

Recommendations for Kellogg Students

The insights from the interviews provide key learnings that can be applied by Kellogg students in their long and winding road in search of a summer job. The ideal network for a job search is a large broker network. Students should take lessons from Paul and aim at building as large and diverse a set of contacts as possible. They should focus on the job function they want to do and contact people associated with that work, either through informational calls or shared activities. They should also follow Paul's lead in seeking out a functionally and geographically diverse set of contacts that can bring new perspectives to the search. When approaching contacts, the goal of students should not be to get a job, but to build a rapport and look for how they can add value for the contact. Both Paul and George emphasized that making the relationship mutually-beneficial was essential to building and maintaining contacts.

At the summer job, students should work on both building and maintaining their network. They should build relationships inside and outside their divisions and, if possible, work on cross-functional teams to gain exposure to different people. Also, finding someone to provide honest feedback and serve as mentor can be extremely helpful as George found in his work at Corning. Students should be proactive and seek out work, as this provides more opportunities to learn and establish a good performance record. As noted by Ringo and Sgt. Pepper, a stellar performance can be a key driver to building a bigger network. Given the limited time-frame of an internship, students should take advantage of all available social and community activities, as these are opportunities to further expand their networks and strengthen their ties to their co-workers.

In sum, students should understand that building and maintaining a network requires time and effort. With careful planning and dedicated effort, a network can be the key to future success.

IV. BUILDING AND LEVERAGING YOUR NETWORK: KEY TAKAWAYS

At Kellogg you have access to a globally diverse student body, faculty and alumni. Identify structural holes in your current network and look to build in breadth, depth and leverage. With regard to networking with other students, Kellogg's focus on teamwork will allow you to build marketable communication and decision making skills. Get to know your classmates by taking advantage of shared activities like flag football or Marketing Club. Look for ways to act as a broker by using your network to meet people's needs. If your teammate wants to pursue brand management and you know someone well at P&G, put them in touch informally (similar to the reciprocity ring exercise.) This principal can help you as well. Seek to develop relationships with the professors in your desired career field. They are at the top of their research and teaching fields and can provide valuable mentorship and career guidance.

After Kellogg, continue to build upon your network to enhance your career progression towards management or entrepreneurship by keeping in mind your career goals whether long or short term. If you want to make partner at a consulting firm, you must invest heavily in creating positive relationships with people at all levels because of the rigorous 360 degree evaluation process. However, don't burn bridges even if you only plan on staying at a company for a short period as the ramifications of negative encounters might resurface in future business or social occasions. By pursuing a rainmaker strategy you will leave your options open.

Finally, as a manager, you should seek to develop and promote the people below and around you. Surrounding yourself with ambitious and knowledgeable colleagues and subordinates is invaluable to your own career progression in several ways. These relationships will enable you to access unique information and continually challenge you to be innovative in the face of changing environment and economies.

Recommendations

Establish, maintain and expand a diverse network of relationships to create personal and professional opportunities:

- Identify structural holes within an organization and either fill them yourself, or leverage the benefits by developing relationships with those who do.
- Meet new people. Every person is a potential resource for new information, ideas or collaborative opportunities.
- Use reciprocity and shared activities to stimulate closer relationship ties.
- Leverage your current network to more easily expand it.
- Get referrals and give referrals.
- Maintain quality of relationships through frequent contact.
- Incorporate social interactions within formal business relationships.
- Design network structures that enhance objective and fresh information flow.

Maximize the value of your network by building trust and commitment among your internal and external contacts:

- Demonstrate sincerity and genuine interest in team members.
- Invest in your team members' personal and professional development.
- Treat people with respect, regardless of title or level of responsibility.
- Treat people exactly how you would like to be treated.
- Create "win-win" situations for contacts.
- Establish credibility by following through on your promises and commitments, and by exceeding others' expectations of your performance.
- Show equal support for those whose support you need.
- Design strategies that achieve buy-in by developing a specific timeline and specific forms of communication to reach different segments at any particular point on that timeline.
- Develop informal agreements with contacts using rewards as a motivational mechanism for incentivizing performance.
- Leverage team members' core competencies to maximize effectiveness.
- Establish diverse internal teams consisting of those who can accomplish the goals and those who can secure necessary resources by effectively communicating the goals throughout the larger organization.
- Establish clear goals, timelines and performance expectations.

Recommendations for Kellogg Students

Our five interviewees have been successful in developing, managing and using their networks. From their experiences we have learned the following “best practices”.

It is essential to take an active approach in building your network. Devote substantial time to meeting new people. Introduce yourself to people and let them get to know you. When you enter a social setting, seek out new people rather than gravitating towards those you know.

Consciously strive to cultivate lifelong contacts rather than single-use “throwaway” relationships. Develop personal relationships based on trust and commitment, acting always with sincerity and integrity.

Discipline is also key. Have clear objectives. You should be aware of your own assets and the best way to leverage them; know where your skills and abilities fit, and how others may find them useful. When building your network bear in mind that membership in the network should benefit everybody. Ongoing maintenance is also critical. Determine the appropriate level of contact and execute it—whether through periodic meetings, informal conversation, phone calls or e-mails. Finally, regularly assess the strengths/ weaknesses of your network, and its fit with your objectives; your network should evolve over time. Networking, like career searching, takes time. Treat it as a second job (or as a “fifth class”).

More specifically while at Kellogg, participate in many clubs and activities on campus. In that way, you are more likely to meet people with diverse interests and have the opportunity to build long-term relationships through shared activity.

Finally, after Kellogg, choose jobs that can help you to further develop your social capital. Look for positions that give you access to brokers and look for companies that value diversity and encourage teamwork, allowing you to expand your network.

