

CAREER

REINVENTION

BOOTCAMP

Module 11:
Networking Tips and
Search Strategies

Audio + Transcript

Pamela: This, our third call, is about “Launching Your Career Reinvention: Networking Tips and Search Strategies.” In this class, we’re going to talk about networking strategies and discuss some tactics for conducting an effective job search.

Both skills are essential to launching your career reinvention and making sure that you actually land where it is that you want to go. Understanding what you’ll need to do in these two areas from a career reinvention standpoint, not just from a job search standpoint, is going to increase your chance of landing successfully in your dream career.

Let’s begin. The first thing we’ll talk about is networking. There are two key points that you need to remember when it comes to networking. The first point has to do with the fact that networking doesn’t have to be scary. Let me state that right up front.

You can ignore all those advice books that recommend you go to every networking happy hour under the sun, walk up and introduce yourself to perfect strangers, and collect a thousand business cards. Forget all that advice. This is superficial and generally not that effective.

What happens is you end up with a big stack of mostly not useful cards. That’s if you can make yourself do it. If you can’t make yourself do it, you’ll end up feeling very anxious and inadequate because you couldn’t do it. Overall, that’s just not a good strategy.

From a reinvention perspective, what’s important is that you’ll have to focus on more than just gathering a stack of cards. This brings us to Point 2. Networking, from a career reinvention perspective, means building relationships. This is so important. You must focus on building long-term relationships.

In actuality, networking should always be about relationship and not the transaction I mentioned in terms of just trading business cards. Success in your previous field required a series of relationships, if you think about it. You had your network. Obviously, it’s going to be essential for you to develop a similar kind of network in terms of the new career that you want to head to.

This is an important strategy for your career reinvention. You’re focusing on building relationships in your target career.

There are three keys to successful networking for you to keep in mind. The first is that you have to take a long-term approach. It’s not just about who can help you now in terms of landing a job. This is about building a network that’s going to serve you in your new career. It’s a long-term approach and not just about getting the job. You’re going to need this new network in order to be successful.

The second key that you need to remember is that you must drive the action. You have to take responsibility for making it happen. When you network, you drive the process. This means you make things happen and don't sit back and let others try to follow up with you. That's the second point.

The third key to remember is that it's not just about you. All relationships, if you think about it from a big-picture scale, are about mutual assistance. It's how you can be helpful to others and they can be helpful to you. This is just across the board. Your friendships, which are relationships, are about mutual assistance.

The same principle is true from a career reinvention standpoint. You need to think about how you can be helpful to them as much as how they can be helpful to you.

It might seem like you're not able to be helpful to them, but in fact, you can. You can be helpful to them by sending information and articles.

We're going to talk later about some strategies for search, but one of the things you should be doing is reading newspaper and industry journals. You're going to be collecting information as you go along. If you come across something that's going to be interesting, send it. That'll help them.

You can provide other information that you're finding out while you're talking to people. You're going to be out gathering information and having a lot of conversations. Maybe you're learning some things about what other companies are doing or new initiatives that would be valuable for them to know about.

You can also think about ways to help them even not regarding the whole business aspect. Even personally, you can think about restaurant recommendations, a new play that you might have seen or a really great book.

If you're looking to build a long-term relationship, you're interested in getting to know these people beyond just their job. It's also about the kind of people they are. You can think about how you can be helpful to them even in their own personal life and what they're looking to achieve.

The big question that comes around network is how to build it. That's a question that I always get in my classes. A common barrier to career reinvention is the lack of a network in your target field.

I know this from personal experience because I faced that very same barrier when I wanted to leave Wall Street and move into the entertainment field. I didn't know anybody. I had to

start from scratch in terms of building a network in a target industry that I didn't have any personal contacts in.

How do you do that? How do you go about building a network, and where do you go in order to do that?

The first place to start is with friends of friends. This is also kind of obvious, but don't underestimate this. You may think that your friends don't know anybody, but the truth is that you can't possibly know everybody that your friends know. Often, people make the mistake of thinking, "My friends don't know anybody in that industry," but until you ask, you don't really know that to be true.

