is meant to be delivered in the time it takes to ride an elevator, or less than one minute. Introduce yourself in an upbeat manner.

Communicate Important Points

Be concise and communicate the most important things that you want others to know about you. This could include what you have accomplished, important knowledge, skills, and traits. Allow it to be a natural, relevant extension of your interaction with the new people you meet.

Set Personal Goals

Set goals for yourself before you arrive at an event and develop strategies for achieving them. For example, you may tell yourself: "I will talk to five different people before leaving this event."

Decide on Talking Points

Decide what you want to talk about and how your skill set can help those around you. This process can be made easier by using the Prepare to Network resource provided.

PREPARE TO NETWORK



The Prepare to Network resource on page 17 serves as a tool for the member to gather his thoughts before entering a networking environment.

- Elevator pitch
- Personal objectives for making connections at this event
- Ideal connections
- Skills and knowledge

HOW TO NETWORK

Consider the types of connections you would like to make and identify areas in which you need guidance and support. As you look to make contacts, seek out groups and individuals with relevant skills and knowledge. Be flexible by remaining open to diversity and planning to build relationships over a long period of time. The broader the scope of your networking group, the more likely you are to have the connections you want and need over time.

The goal of networking is getting to know people, not necessarily gaining something.

ASSESS YOUR VALUE

Identify skills and strengths that you can contribute to help others. Be willing to volunteer for projects that allow you to demonstrate your knowledge, experience, or skills.

THE NETWORKING EVENT

Make an Effective Introduction

Take the initiative to interact with new people. Ask open-ended questions and demonstrate your interest by actively listening. Make it your mission to discover the value in each person with whom you speak.

Help Others Build Their Networks

Once you begin to meet people and get to know their individual skill sets, you may understand how a new connection might help someone else. Make it a point to connect people you feel have something of genuine value to offer each other. Generosity is an attractive quality, and it is something special that people will remember about you. Share your contacts with others in ways that are beneficial to them.

Determine How You Can be Useful

Before a conversation comes to a close, ask how your skills or knowledge may be of service. Some examples are, "How can I help?" or, "In what ways could I contribute to this project?"

Consider the Future

Even if your new connections don't need your assistance immediately, something may arise in the future. Make sure that you communicated your expertise in a memorable way so that your connections will think of you when they need help. Convey a giving nature without an expectation of receiving something in return.

Distribute Business Cards

Distribute your business card after you have made a connection and request them from people you would like to maintain contact with. When you receive a business card, write a brief note on the back as a reminder of your conversation.



This will assist you in personalizing correspondence after the event.

After the networking event, be sure to sustain relationships with new and existing contacts.

NURTURE NEW CONTACTS

Organize your list of new contacts and determine their preferred method of correspondence. Be trustworthy by doing what you said you would do, such as calling or emailing. Make sure to personalize your correspondence by letting each person know you enjoyed meeting them and referring to topics you discussed.

MAINTAIN EXISTING CONTACTS

Maintaining existing relationships with your connections is just as important as making new ones. Similarly, if you told one of your connections that you would introduce him to someone, do so. Take the opportunity to act as a bridge between two contacts and encourage both parties to follow up with you after they meet. Introducing your connections to each other can exponentially expand your opportunities.

USE SOCIAL MEDIA

Consider using social media after a networking event to keep connected. You can help sustain newly formed relationships through social networking by occasionally commenting, messaging, and sharing informative content.

REVIEW AND APPLY

- What strategies can you use to network more efficiently?
- How can you turn your skills, knowledge, or hobbies into relevant networking talking points?
- What are some strategies you could use for maintaining contact?
- How might you effectively use the Internet to network?

COMPLETE YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Now that you have read through the project, plan and prepare your speech or report.

Review: Return to page 3 to review your assignment.

Organize: Use the Project Checklist on page 12 to review the steps and add your own. This will help you organize and prepare your assignment.



Schedule: Work with the vice president education to schedule your speech.

Prepare: Prepare for your evaluation. Review the evaluation resources on pages 14–16 and share all resources with your evaluator before your speech. You may choose to share your evaluation resources online.



PROJECT CHECKLIST

Make Connections Through Networking

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to develop and practice a personal strategy for building connections through networking.

Overview: Prepare for and attend a networking event. After the event, present a 5- to 7-minute speech to your club. Your speech can include a story or stories about your experience, a description of what you learned, or a discussion on the benefits of networking. Your speech may be personal to you or informational about networking. If you attend a non-Toastmasters event, you must sign the Project Completion Form on page 19 and give it to your vice president education.

This project includes:

- The Prepare to Network resource
- Attending a networking event
- The Project Completion Form
- A 5- to 7-minute speech

Below are tasks you will need to complete for this project. Please remember, your project is unique to you. You may alter the following list to incorporate any other tasks necessary for your project.

Select a networking event to attend.

Identify your skills and abilities and select a few you would like to highlight.

Prepare your elevator pitch.

Rehearse your pitch in front of your mentor, friends, and family.