Recommendations to Kellogg Students

- **Goooooaaal!** While many of the important connections that we observed were a result of proximity, each manager interviewed had also carefully cultivated contacts that were specifically targeted to further their careers. As Robert succinctly stated, "Define clear goals for your career and build a network to achieve these goals." Kellogg students may find this targeting particularly useful in undertaking career searches not offered by the CMC.
- **It's the Person, not the Place:** Human capital is mobile; career-switching among firms, even industries, is common in today's business environment. Relationships, therefore, need to be established with people, not institutions. While your contact's title and position may have been of great assistance, the contact's new career can provide him or her with an expanded network and knowledge base to provide you with even more value.
- **Don't Abuse the Network:** At Kellogg, there have been strong criticisms about students using the database of alumni contacts for overt job procurement. Students should be cognizant that the degree of their demands needs to be aligned with the depth of the relationship with the alumni.
- **Keeping the Faith:** It can take years to develop trust, but trust can also be destroyed in an instant. At Kellogg, this can mean delivering on commitments – from organizing an event to turning in a timely project. Because of the plethora of activities available to us, we also need to be aware of over-commitment; over-committing in the hopes of expanding one's network can actually be a detriment if one is unable to deliver on promises made.

Recommendations for Kellogg Students

- Leverage your two sources of networks: genetic and professional.
- Focus on bringing quality, and not quantity, into your network. Moreover, based on the recent crises of trust that have occurred in the corporate world, trust within a network is becoming increasingly important
- Consciously architect your network according to your needs. Define your “needs”, set standards that are consistent with your definition, and build your network around these standards.
- Remember that knowing is not simply a matter of having someone’s title, telephone number and email address. Knowing is building intimacy with members of your network and understanding them: their motivations, their values and their goals.
- Use indirect relationship marketing to develop and strengthen your network. Be cognizant of those who have influence on the key members of your network and seek to influence them indirectly.
- Remember networks are a long-term investment. The real value of the network is not any one individual payoff is the network’s presence as a superstructure offering sustained access to ideas, financial resources, human capital and expert counsel.
- When building your network be creative. Exploit any and all opportunities to create unique position for yourself. Look broadly for these opportunities.
- Use your network to affect change. A network can be used to enhance job security, establish credibility, access new business opportunities and gain access to private information.

Advice for Successfully Managing Networks

A critical element in maintaining a long-lasting network is that relationships must be two-way. Relationships are strengthened when the respective parties help each other. Kellogg students should therefore proactively look for ways to provide value for their key contacts. Whether working diligently so one's boss looks particularly impressive in a meeting or sending a contact a helpful article, students should be mindful that they will get as much out of their network as they put into it. Regardless of the size of one's network, people who have committed to win-win relationships will garner significant advantages over the long-term since their contacts will not only provide help when asked, but will actively try to help them succeed.

It is also essential to be thoughtful and genuine in each and every interaction that one has at all levels of an organization, since every relationship and conversation plays a role in building one's reputation both professionally and personally. Kellogg students should understand that people can be successful in bursts based on hard work and good performance, however they will need a groundswell of support at both the senior and junior levels to be successful over the long-term. By being genuine and respectful toward others, one can earn loyalty and commitment to the point where people will go out of their way to help you succeed. One of our managers specifically manages people with the intent that they will tell others how great it is to work with him, which ultimately benefits both him and the organization.

Additionally, Kellogg students should recognize the importance of leaving their comfort zones. In certain situations, one needs to have the confidence to take risks, to speak one's mind and reach out to different people, and to not be afraid to make mistakes. By challenging opinions and convention in a non-threatening and constructive manner, students can earn the respect of their colleagues, move the company forward, and avoid being a "yes man."

Recommendations to Kellogg Students

At Kellogg, students can gain great business knowledge in the classroom, but in addition to this, a large part of the learning is from fellow students, alumni, faculty, and visiting business professionals. Students should take full advantage of this opportunity to expand their social networks and leverage these relationships to enhance their personal and professional lives. They should avoid seeking out only individuals with similar backgrounds and interests. The number of activities and organizations open to Kellogg students can be overwhelming and intriguing. Students should be cautious in participating in too many organizations that would spread their involvement thin. The experience will be most fulfilling by getting deeply involved within diverse activities and aspiring to leadership roles.

Attending corporate presentations is a great way to meet professionals in an industry of interest (specially for changing careers). However, there are too many of these for one individual to attend all. Therefore, leveraging contacts with fellow students within Kellogg is also a great way to gain inside knowledge on specific companies and industries, which will aid in the filtering process of determining which presentations are critical to attend.

Be a broker for other students. Put students in need of information in contact with others in your network that may be able to assist. Gaining meaningful friendships and trust is a reciprocal arrangement that requires both giving and taking. Keep in contact with previous professional contacts. Those contacts remain extremely important to maintain over time. An occasional email to update them on what you are doing and challenges you are facing is a great way of accomplishing this. Be careful not to come across as arrogant or insult their company. Apply these guidelines to your network and build a strong web of relationships, the pay off will be extremely rewarding.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KELLOGG STUDENTS

These findings lead to three main recommendations for Kellogg students:

- First, students interested in becoming entrepreneurs should note that the network structures of existing hierarchies differ from those initially needed by entrepreneurs. In building a business, entrepreneurs initially need multi-disciplinary support, resources, and advice. For this reason, they may tend to develop broader, industry-associated contacts. (For example, Ersan and Corey scrambled to get anyone into their support web.) Over time, these networks evolve into the optimal networks that are more traditionally observed – those based on shared interests. Entrepreneurially-oriented students should focus first on collecting contacts and building relationships, and then build strategies necessary to maneuver and control network holes.
- Second, always obey the “R before T” rule. Networking is not a discreet activity. Don’t try to get major short-term results from people with whom your relationship is brief and superficial. Instead, work hard to develop meaningful relationships over time. The “R before T” rule can be applied to all types of networks, and specifically has been shown to be very important when approaching new contacts in the job search.
- Third, and finally, there is a personal “tipping point.” - the inflection region where an entrepreneur’s social network is self-generating.. The following steps lead to achieving a personal tipping point: (1) understand how a social network is evolving (2) orient the social network to generate results (3) achieve critical mass by strengthening key players using R before T (4) open and share contacts across key players (anti-monopolistic brokering).