Someone once said to me that our networks are actually three deeper than what we realize. Keep that in mind because you don't move in your friends' worlds. You don't have any idea who their next-door neighbor is, who they went to high school with, who their officemate friend is, or who they might know. They may know somebody in your target industry.

The thing about friends of friends to keep in mind, unless you have a ton of friends, is that it can also be exhausted pretty easily. You don't want to only rely on friends of friends. That's a certain circle, but once you've gone through it, that's it. You've tapped out.

Where do you go once you're moving beyond your own personal friends of friends? Another place to check out is an alumni organization. This has a connection because you've gone to the same school. They're great because they just have databases of people and industries.

Alumni organizations are a really important resource to tap into, both from an undergraduate level and graduate school, if you happen to have that as well, and sometimes even high school, depending upon where you went and what you did. You never know where your algebra buddy ended up or who they even know. Tapping into alumni organizations is a really important strategy.

A third place to look to build a network is through industry organizations. Often these organizations will hold classes, seminars and conferences. You can kill two birds with one stone and start to learn about what's going on in your target field as well as meet people who are in that field.

It's a great way because everybody is there, especially if you attend some of the breakout sessions, smaller groups and such. It's a really intimate, small environment where you're able to make some connections.

If there's an important industry organization that is giving a conference or running a class or seminar, sign up for it. You can make some very good contacts that way. It's much better than just going to a general networking event.

Industry organizations are set up to provide useful information to people in that field. You'll get the movers and shakers actually showing up. Often they also give talks at these very same events, so it's a great way to meet some of those people who are up in the front of the room.

Go up to them and talk to them. It's a way you'd have access to them and begin to build the connection in a very natural environment.

Another way to look at networks and another venue to check out is through volunteering. I'm a big proponent of volunteering because it attracts a lot of people and is a great way to develop skill sets that you may need for your target field, as well as developing a network and bunch of connections. It's an easy and fun way to do it.

Look at the nonprofits in your target field or the industry organizations. A lot of times they need assistance with their conferences and things like that. This is just a great way to meet people and work yourself in.

Look for the nonprofits or organizations that attract a lot of movers and shakers because they're out there. Then start going out there, volunteering, making yourself part of an organization, and making friends while you're there. It's a great way to build your network.

Another area to look when you're starting to build your network is just clubs. By this, I mean general clubs, like country clubs or hobby clubs. This is interesting because people there are tied by a personal interest or passion, but obviously, they have other lives, just as you do.

A lot of times at your country club or hobby club, like for photography or cooking, these are people who have businesses and are in jobs in all different kinds of industries, but everybody is drawn together by the love of that particular hobby.

It's a great way to build a connection and long-term relationship around something that you have a shared passion for. Then eventually, you can move into them helping you with your target career and you helping them.

The final place to look for a network and how you build a network is one that a lot of people don't really think about. It's a really interesting and useful place. That is actually in the media. It's unusual but very effective.

Contacting people when they have something written about them is a really useful way. It could also be if they've written something themselves.

People are more open than you think, especially if they've written an article on something or have been quoted. That means that you now have an opening to contact them about something they've said or written or something that has been profiled in their business.

It's unusual how people will respond when you write to them and say, "I read this. I found it to be interesting for X, Y and Z reasons. I'd like to speak to you."

I have a particular client who has used this very successfully, contacted some pretty major names in her target industry, and gotten a lot of meetings just by writing these letters saying, "I've read what you've written and found it to be really interesting. I'm targeting this industry. Would you take some time to talk to me?"

It's a very effective way to build a network. Now she has moved into her new target field successfully.

There's a workbook associated with these classes, so you want to take a moment to go to your workbook and brainstorm some potential targets in each of the networking areas. Think about what alumni organizations you might tap into, some friends of friends that you might know, where you might volunteer or some industry organizations.

Moving on, there are actually four levels of networking contacts. I'd bet you didn't know that, but there are.

