CAREER SEARCH SERIES
Webinar 3

The Career Value of Networking and Informational Interviewing Skills

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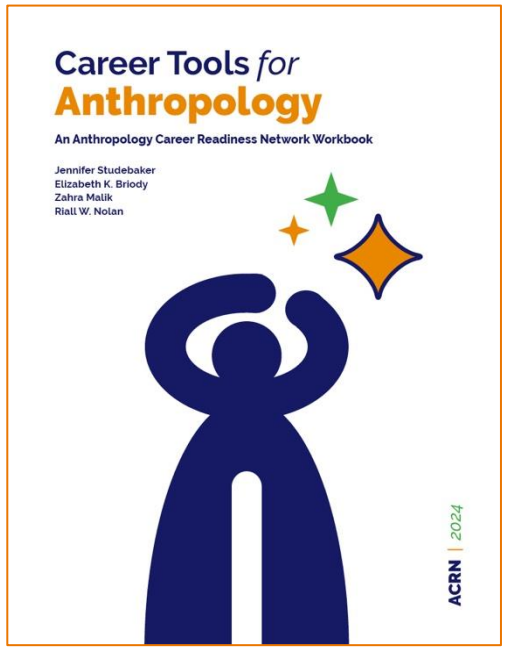
What is the Anthropology Career Readiness (ACRN) Network?

Our Mission

Prepare the next generation of anthropologists to meet tomorrow's challenges and opportunities

Our Resources

- "How-to" Tools for Job Seekers and Instructors/Departments including:
  - ***Career Tools for Anthropology***
  - ***Teaching Tools for Anthropology Careers***
- Speaker's Bureau
- World of Work Blog
- Client-based Class Projects
- Departmental Advisory Initiative and more!



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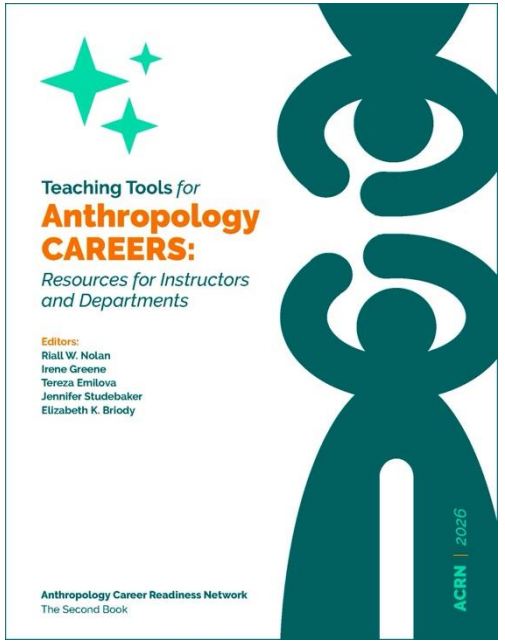

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Outline

- Conceptualizing Networks
- Networking
- Conducting Informational Interviews

Conceptualizing Networks

Exercise 1: Identifying Networking Conceptualizations

- Practice interviewing a partner and take notes on what your partner says (10 min.)
- Emphasize the focus of the interview:
  I want to learn how you think about networking.

  1. Ask your partner to Describe
     Please talk about your ideas related to networking.
  2. Ask your partner to Draw
     Draw me a picture that reflects what you said.
  3. Ask your partner to Explain
     Now tell me what you have drawn.

- Compare your results (drawings and statements) and be ready to report to the rest of the group

Networking

Networking is how anthropologists find jobs

A process of establishing and maintaining connections to communicate, gather and share information, build relationships, and get things done

Based on reciprocity

Social network

- Family, friends, neighbors
- Hobby groups, sport teams
- Religious community
- Social media acquaintances

Professional network

- University students, instructors, alumni
- Members of professional associations
- Anthropologists in industry, nonprofits, government
- Former work colleagues

Think about when to apply these four uses of professional networks during your job search

Connections

- to anthropologists working in your domain of interest
- to organizations that are nearby
- to colleagues from your earliest jobs

Information

- on current salaries for mid-career professionals
- on specific roles
- on typical work responsibilities
- on framing your key competencies

Advice

- about pursuing two different career paths simultaneously
- about additional training
- about a job offer

Access

- to the hiring manager through an internal referral
- to time on a person's calendar
- to a data set or electronic library

An in-person networking event is planned for next week. What is your goal for that event?