Recommendations for Kellogg Students

Our diverse group of managers provided a number of recommendations for students which we have narrowed down to following three main categories:

- **Attitude:** Several managers mentioned that students should have a passion for whatever career they pursue. Having the passion will make it easier to build the networks needed when starting a career in addition to motivating superior job performance. We were encouraged by several interviewees that this was the best time in our lives to take risks, to make mistakes, and to learn from them. Risks, such as working in unfamiliar industries, allows for the growth of unique contacts in a range of industries.
- **Communication:** All managers indicated that active listening is one of the most important components of success in any context. It requires one to observe and listen when new in the network, which also provides the opportunity to learn about others. Open and honest communication helps build trust - critical to developing and maintaining strong relationships.
- **Relationships** - Several managers insisted that students should look at building relationships that transcend their traditional work or school network. One manager explained that the best network and skills are applicable across industries and not necessarily focused on one's immediate surroundings. Becoming involved in community service activities or continuing education are excellent ways to enrich a network, but we were warned against becoming involved purely for business purposes as people will see through to your true objectives.

Finally, the best recommendation, repeated by all our interviewees, for long term success was - HAVE FUN! We spend a large part of our lives working; we should make it as enjoyable and fulfilling as possible.

Recommendations for Kellogg Students

Six Pillars of Managerial Success

It is really “up to you” how much you can best utilize the Kellogg environment to acquire useful social networks for your career advancement, which includes infinite opportunities to contact with diverse background students, prominent faculty members, and representatives of premier companies. In order to maximize this environment, you should keep in mind the following guidelines:

1. **Take a long term view** when it comes to building your social network. You may not think that some relationships will help you initially; but you must still nurture these relationships over time, as you never know who will be able to help you down the line.
2. **Seek out the commonality** between you and another individual despite whatever superficial differences may exist. Common interests or values are the building blocks for strong relationships. Once you find these, you can build a relationship with anyone.
3. **Enjoy working with people** and like people – this cannot be forced or phony because people will see through the façade and not trust you.
4. **Never forget your older networks**. As your network expands and you continue to meet new people, it is important that we don't lose track of our older (pre-MBA) contacts.
5. **Always have a designated “mentor”** within your network whom you can completely trust and who can give you honest feedback.
6. **Get at least one expertise** to attract other people and make reciprocal relationships. Try to ensure that you will be No.1 within Kellogg students in one area.

Recommendations to Kellogg Students

We conclude our analysis with a series of recommendations to our peers; recommendations that we believe will encourage the effective development and use of their social capital.

- Building sustainable social equity is a two-way street; long term social capital requires one to make meaningful contributions back into their network. Remember that the small requests for your help may be just as important as the highly visible demands on your time.
- Periodically “feed” your network, especially those on the periphery, with small favors or tasks to keep the interaction fresh and relevant.
- The method of communication can impact the strength and long term viability of the social capital you are building. Face-to-face interaction, followed by telephone conversation, provides a stronger platform for building and maintaining relationships than many of the popular electronic methods (email, instant message, etc). In addition, more personal methods of communication provide a ‘human element’ to the relationship strengthening important social characteristics such as trust.
- Your success is a positive indictment on your social network. Recognize the important contribution your network makes to your accomplishments. People gravitate towards those who succeed, and thus sharing the recognition of your accomplishments with those in your social network will enable exponential expansion of your social capital.
- Your social network is not a substitute, but rather a complement, to the other skills necessary for continued success.

People say that “it is not about what you know, but about who you know”. I was not very sure about this a few years ago, but as years go by I convince myself that it is absolutely true. My only doubt is whether the “who” is enough by itself, and whether the “what” is also a necessary but not sufficient condition to climb the corporate ladder. It is sometimes sad to say that too many people seemed to have climbed only with the “who” and without the “what”. -- Marcos Browne

- Manage the diversity of your network such that the different components become reinforcing. Use the diverse perspective of your personal network to become stronger in your professional field.
- Share your passions with others, whatever they may be. Subsequent interactions may prove fruitful in ways that are initially unknown. Of equal importance, listen and understand the passion of others. Understanding their interests and objectives will facilitate your ability to make meaningful contributions and build deeper relationships.
- Sincerity. Honesty. Transparency. The simple things are really important.

Advice to Kellogg Students

The following are Mr. Ashe's Top Three suggestions for current Kellogg Students:

1. **Network with Other Non-MBA Students.** Mr. Ashe suggests that students often fail to take advantage of opportunities to network outside of the academic environment. He believes that although your fellow students are important, you should begin strategically developing relationships with individuals outside of the college campus that have strong networks in other areas. These areas may not be important to you, however, the strength of their relationship can provide you with additional opportunities.
2. **Help others as often as possible.** As Kellogg students, Mr. Ashe says, there will be many opportunities to work on building your network through the art of reciprocation. He states that people often overlook the opportunities that this creates. As students, we should look to help out others as much as possible. Not only is it the right thing to do, but it also creates a give and take environment which he admits is critical to success in his industry.
3. **Network with key people in organizations.** Networking with key people is especially key after graduation as it is a great way to get things done without having to address the politics of the entire organization. Mr. Ashe believes that we should begin now developing this skill in the clubs and organizations where we are currently active. Not only does he suggest getting to know the key personnel of an organization, he also believes that we should seek out their most trusted support worker and leverage that relationship in getting things done.

I. Conclusion and Recommendations for Kellogg Students

It is evident from our interviews and analyses that managers employ different styles, network configurations and techniques in order to achieve their goals. Yet their varied approaches have all resulted in influential and powerful positions in their respective organizations. Although the approaches differ, many common themes are apparent, with the most obvious being an element of trust. All managers agreed that building trust from the onset aids in the development of networks. These networks are critical avenues for obtaining advice, getting connected, advancing careers, and influencing others. Maintaining these networks is critical, so time and energy should be expended in keeping them effective.

