



NICA

Networking In Corporate America

Preparing for a Company Presentation
September 2006

Networking In Corporate America, or NICA, is the Business Communication Center's newsletter targeting international students. In its inaugural issue, we bring to you an important aspect of networking—*preparing for a company presentation*. With company presentations starting this week, you will come across many opportunities to network with recruiters. This guide will help you take your first networking steps in America.

Company presentations may vary in format—from lunch hour presentations to lavish cocktail presentations at the Carolina Inn. However, the fundamentals of the presentations are the same. Presenters begin with a brief introduction and then describe the company and preferred job profiles. Typically, four to five company officials attend. As much as these presentations are your opportunity to learn about the firm, the recruiting team uses them to make a first impression of the candidates based on the level of interest shown and type of interaction. This Newsletter gives you advice on how to make the most of your networking opportunity.

Before the presentation

1. ***Research, research, research:*** Beginning with a visit to the company website, follow the CMC links (*MBA Intranet -> Career Management (left button) -> Career Research*) and learn more about the company. The CMC site provides links to external websites like Vault.com, wetfeet.com, and Marketline, which are an excellent resource for company information. Make sure to read the specific job/program details that the firm asks for.
2. ***Use alumni resources:*** Check the alumni list from the company's posting on Enterprise. If possible, glance through the alumni resume by visiting the CMC Library. The CMC Library has student resumes dating back to 1988.
3. ***Brush up on sports:*** Pay a visit to sports.yahoo.com or espn.com. Check out UNC's games played in the last few days. Also, check out scores of teams based in the same city as the headquarters of the company.
4. ***Be ready with a set of questions:*** To start, try FORE¹, acronym for Family, Occupation, Recreation, Education. These are topics of conversation that can be good ice-breakers when you meet a stranger. FORE is a failsafe way to enter into conversation with someone unfamiliar.

FORE is useful whenever:

- You have little in common with someone. FORE will often reveal shared experiences or areas of interest.
- You are nervous and can't think of anything to say. FORE gives you topics of conversation about which you don't have to think too hard.
- You aren't interested in what someone is saying. FORE enables you to run through lots of subjects until you hit on something you find interesting.

5. ***Practice:*** Rehearse your Positioning Statement²...*again and again*.

During the presentation

1. ***Be attentive:*** Be on time and stay till the end. Turn off cell-phones, close laptops, and listen carefully to the presenter. Note the names of the presenters while keeping track of their profiles (most presenters will introduce themselves). Writing down the profile helps you to think of areas of commonality.
2. ***Be aware:*** You don't HAVE to ask a question during the presentation! Keep your questions ready, and feel free to ask them during a one-on-one session with the recruiter. The one-on-one session will help you relate on a more personal/direct basis with a recruiter.

After the presentation

1. **Greet the recruiter:** Begin with quick small talk (i.e. sports, traffic on Franklin, parking in KFBS...just about anything) or try FORE.
2. **Ask questions pertaining to the presentation:** Don't be too specific, for example, McKinsey's practice in Timbuktu (very likely a recruiter won't have any idea of it). While such information shows that you have researched, it doesn't help you connect with the recruiter.
3. **Engage with one or two recruiters:** You don't have to meet ALL of the recruiters. All you need is one spokesperson who remembers you and your profile.
4. **Ask for the recruiter's business card:** If recruiters state that their contact information is available on Enterprise, don't push for it. But, do pass your card to them, reminding them of your name before walking away.
5. **Don't monopolize the conversation:** You have other classmates waiting behind you.
6. **Be prompt in sending a thank-you note:** Respond within 24 hours. Don't send generic thank-you notes. The recruiter will not remember who you were! Try to write something about the presentation, or something about your conversation.

¹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/health/confidence/learn/action_2.shtml

² Positioning Statement: (term used by Next Partners) A brief, concise statement highlighting one's USP (Unique Selling Point). As long as it is relevant, you may describe anything as long as it is relevant – what you did before you joined the B-school, what you plan to do in future and/or how you are different. It is your executive summary with some unique differentiating points about yourself

The Consultants in the Business Communication Center proudly bring these tips to you. From resumes and cover letters to presentations and PowerPoint slide design, the Business Communication Center can help you with all your communication needs. Stop by and visit us in McColl 3127, or visit our [Website](#) for more information.