

# i

## I N T R O D U C T I O N : T H E U N D E R D O G

Yes. No. Maybe. Rockstar. It's the same every time. After you've lived it, you see the pattern. When a recruiter "meets" you (in person, on the phone, through your resume, etc.), he or she immediately places you into one of four categories: Yes, no, maybe or Rockstar.

This decision directly impacts whether you get to interview for that dream job—or not. What most of us don't realize is that you can influence the recruiter's decision mindset to land in—or even move into—the Rockstar category. The only problem is: It's not easy to figure out.

In my two years at B-school, I figured it out and I made the system work for me—and that's what I want to share with you in this guide. Many believe their resume

is their ticket to career success. Recruiters use resumes for a reason: They provide a way to look at hundreds of candidates in a similar format. However, they also reduce an entire person to an 8.5" x 11" piece of paper.

When looking at me on a piece of paper, not many firms would have jumped at the chance to interview me. I was a maybe at best. By reading my resume, a recruiter only would learn that I had an average GMAT score, had attended a lesser known undergraduate university, and had little more than two years of work experience.

So how did I manage to interview with every top firm that I was interested?

*Networking.*

I used networking to break free of the constraints of an 8.5" x 11" piece of paper.

I used networking to personally connect with the firms in which I was interested.

I used networking to show recruiters that I was a Rockstar.

After a while, it became more and more like a science to me. Everything that I've learned and leveraged for success is in this guide. And it can work for you too, no matter who you are:

## The Superstar

You've got everything going for you. You're smart, look great on paper and can hold a conversation with just about anyone. Still, the MBA networking landscape may be unfamiliar to you and you may lack the right tools to navigate it

successfully. This book will reveal the MBA networking lifecycle, teach you how to navigate the “half-moon effect” and provide you with additional tools to be a Rockstar.

## The Paper Idol

You’ve got a resume that shines, but you may be shy or uncomfortable speaking with people in unfamiliar settings or large groups. Essentially, you need to gain confidence in your communication skills. This profile suits many engineers who aren’t used to the selling game. International students also may fall into this bucket because they are unfamiliar with U.S. culture and customs. This book contains models for communication and real-life detailed examples to bolster your confidence in addition to the roadmap of the MBA networking lifecycle. Jump off that 8.5” x 11” piece of paper, and take your networking to a whole new level.

## The Great Communicator

You can talk the talk, but you might not have that perfect background to show you walked the walk. You may have been an artist or a librarian, or you might not have much work experience. While meeting new people may be easy for you, getting the interview with your dream firm(s) requires more than just people knowing you. They need to know what you bring to the table. This book will help you assess your relative competitiveness and appropriately take actions throughout the MBA networking lifecycle to improve your chances for success—no matter what your background.

While most B-school students will fall into one of these buckets, some may straddle more than one category or be the “surprise” candidate of the class. This guide is designed to be relevant to all audiences. The content is packed-in, the flow is conversational and organized so you can get the answers to the questions

that are most important for you. Maybe you're wondering:

How do I get started?

This guide is designed for the busy MBA student and you can jump ahead to a specific question, but to get the most out of the book, read it front to back. Networking is a nebulous concept to many, and this guide introduces it within a specific structure, breaking it down into a "science." Each chapter contains topical questions that allow you to jump in where it is most important for you. It is organized into eleven main chapters:

- Chapter 1 – Principles of Networking
- Chapter 2 – The Networking Lifecycle
- Chapter 3 – The Corporate Presentation
- Chapter 4 – The Post-Corporate Presentation Networking Reception
- Chapter 5 – One-on-One Conversations
- Chapter 6 – Closed List Events & Interview Invitations
- Chapter 7 – Off-Campus Networking & Events
- Chapter 8 – Securing the Internship or Full-Time Offer
- Chapter 9 – Self Assessment & Determining Fit
- Chapter 10 – Tools & Real Examples
- Chapter 11 – Being You! How to Stay Genuine While Networking Like a Rockstar

If you're limited on time, jump to the parts that impact you most. Here are the questions answered in each chapter:

## Chapter 1: Science of Networking

What is networking, really?

Who do I network with and why?

How do recruiters think and make decisions?

What is the relationship hierarchy, and how do I leverage it for success?