In evaluating our managers' networks, we were able to extract a set of recommendations for becoming successful managers. In order to be successful, upcoming managers should "think successful". This translates into being confident in your abilities and knowing when to trust your judgment. Insight and intuition develops over the course of time, so don't be overly critical of your mistakes. Also, recognize when it is appropriate to make decisions. There may be occasions when making a judgment call is not your place, so be sensitive to the situation dynamics. Respecting others and their positions will help you build credibility, a good reputation, and a stronger network. Since it is difficult to recover from broken bonds (due to the interconnectivity), exercise care and caution in maintaining the network. Try to incorporate individuals who share a common goal, as they will help you expand your contact base and offer invaluable advice and feedback. Taking the role of a "servant leader" by expressing an attitude of service in all directions of your network will also help you build your reputation and gain the trust of others. And finally, promote ethical behavior and conducting yourselves honestly.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KELLOGG STUDENTS:

- 1) Exercise the network muscle or it will atrophy. Work to continually maintain relationships in order to make your network stronger and more beneficial to you.
- 2) It's important to remember that relationships are a two way street. The more you give to your network, the more it will give back to you.
- 3) Continually work to find activities that will allow you to develop strong diverse relationships.
- 4) Never abuse the relationship, be honest and always thank people.
- 5) Treat all people equally – observed disparities in behavior will lead to a breakdown in trust and a loss of network effectiveness.
- 6) Most importantly, the simplest rule of effective networking is to live the golden rule – do unto others as you would have them do unto you. The benefits of this philosophy should be self-evident, but if you need proof you need only look to all of the accomplished people we interviewed here and listen to how they have benefited from attitudes and behaviors emanating from this rule.

Recommendations for Kellogg Students

Short term Recommendations

- Aim to gain experience by volunteering or securing internships in sectors that are of interest to you.
Try and gain varied experiences in as many different departments as possible and prove to the key people in the organization that you have the requisite skills for success in your field of choice
- Attend networking related meetings, meet key people and make sure that you strategically send messages, e-mails or letters at appropriate time junctures.
- Getting involved with professional organizations that are influential in the field of interest is beneficial, as is involvement in shared activities.

Longer term Recommendations

- When one is on his or her way up in the career setting, it is important to not sacrifice values and ethics for short term gain. In the long term however, people will know a professional based on his or her ethics, integrity and character.
- The vital point when designing a network has to be the diversity of contacts as well as having contacts that can help meet the goals at hand. Always seek to refresh the network as necessary as objectives change.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KELLOGG STUDENTS

After speaking with five executives and analyzing the results of our interviews, our team has three recommendations for how to build, strengthen, and utilize your network.

1) BUILD your network through active involvement in activities you are passionate about.

- Our managers built their networks by participating in a variety of activities ranging from social events to basketball leagues to Sunday golf matches to charitable organizations.
- The common thread: each executive chose to participate in activities for which they felt passion, in which they were highly active, and to which they were intensely committed. Pursuing this strategy will position you to connect with individuals with similar interests and enable you to more genuinely forge meaningful relationships.

2) STRENGTHEN your network bonds by building trust.

- Be completely trustworthy and ethical at all times so that people unconditionally trust you with sensitive and/or confidential information, personal problems, and thoughts.
- In addition to exhibiting unimpeachable ethics, you must also work hard to earn trust. Consistently fulfilling commitments, delivering reliable results, being straightforward, and working through challenging scenarios with others are important steps in garnering trust.

3) USE your network effectively by maintaining equilibrium in your relationships.

- Ensure that reciprocity exists within your network by giving back as much as you take. This will make it easier to call in favors and leverage your connections when necessary.
- This might feel uncomfortable without organizational power, but there are many ways to reciprocate a kindness: connect contacts within your network to each other or to interesting organizations, pass on informative articles, share experiences about your job, and generally display a proactive willingness to help.

Recommendations for Kellogg Students

The senior managers we interviewed spend a considerable amount of time and energy building and managing their various networks as well as leveraging their social capital in their career. We identified three specific steps Kellogg students can take entering a summer internship or full time employment.

First, focus on expanding your network both within the company you work for and within different social outlets outside of the office. Within the company, don't ostracize individuals in lower levels. You never know when they'll be promoted to positions of influence or how much persuasion they may have over people with significant authority. Outside the company, having a diverse network give you access to valuable information and people. Learning about people's background and using similarities to approach them is effective for building networks. If it helps you to be effective in building your network, keep a written document through which you consciously manage your network contacts.

Second, develop trust which is one of the most important things in maintaining a network. Take steps to let your contacts know that you genuinely care about them and your relationship with them. Get to know them outside of the work environment or learn something about them that doesn't pertain to work (i.e. about their family, hobbies, favorites etc.) Consider ways in which you can be of value to them first (not how to take advantage of their resources!) Assisting them with knowledge sharing or providing access to your existing network may be of great help to them.

Finally, find a broker, especially when entering a new work environment. Senior managers make excellent brokers who will provide valuable resources and are willing to help you. Remember to reciprocate. It will further enhance your social capital.

Recommendations for Kellogg Students

At the beginning of the quarter, many of us were surprised by the results of the "Six Degrees of Separation" worksheet. Through what we've discovered in our course and the insight we've gained from our interviewees we've learned the importance of networks. So **make your network a priority**- invest time and effort to develop it. Remember that it will be one of your most important assets.

Networking must be a way of life. Use every moment to make new contacts. Conduct alumni/2nd year searches to see who is working or who has worked at your target companies. Contact them, get names from them, and contact these new individuals. Repeat.

Business School is a very disruptive change, a "shock" event in one's life. It is a perfect time to reinvent oneself. Take full advantage of this opportunity to broaden your horizons and increase your network, but **don't forget about the contacts you left behind.**

Shared activities are exceptionally important in developing your network, but try not to go overboard. Concentrate on activities you are good at, and organizations that you truly have an interest in. If you are a terrible golfer, meeting recruiters and/or clients at a golf outing may lead only to embarrassment, and not that prospective job/deal. **Focus your shared activities efforts on those activities that you are competent at or have a serious interest in.**

We are all very fortunate that we have gotten where we have in our lives. However, we can't let the fact that we attend one of the top business schools in the world go to our heads. Arrogance breeds mistrust, jealousy, and numerous other negative emotions. **It's important to remember that you can learn from anyone.** Your subordinates will teach you many things throughout your career.