Set goals for the networking event. (Be specific: make five new contacts, share my contact information with two new contacts, etc.)

Attend the networking event.

After the event, follow up with new contacts.

Schedule your speech with the vice president education. If you need more time to share your experience with your club, you may schedule an 8- to 10-minute speech with the approval of the vice president education.

Write a speech about your experience at the networking event.

Rehearse your speech.

After you have completed all components of the assignment, including your speech, return to page 4 to rate your skills in the post-project section.

EVALUATION FORM

Make Connections Through Networking

Member Name _____ Date _____

Evaluator _____ Speech Length: 5 – 7 minutes

Speech Title _____

Purpose Statements

- The purpose of this project is for the member to develop and practice a personal strategy for building connections through networking.
- The purpose of this speech is for the member to share some aspect of his or her experience networking.

Notes for the Evaluator

During the completion of this project, the member attended a networking event.

About this speech:

- The member will deliver a well-organized speech that includes a story or stories about the networking experience, the value of networking, or some other aspect of his or her experience networking.
- This speech should not be a report on the content of the “Make Connections Through Networking” project.

General Comments

You excelled at:

You may want to work on:

To challenge yourself:

EVALUATION FORM – Make Connections Through Networking

For the evaluator: In addition to your verbal evaluation, please complete this form.

5 EXEMPLARY	4 EXCELS	3 ACCOMPLISHED	2 EMERGING	1 DEVELOPING	
Clarity: Spoken language is clear and is easily understood					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Vocal Variety: Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Eye Contact: Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Gestures: Uses physical gestures effectively					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Audience Awareness: Demonstrates awareness of audience engagement and needs					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Comfort Level: Appears comfortable with the audience					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Interest: Engages audience with interesting, well-constructed content					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Topic: Shares some aspect of personal experience networking					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Make Connections Through Networking

This criteria lists the specific goals and expectations for the speech. Please review each level to help you complete the evaluation.

Clarity

- 5 – Is an exemplary public speaker who is always understood
 - 4 – Excels at communicating using the spoken word
 - 3 – Spoken language is clear and is easily understood
 - 2 – Spoken language is somewhat unclear or challenging to understand
 - 1 – Spoken language is unclear or not easily understood
- 4 – Is fully aware of audience engagement/needs and responds effectively
 - 3 – Demonstrates awareness of audience engagement and needs
 - 2 – Audience engagement or awareness of audience requires further practice
 - 1 – Makes little or no attempt to engage audience or meet audience needs

Vocal Variety

- 5 – Uses the tools of tone, speed, and volume to perfection
- 4 – Excels at using tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 3 – Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 2 – Use of tone, speed, and volume requires further practice
- 1 – Ineffective use of tone, speed, and volume

Eye Contact

- 5 – Uses eye contact to convey emotion and elicit response
- 4 – Uses eye contact to gauge audience reaction and response
- 3 – Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience
- 2 – Eye contact with audience needs improvement
- 1 – Makes little or no eye contact with audience

Gestures

- 5 – Fully integrates physical gestures with content to deliver an exemplary speech
- 4 – Uses physical gestures as a tool to enhance speech
- 3 – Uses physical gestures effectively
- 2 – Uses somewhat distracting or limited gestures
- 1 – Uses very distracting gestures or no gestures

Audience Awareness

- 5 – Engages audience completely and anticipates audience needs

Comfort Level

- 5 – Appears completely self-assured with the audience
- 4 – Appears fully at ease with the audience
- 3 – Appears comfortable with the audience
- 2 – Appears uncomfortable with the audience
- 1 – Appears highly uncomfortable with the audience

Interest

- 5 – Fully engages audience with exemplary, well-constructed content
- 4 – Engages audience with highly compelling, well-constructed content
- 3 – Engages audience with interesting, well-constructed content
- 2 – Content is interesting but not well-constructed or is well-constructed but not interesting
- 1 – Content is neither interesting nor well-constructed

Topic

- 5 – Delivers an exemplary speech about some aspect of experience networking
- 4 – Delivers a compelling speech about some aspect of experience networking
- 3 – Shares some aspect of personal experience networking
- 2 – Mentions some aspect of experience networking but does not fully address
- 1 – Speaks on a topic other than personal experience networking

PREPARE TO NETWORK

Use this form to help you prepare for networking events.

My Elevator Pitch

What do I want others to know about my interests, knowledge, and general value? How can I present it succinctly?

Objectives

What are my networking objectives for this event?

Contacts

What skills and knowledge am I looking to develop? Who do I want to meet?

Value

What skills or knowledge can I offer to people at this event?

Measuring Success

Before: How will I measure my personal success at the networking event? (Possible measures may include new social media connections or lunch plans made with new contacts.)

After: How many new contacts did I gain? Did I meet my objectives for this networking event?

PROJECT COMPLETION FORM

I completed all components of my "Make Connections Through Networking" project, including attending a non-Toastmasters networking event.

Note: You are only required to submit this form to the vice president education if you chose to attend a non-Toastmasters networking event.

Member Name _____

Member Signature _____ Date _____



www.toastmasters.org