1. You know them personally. This is obviously the easiest thing.
2. You were sent by someone they know. You trade off of the relationship that someone else has with them.
3. You have a common connection. You went to the same school or share a hobby, or you've read their book or column. You have a connection.
4. You have no connection. That's sort of a cold contact.

Why it's important to think about these four levels of networking contacts is that your goal should be to move people up the ladder to Numbers 1 and 2, if possible. You're either getting to meet them personally or being sent by somebody they know.

Your goal in networking is if there's somebody you're interested in contacting, to either try to meet them personally or see if there's somebody you know who can put you in touch with them.

This works when you think about, “Maybe I can go to an industry seminar and meet them personally,” or “I should try to check my network to see who might know somebody who knows them.”

You can try emailing your friends to see if they know anybody at that company. If you meet somebody at that company, then that person might be able to put you in touch with this target. You can even try an online networking site like LinkedIn or one of the other groups.

Your goal should always be to try to either meet the person personally or be sent by somebody that they’re already familiar with.

Third, having a common connection obviously helps. Numbers 1 and 2 are stronger.

If you’re going to go in cold, Number 4, you must be creative. Do not send out mass emails or letters to “Dear Sir or Madam.” That is the least effective way, and it’s a waste of time, quite frankly. If you’re sending letters, it’s a waste of money. People do not respond to that because if you don’t take the time to make it personal, then why should they take the time to talk to you?

If you’re going to do something cold, come up with an interesting way to get attention. When I was looking to make the shift from Wall Street to the entertainment field, my boss, actually, on Wall Street suggested a stunt that I used quite effectively based off of “Six Degrees of Separation.”

What I did was I went out and got copies of the play itself. This was when it was actually on Broadway, so there was a lot in the news about the play. What I did was I wrote a note to theater people, the top-level people, in fact, in a major entertainment company. I picked about 10 people.

I wrote them a personal note and said, “Everybody is connected by six degrees of separation. Rather than going through figuring out how we’re connected, I decided to cut to the chase.” I sent this note to them along with the book. It was very effective. Everybody took my call because it was cute, got attention and was different.

If you’re going to do a cold mailing or contact, come up with something interesting and creative to get their attention. Do something unique that makes them say, “I want to know more about this person because they took the time to do something to reach out in a different way.”

There are four goals of networking. Most people think that there’s only one, but, in fact, there are four.

1. To get an in-person meeting. You need to meet people in order to eventually end up where you want to be and build the network for when you get there.
2. To get information. You need to learn about the industry and positions in the industry. Most importantly, you need to learn about what job skills, talents and qualities you'll need in order to be successful in that industry. You need information.
3. To get names. You will have to build your network, no matter where you land.
4. To land a position.

Most people think that the fourth one, getting a job, is the only goal of networking. Now you know that there are, in fact, four goals and that Number 4, getting a job, should be the fourth.

In other words, getting an in-person meeting, information and names are more important and come before getting a job because if you don't do Numbers 1, 2 and 3 effectively, it's less likely that you will actually have Number 4 happen and land a position.

The other downfall with only focusing on Number 4, getting a job, is that people go straight to that and say, "It's all about getting a job," so when they go out to network, they tell people, "I'm looking for a job." What this does is limit the number of in-person meetings that they actually get.

What happens when a networker comes in and says, "I'm looking for a job," is if that person doesn't immediately have a job available, then they think that there's no reason to have a meeting. They're in a tough position because they can't offer what the person is looking for. Therefore, they don't want to be uncomfortable and don't take the meeting.

When you go out and say that you're looking for a job, you limit the number of in-person meetings, and by limiting the number of in-person meetings, you limit the number of opportunities for you to eventually get where you need to be, which is landing a position. You won't get information or additional names, so you won't get to the position.

Saying that all you want is a job ends up being a vicious cycle. My recommendation to all my clients is to focus on first getting the in-person meeting and then Numbers 2 and 3, getting information and names. Then Number 4 takes care of itself.