Most importantly, develop a reputation that earns you trust and respect. Respect confidentiality. Recognize the fact that it takes a while to earn trust, yet only one second to destroy it. Don't ever lie in interviews. It's OK to say "I don't know." Show others that you understand the risks, as well as the benefits, of their ideas/strategies/products. You will gain greater credibility this way. As one of our interviewees put it- "credibility is like virginity, once you lose it, it's gone forever."

4. Recommendations for Kellogg Students

There are several lessons learned from our research:

- **Build entrepreneurial networks:** Kellogg students should build diverse social networks that rarely interact. In the short-term, these entrepreneurial networks will assist in the independent job search. In the long-term, these entrepreneurial networks will also be important in finding new clients and product ideas.
- **Selfless Reciprocation & Keeping in Touch:** Always look for the win-win situation, but be selfless and look beyond the short-term gain. Acts of kindness, such as helping Kellogg student build a club website, will be remembered when you need their help. Prioritize your contacts, but try to keep in touch with everyone. If you contact them only when you need them, your contacts will feel exploited.
- **Use Social Networks to Overcome Your Weaknesses:** Don't be afraid to ask for help! People want to help you, especially people who like you. For example, during your summer internship, it's easy to isolate yourself and to attempt to solve problems on your own. Instead, use your contacts to supplement your knowledge. If you need Excel help, locate technical mavens in your network to assist you. If you need to get colleagues involved in an upcoming church bake sale, use brokers to spread the news and to motivate people to donate.
- **Building Teams:** When building new teams, it is most effective to build teams using individuals with diverse skills from within your own contact pool. This helps to build the foundation for cohesion and cooperation. Then, supplement talent and knowledge gaps with outside talent to cover weaknesses and to reduce groupthink. For example, when building a Kellogg consulting case practice team, select a cohesive group of individuals to maximize commitment, discipline, and cooperation but add subject matter experts (e.g. finance and economics) into the group to gain new and diverse points of view.

Recommendations for Kellogg Students

While you are at the Kellogg School of Management:

- **Diversify your network** to include people from different cultural / business backgrounds
- **Develop** at least a handful of very **close relationships**
- **Take advantage of opportunities** to engage in new activities and develop new interests
- **Leverage your student status** to meet with professionals outside your business area
- **Make the effort** to get past superficial interaction

As you begin your career:

- **Remain aware** of your position in the network – build accordingly
- **Find mentors** who can provide pointers for navigating through the organization
- **Get involved** with people from different levels and areas of the company
- **Clearly identify** the players / roles in your network
- **Stand out** through effort and sincerity (hand-written notes, cards, etc)
- **Share your outside interests** with your colleagues
- **Choose your colleagues wisely**...they impact your perception within the organization
- **Attempt to give more than you take** from any business relationship
- **Nourish** critical connections with key network members

Throughout your life:

- **Develop a plan** for maintaining and leveraging your network
- **Carefully watch** for network holes and fill them as quickly as possible
- **Never underestimate** the power of a contact...chance opportunities change lives
- **Continually invest** to keep your network healthy
- **Never stop developing this critical resource!**

CONCLUSIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR KELLOGG STUDENTS

The strategies that SS, SB, CK, MK and AJL developed provide many salient insights for Kellogg students. Kellogg students need to be always aware that building and maintaining reputation are key factors to success not only in business, but also in every stage of life. We need to constantly make a conscious effort to connect ourselves with influential people in the environments to gain visibility, information and support. In order to keep our connections strong and prolific, we need to gain and maintain trust. With reciprocity, we can enhance our reputation by creating repeated interactions, and form stronger and dynamic relationships.

While returning to the corporate world, it is essential for Kellogg students to consciously evaluate the organizational structure and culture of their firms early on, discern the goals and activities of key players, and concentrate on building our networks tailored to their firms. While delivering results is a key factor in success, without the broker ties one may not gain the visibility of one's accomplishments or gain the required buy-in for their actions. Depending on the structure of the organization students need to decide whether to build a few crucial ties versus a high-density weak-tie network.

It is equally important to understand the dynamic nature of networks and, as situations change, to adapt our positioning and contacts to these new environments. Whether it is starting a new business, transitioning in a firm or building support in an organization, students need to build diversified, strategic alliances, and be prepared to eliminate redundant contacts.

Finally but not lastly, students need to be aware of the clique network among senior management. While students may be constantly exposed to the senior management team, one needs at least one champion in this small network to get connected. As one climbs up the corporate ladder, the importance of the power of one's contacts become more crucial.

Recommendations

Three key takeaways emerge from our interviews which Kellogg students may find helpful in establishing functional networks.

Firstly the internal vs. external networks framework discussed earlier provides a unique perspective on how networks are used by managers. In viewing internal firm networks as a support structure and external (outside firm) networks as entrepreneurial centers, students can gain a valuable broad perspective on how managers use people in their day to day work. More specifically, this broad framework can allow students to determine whether their internal networks are sufficient to allow them to execute or implement key ideas and whether their external networks are sufficient to help them generate and sell these key ideas.

Secondly, students should target key "career contacts" in their networks now and ensure that their relationship with them remains strong. To build these relationships a student can gain credibility by using his/her strengths to help others, thus creating loyalty. These contacts need not be key brokers but should be relationships forged "in the trenches" with someone who the student feels has the capability and drive to succeed.

Finally, students must be made aware that the best way to gain access to influential decision makers in an organization is through the caliber of work performed. Students must focus on leveraging successes in the work place to gain the attention of senior managers who could pave the way for exciting and dynamic career opportunities.

Recommendations to Kellogg Students

In order to establish relationships and build a network, one must seek out ways to build trust, one must learn enough about others through shared experiences to be able to meet their needs and lastly, one must care enough about others to give to them selflessly. Below are four strategic recommendations for developing a successful network.

- Focus first on trust. Not only will there not be a network without it, but through trust one gains credibility and together those provide efficiency. In a time-crunched world this is not only a luxury, but a necessity.
- Receiving is nearly impossible without giving. The more genuine and selfless that giving really is, the deeper the relationships it will create and the more powerful the network that results. Seek out opportunities to give to others selflessly and generously. Those acts will be remembered and most often reciprocated.
- Once such a foundation has been laid, maintaining a network requires intentionality. Find a comfortable or inventive method such as a tickler file or book-sharing, use the resources at your disposal such as phones, email, and reunions, and never hesitate to re-invigorate a connection.
- Recognize that with wisdom and maturity comes an understanding that the relationships that grew from shared values and genuine interest instead of solely for personal gain end up being the richest, most valuable, and most fulfilling relationships in a network.