01

Meet three elected officials to identify volunteer opportunities in their offices

02

Interact with at least five attendees to learn how they made their most recent career transition

03

Seek out the speaker to introduce yourself and ask for a brief meeting

How are you going to prepare for this networking event?

Update your LinkedIn profile

Order new business cards

Learn about an individual expected to be there

- on LinkedIn, personal website
- via readings, podcasts, presentations
- by speaking with others

Learn about an organization co-sponsoring the event

- on organization's website
- via publicly-available documents
- by speaking with employees, stakeholders

How will you introduce yourself to the speaker?

03

Seek out the speaker to introduce yourself and ask for a brief meeting

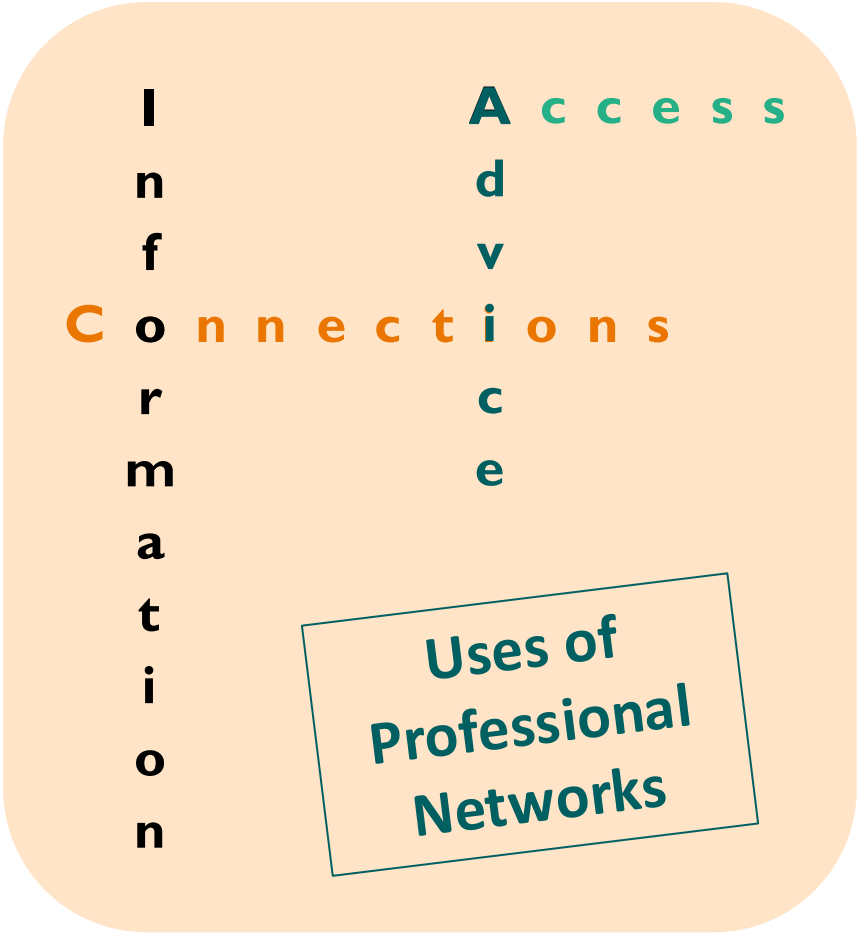
- Name
- Role
- Organization
- Request
- Explanation for request
- Business card
- Follow up

Summary

- Similarities and differences in networks
- Why networks are useful
  - Connections
  - Information
  - Advice
  - Access
- Importance of having a networking goal
- Preparation for a networking event

Exercise 2: Introducing yourself and your request

- Practice introductions with a partner
- Explain your request so that your partner understands why you want to have a meeting
- Emphasize what follow up you will do to facilitate the meeting



- Name
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Conducting Informational Interviews

Informational interviews position you to consider domains of work with which you are unfamiliar

An informal meeting to learn about an industry, organization, or role from a professional who can provide career insights and advice

Purposeful

- Establish a connection
- Gather information
- Obtain advice
- Gain access

What are some other benefits of informational interviews?