Let's talk about some tips for playing the networking game. One of the things that you want to do is use both email and calling to try and contact people. This is because people have different preferences. Some people respond better to email, and other people respond better to calls.

If you happen to know your target's preference, then go ahead and use it to your advantage, but use both email and calling, as a general rule, because it helps.

Another tip for networking is to pay attention to the timing. There are two kinds of time. There's search time and work time. They run differently. This is important to remember.

In search time, one day feels like a week. In work time, one week feels like a day. What I mean is that when you're working, you have many things going on, so a week can pass in just a moment.

Maybe you're out for a conference or at meetings. Before you know it, it's the end of the week. You may have had the intention of doing a lot of things and calling people back, but somehow the week passed and you didn't get to it.

When you're in search, you feel every single minute. When you put in a call to somebody and they don't call you back for a day, it feels like forever.

It's this particular conflict between work and search time that can feel very difficult for people who are out networking. It can also cause the networkers to call back too frequently and to somehow start to become more of a pressure to people.

The important thing to understand when you're networking is you must pay attention to timing and reset your timing to work time. You have to give people time to get back to you. If you call them, do not call them the next day. Give them a week or so to get back to you. Again, they're on work time. Maybe they were out for four or five days. You don't know. You want to be very sensitive to timing.

Another tip related to this is that you want to be very aware of how you follow up with people. You want to alternate how you follow up with them. This goes back to using both calling and emailing. Call one time, and then if you don't hear back, email a week or so later.

This does a couple things. First, it allows you to be in consistent, not continual, contact. It also gives the impression of less pressure because you're not constantly calling nor emailing. By shifting the methods that you use, it creates an image of less pressure.

Another networking tip that's important to remember is one we mentioned before but in the context of all of this is important. It is that you drive the process. It's incumbent upon you to make the contacts. You tell people that you'll contact them. You make it easy on them by knowing how they like to be contacted or asking them how they prefer to be contacted. You get their information and you follow up.

Don't expect that people are going to follow up with you. If they do, that's fabulous. That's just great. Consider it a bonus.

It's best to understand that you're driving the process and your goal is to get them on the phone or get them to respond. You want to be strategic about that. Remember that it is your responsibility.

If you haven't heard back, don't sit and say, "I haven't heard back from them." Get on the phone. Call them at a very likely hour that you'll reach them. This is another secret networking tip. If you want to get somebody who's very senior and they have an assistant who's been stonewalling you, call before 8:30 in the morning or after 5:30 or 6:00 at night.

Usually people who are very senior work longer hours, but their assistants tend to work between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or 5:30 p.m. If you call earlier in the day or later in the evening, you'll tend to get them when they're answering the phone directly. This is a great and very effective strategy to use.

Another tip is if you don't hear back, don't take it personally because it's not. It's never personal.

This is something to remember when you're going through the whole process of reinventing your career but especially around networking. Sometimes people just won't get back to you. Again, it's not personal. They may be busy or things may be going on.

If you're contacting a number of different people, there's always going to be a certain percentage that just doesn't respond. Don't take it personally or spend any time wondering why this isn't working. Just move on.

Another part of that is to always be cheerful and polite with people even if you've contacted them multiple times. No one wants to have a guilt trip or talk to anybody with attitude. Even though you're going to be contacting them multiple times, be as nice, cheerful and polite the fourth time as you are the first time.

If you get somebody on the phone and they apologize, be nice about it. Say, "No problem." Take the pressure off. People will be very grateful for the fact that you are just completely courteous and nice about the fact that it's taken them a bit to get back to you.

As a general rule, if you don't get a response from somebody after four or so tries or over the course of, say, a couple months, then move on. That's a good rule of thumb.

Let that be driven by how much you want the opportunity to talk to them. Persistence does pay. I've had cases where I've been contacting people in my previous career transition and it

took me three months to get a hold of them. Again, as a general rule, you want to say four or so times. If it's a contact that's important to you, continue.