Recommendation to Kellogg Students

We have realized, through these five managers, three important principles of networks that Kellogg students should keep in mind as they develop their careers. First, an important factor of networks is the foundation of trust and reciprocity. This seems obvious in concept, but trust is complex and hard to obtain. Trust takes an exceptional amount of time and commitment to establish and an individual must be willing to go the extra mile to build it. Often this means sacrificing at times for a relationship when the benefits are not immediately visible.

Additionally, trust is fragile and can more easily be destroyed than developed. Therefore, trust must be nurtured, for once it is destroyed it is nearly impossible to rebuild. Kellogg students must focus on taking the time to build trust, even when it is not convenient for them. One of the best ways to build trust is reciprocity. Extending yourself to assist others makes it easier for you to be trusted because it demonstrates that you are not just self-interested. Extending yourself also encourages an individual to reciprocate a favor at some point. Kellogg students should remember that it is the long-term where trust and reciprocity matter, for it is then that you will need assistance and want to have individuals who will reciprocate.

Once new contacts are made, developing and nurturing these relationships are as important as the time expended to initially build trust. Frequent contacts and continuous reciprocity work to strengthen the contact and take less time than initially establishing the relationship. E-mail, phone calls and lunch meetings can be easy ways to make sure contacts are not lost. Kellogg students should remember that previous network contacts will always be important even if they do not seem useful at the moment. Nurturing is an easy way to maintain a contact that may become useful later on.

Moreover, while maintaining existing relationships, continue to expand contacts and your network. A powerful tool we observed from our interviews for expanding networks is shared interests. Engaging in activities at different clubs or sitting on a board of a non-profit organization may help to increase the diversity of one's network.

Our last piece of advice for Kellogg students is to focus on leveraging networks to accomplish their managerial goals. Often managers feel that part of their managerial responsibility is to accomplish objectives on their own. As exhibited by these five managers, their social networks helped them achieve organizational goals of creating change, providing information and knowledge for a client and solving organizational problems. Continually reciprocating with individuals in the network helps to build up reciprocity with people that you can utilize when you are trying to achieve a management objective. It also allows a manager to accomplish more than he could individually.

To be an excellent manager, Kellogg students must remember – **Build Trust, Nurture and Develop Relationships, and Utilize Contacts to their Managerial Advantage.**

General

- Perform the tasks you are assigned well. Trust begins with proof of competence.
- Never compromise your personal integrity. One dishonest act can mark your reputation.
- Be an active listener. When you're talking, you're saying what you already know.
- Step out of your comfort zone and meet new people. A diverse network is a formidable asset.

At Kellogg

- Start building your network now! Develop professional contacts through recruiting events, Kellogg alumni, and other students. Build social contacts through clubs, sports, arts, volunteer work, parties, etc.
- Get involved in diverse activities which you might not have exposure to after Kellogg.

Making contacts during summer internships

- Maintain both personal and professional relationships with superiors, peers and subordinates.
- Develop strong relationships with people who have the greatest impact on your career, including those who are most active in the company's recruiting process and those who hold leadership positions in the organization.
- Be positive and learn from difficulties, disappointments and conflicts: behind most negative situations lies an opportunity.

Prepare for the transition to the executive level

- Be firm and fair, which will give you the right to be demanding. Let those around you know exactly what you expect from them.

Manage your personal image in order to create a strong personal brand. Be respectable, influential and likeable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4. **Network with brokers in organizations.** Networking with brokers is especially important as it is an efficient way to accomplish your tasks without having to address the politics of the entire organization. You should begin developing this skill now in the clubs and organizations in which you are currently active. Not only should you strive to know the key personnel of an organization, but you should also seek out their most trusted support workers and leverage those relationships to achieve your goals.
5. **Utilize networking to promote your ideas.** Kellogg is a student-driven institution and there are a plethora of opportunities for student initiatives. The best way to drive these initiatives is to identify key representatives needed to promote your project and establish yourself as a broker between these groups to bring together the power of the network.
6. **Network outside of Kellogg.** Students often fail to take advantage of opportunities to network outside of the academic environment. Although your fellow peers are important, you should begin to strategically develop relationships outside of the college campus with individuals that have strong networks in other areas. These areas may not be important to you; however, the strength of their network can provide you with additional opportunities.
7. **Help others as often as possible.** Many incoming students will be coming from competitive environments, where helping your peers is not second nature. As Kellogg students, there will be many opportunities to work on building your network through the art of reciprocation and building trust. People often overlook the opportunities that this creates. By helping your fellow students, you will be building trust which will not only be beneficial during your time at Kellogg, but will be a valuable resource throughout your career.

Recommendations to Kellogg Students

In order to establish relationships and build a network, one must seek out ways to build trust, one must learn enough about others through shared experiences to be able to meet their needs and lastly, one must care enough about others to give to them selflessly. Below are four strategic recommendations for developing a successful network.

