

## Networking Exercises

(Updated: June 16, 2017)

### Discussion Questions

Please be prepared to provide written responses and/or discuss the following questions:

- 1) Do you think that networking is a wise investment of time for an entrepreneur or small business owner? Be prepared to defend your position.
- 2) What do you think is the hardest part about networking? How can you overcome this hurdle to effective networking?
- 3) Why is following up an important part of networking?
- 4) Why would it make sense to set "networking goals?"
- 5) How likely do you think it is that a person you don't know would give you a referral to their accountant or lawyer?

### Short Essays

- 1) You are a successful entrepreneur with a thriving business that creates apps. You're contacted by an even younger entrepreneur asking you for advice on how she can form her new business creating apps. How do you respond?  
(If you agreed to respond, what advice or referrals would you offer? If you decline to respond, why . . . and what would then expect the next time you reached out to someone for help?)
- 2) Part 1: Write an introductory letter to the owner of a successful beauty salon, asking for different types of advice.  
Part 2: Trade letters with a classmate. Write the response as if you were the salon owner receiving this letter.

### Role Play 1

Conduct one or more interviews about networking with a local business leader or a Nepris mentor.

Step 1: develop a questionnaire for this interview. Include questions about this person's experience with networking (both about their experience networking to help their own business, and about their response when someone contacts them to ask for assistance, referrals or new business).

Include in the questionnaire specific questions about whether they'd make referrals to their key advisors (accountants, lawyers, insurance agents, bankers) if asked for potential contacts in those areas. If "Yes" why do they think that's a good idea. If "No," why not.

Step 2: conduct the interview. After the interview, determine what you think were the key insights you learned during the interview.

Step 3: write a Thank You note to the person(s) you interviewed, indicating in your note what you believe were your key lessons learned

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## Role Play 2

You want to find out the favorite restaurant of the teachers at your school. Assign classmates roles in contacting teachers to find out their favorite restaurant . . . why . . . and what their favorite dish is.

Compile the results of your initial networking work. Follow-up by providing the teachers you contacted with a concise, effective summary of the information you learned.

Contact the one, two or three top restaurants named by your teachers. Tell the restaurants what you've learned from your teachers. Determine if the restaurants would be willing to hold an event for your teachers at their restaurant, and what special terms they might offer.

Compile the results of this second round of networking. Once again, develop a concise, effective summary of what you learned to your teachers.

*Now: figure out if you want to hold this event at your teachers' favorite restaurant.*