If they're not responding to calls and emails then what you want to do is get more creative about how you get their attention. If you've tried for a couple months calling and emailing and they're not responding but you really want to get in front of them, get creative. That might be a time to see if they're giving a talk at a conference somewhere. Maybe you can go attend that.

Try one of the creative ideas like sending something you know they might be interested in or whatever. Again, it's changing your tactic and not just continually calling for six months. If you're not getting a response and it is important, change your tactics and continue.

With that said, you don't want to get fixated on one company or person. There are many different paths to ending up where you want to end up. This is one of the common pitfalls I see among people who take my seminars and clients. They get hung up on one person where they think, "This person can totally help me." They put all of their eggs in that basket about that one person. Don't do it. It's not about one person.

Often, the person you think is the person who can help you is not the person who will end up helping you. It'll be somebody else that you completely didn't even realize and perhaps didn't even think had the ability to help you. Again, you never know until you have a conversation. Do not get fixated on one person or company. Always keep a basket of opportunities going.

Another networking tip is to go into each networking meeting or contact with a goal. You always want to have your goal in mind. It's not always about the job if you remember what we said before. You're not just showing up to say, "Let's have a conversation." You want to think about, in advance, what it is you want from them.

Perhaps this is a contact that can provide you with a lot of information. This is essential. Maybe it's a contact that can provide you with a number of different names. Those things are just as important. Perhaps you may not know that maybe this person does have a position. You want to be open to all three.

Decide what your goal is. Keep it in mind so you then close each networking interaction, which is the next tip. That means ask for the names, the card or the next step follow up for whatever position it is.

You always want to close your networking contacts. You want to make sure that you take action toward moving that contact to the next level of whatever goal you've set. Again, you want to ask for the names, card or follow up.

Let's talk now about some search tips and tactics. We've talked about networking, so let's move on to search. How you run your search is critical.

David Perry, who's the author of *Guerrilla Marketing for Job Hunters*, says that job hunting is a process with a beginning, middle and an end. If you nailed the early and middle parts, the end comes quickly.

This is important to remember because what it means is that you should really focus on doing those early and middle parts well. If you do, the end will naturally take care of itself. That means landing your meetings, getting referrals, meeting new contacts or learning something new about the industry and its job functions. If you don't have interim successes in those areas, you're not going to end up at the finish line. Keep that in mind.

Let's talk about some tips for conducting an effective search. The first thing you want to really do is conduct a multi-level search campaign. What this means is that you don't look only in one area.

In today's world with the online job boards, I always have a few in every class who go on to these boards and apply every day and then feel like they have done a very comprehensive job search. I'm here to tell you that going on to the boards is not the most effective way to conduct a job search.

It's very seductive because you can feel like you're making a lot of progress when you've sent out 10 or 15 resumes that way. You have to understand that that is probably the lowest barrier to entry because it's free. You don't even have to pay postage to apply online. You and millions of other people are applying online.

Never say never because people find jobs in all ways, but if you are solely relying on applying for postings online, then it's going to be a long, arduous and competitive process because millions of other people are applying for those same things. They may be getting hundreds, if not thousands, of resumes that they have to sift through in order to get to the few gems. Those are not odds that are in your favor.

You always to think about and conduct a multi-level search campaign beyond just the online job boards like Monster and CareerBuilder. You want to look at other places online. You want to look at industry blogs and newsletters, which are really great ways to search online because they're very targeted.

Newsletters like MarketingSherpa for the marketing field, Publishers Lunch for the publishing field, and Cynopsis or Hired Guns for the media field all do job postings, but they're very targeted.

If you're going to go online, go sign up for a few industry newsletters and look at those postings. It's much less competitive than being on one of the major boards.

You also may want to look at group communities online. It's another effective way to do a search and see if people are talking about movement at companies or things happening there. Blogs are a really great way to see what's going on. These are places you can target your search.

The other part of this multi-level search campaign is the offline component. That's where you're looking at newspapers and industry trades. When you're looking at newspapers, you want to read the business section and what's going on at companies. That will give you a lot of information.

