NETWORKING REFRAMED

Making Networking Feel More Natural



Nicole Jenkins

Associate Director, Organizational Effectiveness

Research & Innovation Office, CU Boulder

THIS IS FUN

“I love networking. Name tags, strangers, all of it. I leave energized with new connections I’m still excited about tomorrow.”

I’LL MANAGE

“I treat it like a workout. I don’t love it, I know it’s good for me, and I feel accomplished when it’s over.”

NO THANK YOU

“I’d rather be anywhere else, including the dentist, but I will go if absolutely required and spend the whole time planning my escape. ”





THE NETWORKING MINDSET

"WHEN PEOPLE BELIEVE THEY HAVE A LOT TO OFFER OTHERS... NETWORKING FEELS EASIER & LESS SELFISH"

-HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW



PREPARE TO MIX & MINGLE

Know Yourself

What's your department's role on campus? What's your role on campus? Can you explain it?

What motivated you to attend the event?

What do you care about? What you are your thoughts on moving what you care about forward?

What value can you offer others in the room? Perspective? Inclusion? Gratitude? Connection?

Set Goals

Who do you want to meet or talk to? Do your research ahead of time.

What do you want to learn? What do you want to share?

What is the minimum number of conversations you'd like to have? How many contacts can you make?



PUTTING THE WORK IN NETWORK

Be Brave & Initiate

Play the role of the host and approach new faces or those not yet engaged.

Prepare openers: “Hi, I haven’t had the chance to meet you yet.” “I noticed your name tag says you work for_____. Tell me more about your role there.” “Great presentation today! What are your thoughts on ____?”

Curiosity & Connection Takes You Far

Enter the conversation with a curious mindset: what can I learn about this person, their role, their values? How can I listen with intention?

Identify commonalities and use them as a basis for conversation: career, sports, seasonal activities, kids, pets, traffic, etc.

Finding the Exit

Keep conversations brief by using a polite cue to mutually part ways: “It was great meeting you today! Hope to see you at events in the future!”

Collect contact information if appropriate. Did you determine that it would be beneficial to stay connected? Do you want to plan a future meet-up?

KNOW YOURSELF & PLAN FOR IT

- IDENTIFY YOUR PITFALLS
- DEVELOP STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

IDENTIFY YOUR PITFALLS

Arriving late (or early to leave early)

Talking only to people you already know

Hanging out alone by the refreshments

Not prepared to socialize

Not prepared to talk about yourself

Monopolizing conversation

Clinging to one conversation

Showing up was your only goal



DEVELOP STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Do your research on attendees

Set goals for networking

Self-reflect

Identify what you can offer

Arrive early

Shift your social mindset

Ask questions and listen

Work the room

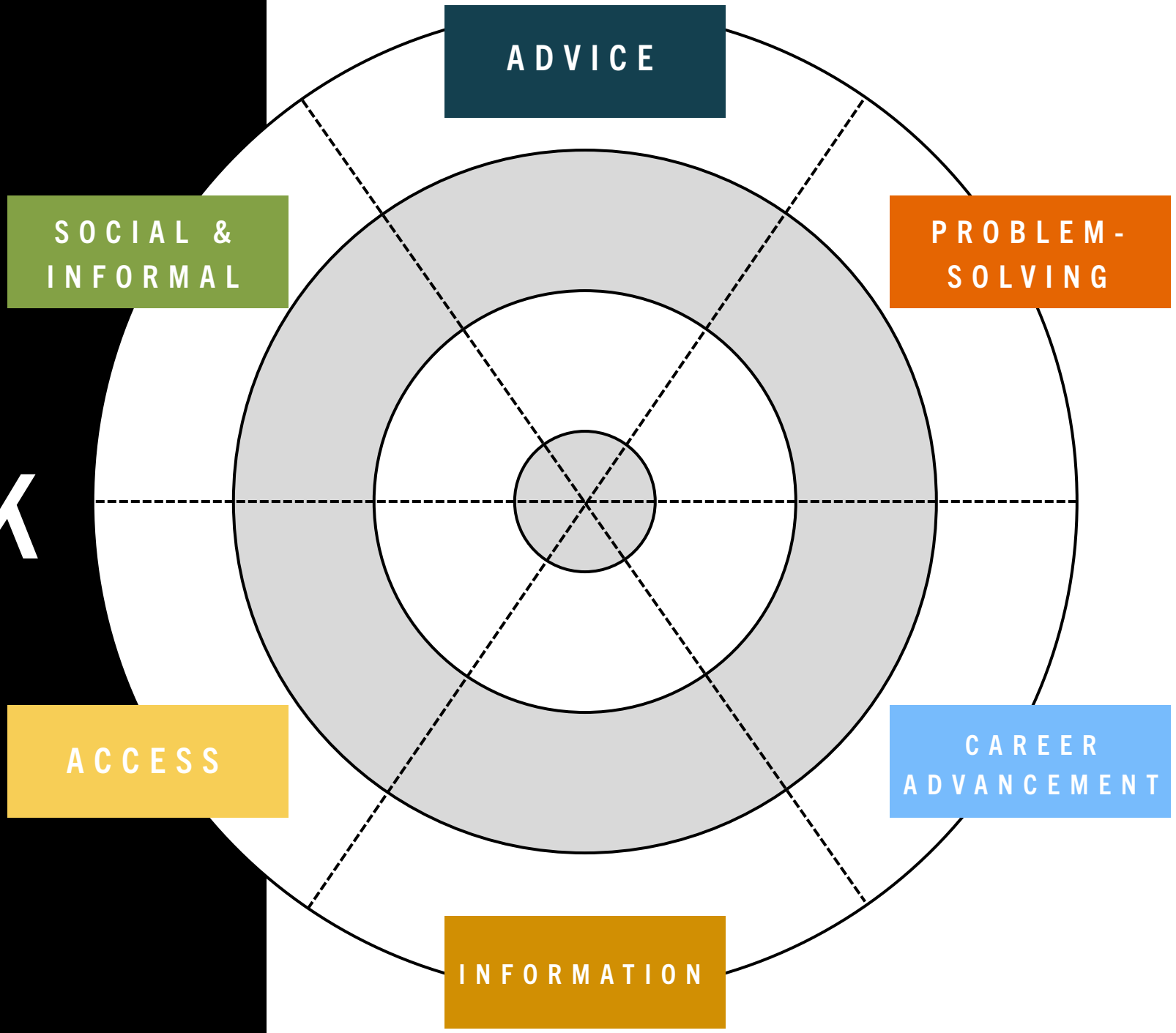


BRAINSTORM & DISCUSS

- PICK 2 PITFALLS THAT YOU IDENTIFY WITH (ON THE LIST OR NOT) & THINK THROUGH STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU AVOID THEM.

- SHARE OUT ONE PITFALL AND CORRESPONDING STRATEGY WITH YOUR TABLE GROUP. IF THERE'S TIME, GO AROUND AGAIN TO SHARE THE OTHER ONE!

MY NETWORK MAP



CREATE YOUR MAP

1. Start by listing a few people in each of these categories on the handout called Mapping Your Network.

2. Think about the strength of your relationship (very close, close, not very close, distant) and put those names on the circle page with the closest relationships in the center and work your way out.

ANALYZE YOUR MAP

1. What is the size and make-up of your network?
2. Are there gaps?
3. How connected is your network?
4. How will you build your network?

WRAP UP

What strategy will you apply to your next networking opportunity?



“AS WE LET OUR OWN LIGHT SHINE, WE UNCONSCIOUSLY GIVE OTHER PEOPLE PERMISSION TO DO THE SAME.”

— Marianne Williamson