

# PowerPoint Narration for Career Mentoring Network Training

## Slide 1

Hello, my name is Craig Lavoie, and I will be taking you through the OU Career Mentoring Network training today. This network began as a vision of five OU undergraduate students who saw a disconnect on campus—between the student body, Career Services, and our nationwide network of OU alums. So, in cooperation with the Honors College Leadership Center, Career Services, and the OU Alumni Association, they were able to create a mentoring network that operated totally online. Over the past year, this network has proven to be extraordinarily useful for students who understand the value of social networking and seeking good advice. You have made an excellent decision by choosing to enroll in this program.

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So, what are we hoping that you'll gain from this mentorship?

Well, one of the things you will be able to do is to confirm areas of interest that you already have. If you are a pre-med major, you can contact doctors who have been practicing for several years and ask them questions about medical school, choosing a specialty, or starting a practice. If you are interested in non-profit work, you can contact alumni who have founded and operated successful non-profit organizations.

By discovering what their jobs are really like, you will be able to know the skills necessary for success in those professions and start developing them now.

For those you who aren't yet sure what you'll be doing following graduation, this network offers a great opportunity to explore different fields. We encourage you to take advantage of the great depth and breadth of experience on the network. Over 20 different industries are represented, from government to journalism, from education to law. Even if you think you know what you want to do, you may discover an interesting field that you had not considered before.

Finally, we believe that an equally valuable use of this network is to discover things that you don't like. Maybe you have an idea of what you would like to do for a career, but after corresponding with a mentor you find that their day-to-day activities are not something you find appealing. It's certainly better to discover that now than ten years from now.

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This is a quotation from Ryan Burge, an Industrial Engineering student who participated in the pilot version of this program. He says:

"This is definitely a great program. I networked with about 13 different mentors...from the CFO of Trident Capital who I had breakfast with this summer in Palo Alto, California to a Vice President at Booz Allen Hamilton, to the US CEO of Deloitte Consulting. Believe me, if you want good advice, take advantage of this! You should get to contact two mentors each month...and the relationships are long-lasting."

Based on his remark, it's clear that Ryan utilized this network to the fullest. Each month you will be able to contact two new mentors, but after the first exchange of e-mails you will have their contact information for the rest of your life. At the first of each month, the mentor contacts reset and you can contact another two. One way to use this program is to contact as many people over time as you're interested in, but an equally good use of this program might be to contact only a few, and develop meaningful relationships with them. Ryan has taken the time to keep in contact with his mentors, and they continue to want to help him succeed even after his graduation.

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When Barry Feuerborn of the OU Alumni Association started contacting people about mentors the response was overwhelming. Many were excited about the opportunity to give something back to OU, other than just their money. As you can see, over 180 mentors have signed up and are anxious to answer your questions. Several mentors have been known to go a step further, suggesting a phone call or a get together over lunch. Feel free to take advantage of these opportunities if the mentor offers.

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Now we will go over a few of the do's a don'ts for network use. The first is, do not forward your mentor's contact information to other students. While our mentors are eager to offer advice, many of them lead busy professional lives and only have time to mentor a few students. Most mentors have set a limit of 2 or 3 on the number of new students who can contact them each month. We've found that this has not been a major barrier for our students contacting who they are interested in. If there is a mentor who has already reached his contact limit for a particular month, chances are he will be available if you check back at the start of the next month. With persistence, you will be able to contact all the mentors you desire.

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Second, do not ask your mentor for an internship or job. This network was not created as a job search, but rather for students to seek advice from successful professions.

At the same time however, some of the alumni on the network are in a position to offer jobs and internships, and have done so in the past, but you should never be the one to initiate this conversation.

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Third, do not pester your mentor with e-mails, calls, or mailings. Remember that less is more in some cases. Again, the mentors on this network are excited to be a part of this program, but we must still be mindful of their time.

You will be able to gauge your mentor's availability based on the promptness of their first response, and you should adjust your e-mailing patterns from thereon. Try to keep your messages to a reasonable length, and avoid overloading them with questions.

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To review, the three do nots were: first, do not forward your mentor's contact information to other students; second, do not ask your mentor for an internship or job; third, do not pester your mentor with e-mails, calls, or mailings.

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Now we'll discuss a few things that you *should* do in corresponding with your mentors.

First, be sure to share your career aspirations and future goals. By explaining your current situation, you establish a more personal bond with your mentor than if you were just asking questions. Also, the more your mentor knows about you, the better he or she will be able to advise you. Many of the mentors on the network are eager to assist students any way they can, so be ready to answer the question: "How can I help you?"