They may talk about the company launching a new product that they expect will grow to 30% of their sales within the next two years. That probably means that they're going to be staffing up.

If they have some new initiative, they've done some new partnership, or they're going to be launching a new joint venture to enter a new market, these are all clues.

You want to be reading the newspaper with an eye to see what are companies doing and are they going through changes that would mean they need to add people? Industry trades are another great way of getting information to say, "Where should I be targeting my search?"

Some other places to think about offline are the people in the move columns. This is an unusual area because a lot of people just look and say, "So-and-so got this job." What's interesting about that is two-pronged.

First, a person may have just gotten a new job. Maybe they're staffing up on their team. Second, you may want to see where they've come from. If they've left their company to move to a new company, perhaps there's an opening in the old company. These are interesting and unique ways to do a search.

Another place to look is the classifieds, which is an interesting thing because people think, "Classifieds? No." I'm here to tell you that I got my first job in entertainment as an international sales manager with a very high-profile company through the classified ads.

Those big banners ads that you see where companies are advertising for positions are very expensive. Some companies do that, but when you have a big banner ad you are spending a lot of money and have a lot of people applying for them.

Far fewer people actually look through the classifieds. Look at them. You just never know. Nine times out of 10 there may be nothing there, but occasionally there's a jewel. I can

attest to that with my own personal experience. Another place to look offline is industry conferences and gatherings.

One place that people tend to think is a good place to look for a search but I say no to from a career reinvention standpoint is recruiters. Recruiters are interested in matching people to jobs. They are not interested in people who are changing careers.

Their goal is to match you according to your experience to the next level job or the similar job at a competitor. They're at cross purposes with people who want to reinvent their career. From a career reinvention standpoint, recruiters are not effective.

Another tip for conducting an effective search is to be targeted. Do not send out hundreds of emails or letters and don't make random phone calls. You really want to be targeted. If you're doing your research and going through all of this, you can come up with a list of companies that you know things about and want to target. There are no mass contacts.

Another effective strategy is to identify what your target industry needs. In order to conduct an effective search, you have to know what your industry needs so that you know what you bring to them and how you can help them.

You learn this through networking, your search, reading about the trends and about what companies are doing, and while you're out meeting people asking them, "What's going on?"

Keep in mind that the most basic need a company has is to create and serve the customers who keep them in business. You should be thinking about what this means within your target industry.

There's space in your workbook where you can take a moment to identify what it means in your target industry. What's their basic need they have around creating and serving customers and the people who keep them in business?

Next in terms of an effective strategy for search is to identify what you have to offer your target industry. This is important. You have to think about what makes you unique. What is your mix of accomplishments, skills, experience and attitude?

In the "Identifying Your Dream Career" call we talked about the three types of job skills. The adaptive are about the personality traits, like detail oriented or enthusiastic.

The second kind is transferable skills. These are skills that are used in a wide variety of jobs, like managing people, budgets, writing, negotiating and that kind of thing.

Then there are job-specific skills that you need to perform a particular job, like flying a plane for a pilot.

You want to take time to identify what your unique offering is that satisfies what your target career needs. We talked about identifying the need that they have. Now think about how what you bring to the table helps them to do that. You want to be specific about that. There's a space in your workbook for you to make some notes around that point as well.

In doing this analysis where you compare your target industry needs and what you uniquely have to offer, if you notice that there is a gap between those two you have to come up with a strategy for filling that gap.

This is the next effective search tip. It's important. Many people say, "I don't have that information or skill set." Part of conducting an effective search is coming up with a strategy for filling your gaps.

Don't expect people to take a chance on you without being willing to prove that they should. The way you prove they should is by taking steps to fill those gaps.

This is one of the big pitfalls of career reinvention. One of the big things that people get hung up on is, "I don't have this." They let it stop them instead of saying, "How do I fill this?"

Don't expect people to take your word for it. This is another big pitfall. People come and say, "I know I can do that." You want to be able to show them in a very tactical and tangible way that you're able to do it, not just your word.