- Focus first on trust. Not only will there not be a network without it, but through trust one gains credibility and together those provide efficiency. In a time-crunched world this is not only a luxury, but a necessity.
- Receiving is nearly impossible without giving. The more genuine and selfless that giving really is, the deeper the relationships it will create and the more powerful the network that results. Seek out opportunities to give to others selflessly and generously. Those acts will be remembered and most often reciprocated.
- Once such a foundation has been laid, maintaining a network requires intentionality. Find a comfortable or inventive method such as a tickler file or book-sharing, use the resources at your disposal such as phones, email, and reunions, and never hesitate to re-invigorate a connection.
- Recognize that with wisdom and maturity comes an understanding that the relationships that grew from shared values and genuine interest instead of solely for personal gain end up being the richest, most valuable, and most fulfilling relationships in a network.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KELLOGG STUDENTS

1. Begin building your network now by building relationships with your Kellogg classmates. Utilize the many professional clubs to begin building diverse networks in the industry you plan to enter and join sports and social clubs to build networks with colleagues from a variety of industries.
2. Connect with a mentor early in your career and use this relationship to quickly build a network within the organization.
3. Network "Up, Down, Over, and Out". Don't focus solely on networking up in your organization. It's equally important to build and maintain networks with subordinates, peers, and colleagues outside of your organization.
4. Open communication and reciprocity are powerful tools to build trust with the members in your network.
5. Do not neglect your family network. Work to maintain a good relationship with your family and communicate work issues to help them understand the pressure you are under at work.
6. Maintain relationships even after you move on to another division or outside the organization. You never know when that person may be able to help.
7. Communicate, communicate, and communicate. You can never communicate too much. It makes people feel valued, develops knowledge for yourself, and builds trust.

Contact Resource Persons Regularly

Staying in continual contact is indispensable to maintaining one's network. Considering that our contacts are extremely busy, sending email or cards on a regular basis is a good way to let them know how we are doing. One person suggested a "monthly phone call" to all the major contact persons in your network as a good way to stay in touch and remind them that they are important to us.

Find time to establish and maintain your network

The managers we interviewed spend so much time establishing and maintaining their networks despite the fact that they are extremely busy. We should consciously allocate our time to connecting with classmates and other potential contacts no matter how busy we are.

Enhance our reputation at Kellogg

Many managers have developed important contacts since their youth. Undoubtedly, Kellogg is one of the best places in which one can extend our network.

Participate in activities you enjoy

We should participate in activities we really enjoy. In these activities, we could perform favors for others willingly and gain trust from them. If you enjoy what you are doing, it won't seem like you're networking. In addition, sticking to basic manners, such as keeping promises, being punctual and responding to requests in a timely manner, is crucial in gaining trust.

Ask for favors sparingly


This is especially true if we are trying to maintain a long term relationship with senior executives. Although the interviewees had access to the CEO and CIO, they made it a point to never use those contacts unless critical. Also remember that using contacts is a two way street. Do not just call upon contacts when you need something.

Recommendations for Kellogg Students

Kellogg Students can do a lot to improve their networks and accomplish their goals by applying the three ideas of our social networks framework. What follows is a set of general and Kellogg-specific recommendations.


Foundation

- Build trust through competence.
- Establish reputation for doing a good job and for being trustworthy.
- Stay true to your values/interests; find others who share those values/interests.
- Use shared-activities as a means to cultivate strong contacts.

 **Kellogg** : Kellogg classmates are the basis of a great network. Build trust and a good reputation with classmates through competence in assignments and group-work, reliability and trustworthiness. Find others who share your values and use shared activities to solidify relationships. Last but not least, make sure they know "who" you are--tell them what you want to do professionally and exhibit your character uniqueness.

Design

- Seek diversity in social networks, both at work and in other activities.
- Lateral moves and extracurricular activities are often great sources of contacts.
- Remember that the goal is entrepreneurial networks.

 **Kellogg** : Seek to diversify at Kellogg (and companies/industries!). Join diverse activities and take a variety of classes. During summer internships, network with MBAs from other schools or with people from varying departments. Use subtle tactics to promote your visibility so that your network perpetuates itself (Who doesn't know of Barry Grant even if you haven't met him?).

Maintenance

- Maintain visibility and image with those around you.
- Keep in contact with existing network members.
- Remember that networking is based on reciprocity – help out your contacts however you can, when you can.
- Respect the limitations of your contacts – don't over-utilize them.
- Initiate a tipping point (reputation, active participation, achievements).

 **Kellogg** : Maintain visibility with recruiters by attending information sessions and keeping in contact.

Keep in touch with classmates from CIM Week section, previous classes, and work. Help people interested in industries and careers you are interested in. Use technology to help you save time. Buy a contact manager software like Act! or Goldmine, PDA compatible tools used by effective salespeople, to facilitate grouping and periodically keeping touch with mentors, recruiters, classmates, alumni, and others

IV. CONCLUSION: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KELLOGG STUDENTS

Our interviews revealed that one's network is a function of position, industry, and career level. In the early stages of one's career, you should focus on developing a diverse network, whereas in later stages you will be constrained by time and may have to emphasize network maintenance over development in order to avoid network atrophy. Elaborated on and supported with anecdotal evidence throughout this paper, the nutshell takeaways for our peers are as follows:

- Look for opportunities to expand your network in diverse directions
- Do not underestimate the value of any contacts—some day they may fill a structural gap in your network
- Do not underestimate your value to another person's network; you may fill a gap in their network
- Leverage your existing resources to expand your network
- Cultivate and protect your reputation
- Look for time-efficient ways to serve your network
- Be on the “top-of-mind” of your main network contacts
- Leverage your network sparingly and subtly; it is better to tap the network broadly rather than deeply
- Set up information flows that minimize the amount of time you must spend trying to extract information from your network
- Capture and convert institutional networks to personal social capital.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KELLOGG STUDENTS:

Building and Leveraging Social Networks to Overcome Conflict

Sources of conflict in a business environment can differ in nature.

- **Factual arguments**
- **Personal conflict**
- **Corporate rivalry**

These common and difficult situations can be dealt with by leveraging social network relationships.

Depending on the individual situation, business setting, and state of one's social network, there are five possible approaches that can be taken to manage the conflict.

- **Leverage the depth of relationships** – Evaluate the strength of your networks before allowing a confrontation. This evaluation is critical in the case of corporate rivalry. If the depth of the relationship is overestimated, the resulting confrontation could wreck the chemistry and cohesiveness of the manager's entire social network. Draw a line when necessary.
- **Turn around conflict relationship** – If a conflict exists in a required work relationship, a manager should expend more energy developing a relationship such that trust, common goals, and mutual respect mitigate the conflict.
- **Circumvent impediments** – When managing a conflict with a superior, a manager should utilize the resources available through their social network to overcome the effects of the conflict in a way that maintains the manager's integrity within the organization.
- **Prune a Social Network** - Be aware that conflict may sometimes be an indication that the social network connection should be eliminated. Managers should be willing to professionally exit relationships as a means of promoting further growth in their social network.
- **Get out of the way** - In project-based business settings where conflict can be tolerated, a manager should focus on deliverables and ensure different teammates are chosen next time.