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Second, share your experiences from campus leadership activities, study abroad, and community service. Mentors love to hear about what life is like for current students at OU. By discussing your community and campus involvement, you may discover links between yourself and your mentor. At the same time, try to focus on your most important activities—the ones that define who you are.

Keep in mind also that most alumni aren't familiar with campus acronyms. PLC, CAC, PCS, probably won't mean much to them unless you explain what they are.

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More than anything, your mentor will remember you by the quality of questions that you ask. Questions that can be easily answered by browsing the company website will be both boring for your mentor and not that beneficial for you. What a website can't tell you is what a typical day is like for your mentor, or whether you should go to graduate school instead of pursuing a job. These mentors are special resources, use them to get information you wouldn't have been able to get otherwise.

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Here are a few examples of questions you might ask. But remember, these should not be copied and pasted right into an e-mail. In order to establish a relationship, your questions should apply to your personal situation. Some of these questions might make sense for you, and others maybe not. The last thing you want is to have your mentor feel like he's receiving a questionnaire or a survey. Having said that, here are a few things you might ask...

- a.) If you were starting today to launch your career, what steps would you take?
- b.) What do you do in a typical day?
- c.) What entry-level jobs do you recommend and why?
- d.) How important is graduate school in your industry?

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- d.) What do you like most and least about your job?
- e.) Did you take any specific steps to get to where you are today?
- f.) What types of projects do you work on?
- g.) What types of projects do entry-level employees work on?

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Fourth, send a hand-written Thank You note after the first exchange of e-mails. Being thanked in an e-mail is nice, but nothing beats a hand-written note. In this day and age, mentors will be impressed that you took the time to send a note. Stationery is available in the Career Services office.

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Fifth, proofread all correspondence before sending it to your mentors. If you use an e-mail account that doesn't have spell-checker, write your correspondence in Word and paste it into your e-mail. Don't allow sloppy mistakes to affect your mentor's impression of you. Write with care, and read everything over before you send it to make sure it makes sense. Remember: when you contact mentors, you are serving as a representative of your university.

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To review: First, Practice your “elevator speech.” Share your career aspirations and goals, as well as your experiences from campus leadership/activities, community service, or study abroad trips.

Second, listen and ask intelligent questions – that’s what the mentors will remember.

Third, send a hand-written Thank You after the first exchange.

And finally, proofread all correspondence before sending it to your mentors.

Now we’ll move on to the next part of the training—how to use the online mentoring program

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To begin, please note that the Career Mentoring Network does require an active Career Services Account. Registration is completely free for students with the following majors:

Arts & Sciences  
Journalism students with over 90 hours  
Petroleum Engineering  
Civil Engineering  
Architectural Engineering  
Environmental Engineering  
Environmental Science  
Energy Management  
JCPenney Leadership Center Students  
MBA Students

Even if you do not belong to one of these groups, Career Services costs only \$25, and is charged directly to your bursar account. In addition to the mentor network, they can help you secure job interviews, prepare a resume, and find internships.

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Open your preferred internet browser and type into the URL [www.myinterfase.com/ou/student/](http://www.myinterfase.com/ou/student/). If you’re not already registered with OU Career services please do so here; otherwise, you will not be able to access the career mentoring network.

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Now that you’re logged in, move your cursor over “my account” and select “my profile.”

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Please fill in all the sections with the requested information and then click “Save”.

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Now that your information is in the system, when can begin the process of matching you with your potential mentors. Move your cursor over "Mentor Search" and click.

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Please fill in the applicable criteria for what you're looking for in a mentor and click "search."

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If your search results cannot find a mentor with your criteria, use more generalized criteria as shown in this slide and click "Search."

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A list should now appear on the screen of all possible alumni mentors in your field of interest; in this case, we're looking at mentors for students with strong interests in Law. Choose an alumni mentor to see his/her profile.

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If you feel this mentor suits your interests move your cursor over "contact mentor" and click. If the mentor doesn't appear to be a good choice in terms of your interests, go back to the list and choose another mentor to profile.

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After selecting "contact mentor" a browser window will appear advising you on how many mentors you can access for the remainder of the month. If you're not sure you want to continue and contact this mentor, select no and go back to the list and continue profiling other mentors. Otherwise, select "yes," and you're on your way to new and meaningful relationship with one of OU's prestigious Alumni Mentors.