You have to look at what it is going to take to fill those gaps. See if there are any shortcuts. Nobody is saying that you have to go back to school for 10 years, unless you decide you want to be a doctor, in which case you do.

Are you going to need more education or training? Perhaps volunteering can help. You can go out and volunteer and work on something. You can do some pro bono projects to develop this skill set. Get creative. There are a lot of ways of doing it.

Don't feel locked in and think, "I don't have this piece of experience. Therefore I can't do it." Think, "How can I get this experience in a very short or useful way?" Can you perhaps take a class?

There are a lot of ways to go about it. Take a moment in your workbook to identify any gaps and brainstorm strategies for filling them. You want to be specific on this as well.

I have some more tips for conducting an effective search strategy. Another thing you want to do is create a system for tracking and organizing your search.

You want to keep a history of your conversations and have reminders for your follow-ups. Forgetting details like this is a major problem in search. You really want to be on top of this part.

Use systems that feel comfortable for you. You can use a notebook, Outlook, the free Jobseeker's Desktop at www.JobFiler.com or whatever fits for you.

Create a system for tracking and organizing your search. If you say that you're going to call somebody back in 10 days, have some kind of automatic reminder so that 10 days from now you know that you have to make that phone call.

Another important tip for conducting effective search is to have a personal business card and an email. It might seem obvious but a lot of people tend to make mistakes in this area.

A lot of times if people are employed and looking, they give out their employer's card. This is a big no-no. They also give out their employer's email address. That's another big no-no.

What you want to do is have a personal business card and personal email address. If you're between gigs, make sure you get a personal business card so that you can hand something over to people. It's not acceptable to say, "I don't have a card." Go to Kinko's, spend \$20 and get some cards. Go to www.Vistaprint.com and get cards for free.

Also, when you have your personal email, make sure that your email, even if it's a personal account, has a professional handle. Do not have WildPartier@Yahoo.com. Look at your email address with the eyes of a potential employer or networker and think, "What is this person going to think about me when they see this email address?" Keep it professional and easy.

Another effective search strategy is to create a reinvention team. You're going to need support and inspiration as you go through this process, so you want to recruit supportive friends, get a coach and create a team around you of people who are going through a similar kind of career reinvention process.

That way, you'll have a place to go to talk about what's going on, brainstorm and get inspiration and ideas. It's an important part. Don't do it alone.

With that, a final tip I have for conducting an effective search is to identify what I term a "media mentor." This is someone who has done a career reinvention and inspires you. By "media mentor," I mean somebody in the media who you admire and who has made a

change in their career. You can see that somebody else has trodden before you the path that you are looking to do.

If that person is not in the media, see if you can find somebody within the industry. Pick a mentor who has done this and use that person as inspiration.

In closing, crafting an effective networking plan and search strategy is essential to successfully reinventing your career, just as we said. The most important thing to remember is what I said earlier. Defining success by setting and achieving goals along the way is more important than holding out for the success by landing the job.

This career reinvention process, like any job search process, is a long and sometimes bumpy road. If the only way that you define success is by reaching the end, you set yourself up for getting discouraged along the way.

When this happens, you have to remember that David Perry has some very wise words, as I mentioned earlier. With this search and career reinvention, there's a beginning, middle and end. Focus on nailing the early and middle parts, and the end will come quickly.

Now the line is open for some questions. Who would like to ask a question?

Participant: When you say to follow up with a card, you're meaning a personal card. Is it appropriate to do that and an email? It seems like most people, when I've had networking meetings, follow up with me with an email right away. Is that kind of an overload?

Pamela: They're actually a little bit different. You can use the handwritten card as a thank you and the email as a quick, "Thanks for taking the time." Then follow up to move to the next step. They're a little bit different.

The email you can use as sort of a confirmation of the meeting and to say, "Here are the next steps that we discussed. Thank you for the time," and then move on. Emails drive the process, whereas a handwritten note can be a very nice touch of "Thank you so much for the time."

Does that answer the question?

Participant: Yes. Thanks.