- Assess how well this type of work aligns with your interests and values
- Build your professional contacts, including through referrals to new interviewees
- Provide you with insights about aspects of the work people enjoy and find difficult
- Give you some control over your information gathering, job search, or career pivot

Q: How do you find interviewees?
A: Through your "weak ties" *

- Contact a "good friend" whose friends may be willing to speak with you
- Contact your acquaintances—including former colleagues with whom you have lost touch—to seek an interview
  - ***NB:*** Your acquaintance's acquaintances are too distant from you to be helpful

* Granovetter, M.S. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* 78(6): 1360-80, May.

Send a simple request via email

- Ask for 15 min. of their time to do an informational interview
- Explain that
  - You are exploring career options
  - Person X "advised me to contact you"
  - You are seeking information and advice, ***not*** a job

Stick with open-ended questions to get the information you need; this is your meeting!

Interviewee's Work

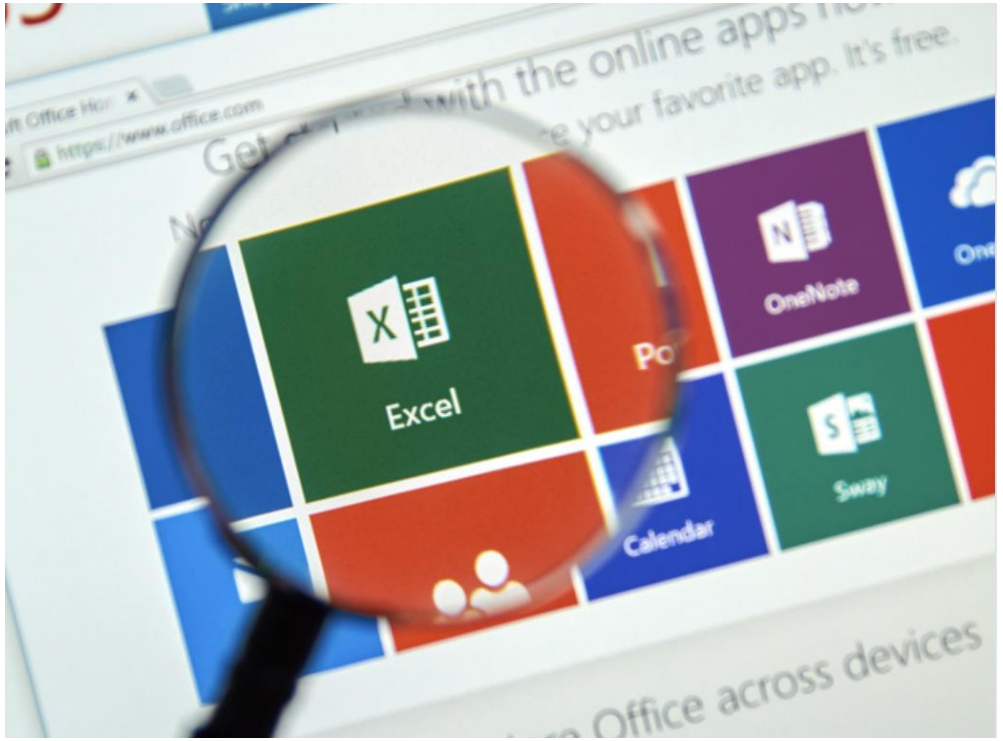
- How would you describe the work you do?
- What is a typical (or composite) day like for you?
- What do you enjoy best about your job?
- Which aspects of your job are the most challenging?

Career Advice

- What qualifications and certifications are useful in this industry?
- Given my background, what career advice would you have for me?
- How does your organization find the people it hires?
- Can you suggest others with a similar role that might be willing to speak with me?

Document what you learned

- Take notes during your interview
- Recall and jot down specific details immediately after
- Keep a spreadsheet for recall and/or for future discussions which includes
  - Contact name, email, and role
  - Date of interview
  - Advice
  - Referrals and any follow-up



Summary

- Benefits of informational interviews
- Finding interviewees through "weak ties"
- Contacting them
- Developing your questions to ask
- Capturing what you learned in notes, spreadsheet

Exercise 3: Conducting an informational interview

- **Situation:** You have been laid off (or expect to be laid off) from your position and wonder how you will manage to find a new position…somewhere, in some role
- **Task:**
  - **Explain** briefly about your job loss or anticipated layoff
  - **Ask about** your partner's current (or former) job
  - **Identify** what you learned about the process and yourself

Thank you for your attention!

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