A manager must not only understand the nature and cause of a conflict, but (s)he should also be aware of the options available to resolve the conflict. As the success of the conflict resolution methods described above depends on the breadth, depth, and quality of the network relationships, a manager must constantly strive to build, develop, and maintain strong social networks.

Recommendations for Kellogg Students

- a) Be a good listener: In order to add value as a broker and transcend your own limitations through others, the managers interviewed (hereinafter "The Managers") deeply know the experiences, abilities, strengths and rationale of their contacts.
 - a. Mentor and be mentored: Learn from experience and from fresh ideas.
 - b. Find ways to obtain private data: through encouraging uninhibited discussions, discussing books, other self-revealing matters, etc.
- b) Give: The Managers share a willingness to apply their expertise and energy towards helping people solve professional and personal problems. Consequently, they have formed alliances and gained trust from these individuals, which became contacts.
- c) Generate proximity: Presence in influential circles has greatly benefited The Managers.
- d) Keep it positive: Burning bridges (i.e. with former superiors) does not contribute to building networks and can have a devastating effect on reputation.
- e) Appreciate your specialist, treasure your brokers: While experts on subjects provide an informational edge, The Managers recognize that it was their brokers who had a major impact on their careers.
- f) Balance your network: Although The Managers do not show uniformity regarding how they blend their professional and social networks, they all recognize the value of balancing the diversity of the network with both work-related and social contacts to reduce redundancy and increase the array of potential opportunities.
- g) Learn how to leverage your network: The Managers play different roles within their networks (acting as brokers sometimes, and as clients other), form alliances, facilitate the information flow, fill structural holes, build cohesiveness (with their contacts and between contacts) reinforce reciprocal agreements, promote collaboration, etc.
- h) Establish relationships based on trust: While agreeing that trust is fundamental to the successful utilization of a network, The Managers showed different ways of building trust (on top of giving and encouraging open discussions). Some tactics include:
 - a. Avoiding hidden agendas
 - b. Following through on the evolution of people's problems
 - c. Involving the family in professional life (to show there is nothing to hide)
- i) Recognize the power of a reputation, and its fragility: Information from a respectable source is often taken more as a fact. However, it takes long to build the desired reputation, and short to build the undesired one.
- j) Use corporate culture to build trust, and trust to coordinate corporate culture: Culture can bring people together, so they can build trust among themselves. In turn, faith of individuals in the people that surround them helps extend the organizational culture.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KELLOGG STUDENTS

Our interviews reveal that successful managers strategically build their network and their reputation. With overwhelming demand for their time, the most successful managers strategically build their networks by improving their position and adding non-redundant, yet complementary resources. In addition, since your network is only as good as your reputation, successful managers consistently have very good reputations.

Some recommendations for Kellogg students are as follows:

- Take advantage of your current network: you go to the number one business school in the world. Make sure that you develop many strong relationships during your time there.
- Shared activities: shared activities provide the best platform for building diverse set of contacts. Take part in non-academic and non-career events of interest (e.g. wine tasting). While it may be easy to build relationships with people that are in the same section or in the same career track, remember that there is decreasing rate of return for redundant contacts.
- Self-promotion: there are numerous ways to promote yourself in positive ways at Kellogg. If Barry Grant, GMA President, and another Kellogg person you did not know came to you asking for a job, who is more likely to get a job? Take up leadership roles to increase your visibility.
- Build your reputation: if you belong to a study or a project group, make sure that you are a teammate that others would like to work with again. If you are a poor teammate, who is unreliable, your reputation will very quickly be ruined at Kellogg and elsewhere.
- Pay attention in your MORS classes: believe it or not, our managers contribute large part of their success to their leadership capabilities, ability to negotiate or persuade, and social capital. The “soft” stuff is really the hard stuff!

CONCLUSIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR KELLOGG STUDENTS

The strategies that SS, SB, CK, MK and AJL developed provide many salient insights for Kellogg students. Kellogg students need to be always aware that building and maintaining reputation are key factors to success not only in business, but also in every stage of life. We need to constantly make a conscious effort to connect ourselves with influential people in the environments to gain visibility, information and support. In order to keep our connections strong and prolific, we need to gain and maintain trust. With reciprocity, we can enhance our reputation by creating repeated interactions, and form stronger and dynamic relationships.

While returning to the corporate world, it is essential for Kellogg students to consciously evaluate the organizational structure and culture of their firms early on, discern the goals and activities of key players, and concentrate on building our networks tailored to their firms. While delivering results is a key factor in success, without the broker ties one may not gain the visibility of one's accomplishments or gain the required buy-in for their actions. Depending on the structure of the organization students need to decide whether to build a few crucial ties versus a high-density weak-tie network.

It is equally important to understand the dynamic nature of networks and, as situations change, to adapt our positioning and contacts to these new environments. Whether it is starting a new business, transitioning in a firm or building support in an organization, students need to build diversified, strategic alliances, and be prepared to eliminate redundant contacts.

Finally but not lastly, students need to be aware of the clique network among senior management. While students may be constantly exposed to the senior management team, one needs at least one champion in this small network to get connected. As one climbs up the corporate ladder, the importance of the power of one's contacts become more crucial.

Best Practices Recommendations

Below we have compiled a best practices list in the areas of creating and maintaining networks, uncovering the hidden resources within one's network, and building and motivating teams.

Networking

- Diversify your network by participating in a diverse set of activities – professionally, socially, and philanthropically
- Keep your network kinetic by scheduling regular meetings or gatherings (e.g. weekly, monthly, or annually) with individuals within your network, or otherwise maintain regular contact
- Ensure that a mentor is included as part of your network and that you and your mentor have shared values

Building Teams

- Assemble teams with high complementarity and cohesion
- Empower team members through training and development

Interfacing Teams


- Foster an environment that encourages free communication between team members to progress toward desired goals

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