Pamela: Are there any other questions?

Participant: As far as that, I know you said to give it about four times or so if you're following up with someone and don't seem to be getting a good response or any response from them. Sometimes I don't want to come across as pushy.

What if someone is giving me a flat response? You say you're going to be in town and would like to meet up with them, and they were even referred by someone else you met with recently. They respond back, "I'm sorry. I'm not going to be there that week," with no additional, "Maybe we can talk on the phone," or anything else. Should I take that as an indication to stop bothering them, or what?

Pamela: Somebody has sent you to this particular person, and you're following up to try and arrange some time to meet with them. They're emailing you back saying, "I'm sorry. I'm not going to be there that week."

Participant: Actually, I've met with this person before and followed up originally with an email and some follow-up information. I didn't hear back from them. Then when I met with someone else, they said, "I know that person. Tell them I suggested you contact them again. I really think you should give it another try."

Pamela: This is a person you've met before. There are two different kinds of situations going on in this.

With the first scenario, the one that I laid out for you, if it's a person you haven't met yet and they're just saying, "I'm not in town then," then you can go back to them and say, "Could we have a conversation via telephone the following week?" or something like that.

If you haven't met them and are just trying to do it and they just say, "I'm not available," try to go back. This is part of driving the process. Maybe they're just answering very quickly. You don't really know. Try another, alternate route and see the response you get there.

In this particular situation where you've already met with this person and somebody else sent you back to them, if they're not responding, you may have to let it rest for a little while and then get creative about how you get back in front of them. This is a person you've met and followed up with. They're not responding. Then somebody else is sending you to them.

Getting creative can happen in a couple of different ways. You should get a hold of the person who said, "I know them." Maybe that person is willing to get on the phone for you.

Participant: Possibly.

Pamela: You could say, "Would you mind giving him or her a call?" If you happen to know this person really well, ask the person if they'd be willing to set up a lunch with the three of you the next time you're in town. Take it out of that thing. Since you've already met with this person and sent stuff and they're not responding, you have to take it to a whole other level.

The best thing would be if this person who's recommending and knows them just arranges something for the three of you. That would be the easiest and most graceful.

There may be another way in. If this person you're trying to reach gives talks or thing like that, then you could show up someplace that they're going to be and just walk up to them.

Say, "It's nice to see you again," not like you didn't ever hear from them. That's a very important point. It's like it never happened. You can say, "It's nice to see you again. I met so-and-so, blah, blah, blah," and mention the connection. Then say, "We should get together." Every contact is a new contact, even if you've contacted them 10 times and they've not responded.

In this particular case, it would be best to have the third person set something up. That's always an effective strategy for anything, actually.

If there's somebody a contact is trying to put you in touch with and that person tends to be really busy, then ask, right off the bat, "Maybe we could all get together for a coffee or meal. Would you be willing to arrange that?" It's going to be easier for them to arrange it because they have the personal relationship.

Participant: How do you go about finding the media mentor?

Pamela: That's a good question. With the media mentor, basically, what you want to do is look in your target industry. Look at the industry trades or even *The Wall Street Journal* or some of the business magazines. See who's doing a lot of good stuff, read their bios and see what their background is.

Often, when people are profiled, they'll say, "This person came from an unusual background," because the media loves stories like that. They love stories of the person who somehow came from some strange place and now is being really successful.

Just keep your eyes peeled for that. This point is more of an awareness thing because a lot of times people think that everybody followed the same path to land where they did, which is not true.

I'm glad you asked this question because I forgot to mention this in the networking part. The other thing to know is that when you're networking, you should always ask every single person how they got to the job that they did.

When you ask somebody, "What were your career steps to end up here?" you'll find out that a lot of people did not go the same route. They'll tell you, "I started off here, but then I did this and that." You'll start to learn about different paths, ways in and strategies people

have used to get where they were going. This is all useful information. Ask all your networking contacts as well.

Thank you so much. It was a great call tonight.

Participant: Thank you for the information.

Pamela: No problem. Thank you for everything.