How do I know if I have the support of recruiters or influential individuals?

What's my goal when it comes to networking?

## Chapter 2: The MBA Networking Lifecycle

What is the MBA networking lifecycle, and what is it comprised of?

I just got to campus/started my MBA adventure—what do I need to know?

What is the difference between firm-specific and school-specific influential individuals? How do I interact with each group?

How do I know which firms I should pursue? Is there a way to gauge fit?

When is it appropriate to reach out to my dream firm(s) to maximize my chances of success?

There's a company that I'm really interested in. How important is it that I network with other companies?

## Chapter 3: The Corporate Presentation

What is the on-campus corporate presentation, and why is it so important?

My dream company is having a corporate presentation event, what should I do to prepare?

I'm going to an event tomorrow—what should I bring?

During the event, what should I do? How do I get noticed?

How should I dress for the corporate presentation?

What kinds of questions should I ask during the corporate presentation?

## Chapter 4: The Post-Corporate Presentation Networking Reception

What is the post-corporate presentation networking reception, and why is it so important?

Who should I network with at the post-corporate presentation networking reception?

What kinds of questions should I ask during the post-corporate presentation networking reception?

What if I ask a stupid question?

How do I navigate the half-moon effect at a networking event?

### POST-EVENT PROTOCOL

Do I need to do anything after the event is over?

When should I send the follow-up email/note?

What are best practices when it comes to thank you emails/notes?

OK, so I sent my thank-you emails/notes, what do I do next to get that interview?

## Chapter 5: One-on-One Conversations

### ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS: IN PERSON

Office Hours/Coffee Chats: These are just relaxed conversations, right?

What is the recruiter trying to ascertain in the conversation? How should I approach it?

What if the chat goes horribly wrong?

#### ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS: BY PHONE

I got a positive response to my request for a follow-up phone call! What do I talk about?

How long should the call be?

What are some best practices for the call?

How do I end the call?

Is it OK to discuss off-topic items?

What should I do after the call?

What if I've already waited too long to follow-up after the call?

What if I didn't get a positive response to my request for a follow-up phone call?

## Chapter 6: Closed-List Events & Interview Invitations

I got invited to a closed-list event! What do I do? How do I prepare?

I didn't get invited to a closed-list event. What do I do?

What's my goal when attending a closed-list event?

What are the next steps once the event is over?

I got an interview! What do I do?

I didn't get an interview. What do I do?

## Chapter 7: Off-Campus Networking & Events

What if my dream firm does not recruit on campus?

How do I leverage my alumni network or "cold-call" potential contacts at my dream firm?

What are national networking events, and how can they help me get my dream job?

I'm going to attend a networking event - what do I need to know?

## **Chapter 8:** **Securing the Internship or Full-Time Offer**

I got an internship offer! What do I do?

I didn't get an internship offer. What do I do?

I have been wait-listed, what do I do?

I am a student trying to secure a full-time offer with a firm I'm interested in but wasn't successful with previously. What do I do and when?

## **Chapter 9:** **Self Assessment & Determining Fit**

What attributes are recruiters really looking for in a Rockstar candidate?

How do these attributes vary by firm? How do I ensure I properly project my fit with the relevant attributes?

How can I assess how strong/weak I am across this list of attributes?

What can I do to positively impact my networking goals if I find one of these attributes to be my strength?

What can I do to positively impact my networking goals if I find one of these attributes to be a weakness?

## **Chapter 10:** **Tools & Real Examples**

How do I start a conversation with a complete stranger?

How do I reach out to individuals who are not in my personal network (cold-calling)?



How personal should I get while networking?

What should a thank-you email/note look like?

How should a one-on-one phone conversation flow?

What should my communications look like if I am invited to an event, interview, etc.?

What should my communications look like if I am not invited to an event, interview, etc.?

I am a student trying to secure a full-time offer with a firm I'm interested in but wasn't successful with previously. What should my communications look like?

## **Chapter 11: Being You! How to Stay Genuine While Networking Like a Rockstar**

### **A Note to Part Time Students: You Gotta Work Harder!**

### **Epilogue: Networking for a Lifetime**

Everything that I learned about the power of effective networking is in this guide—it's now up to you to decide how to best leverage these learnings to help accomplish your career goals. Good luck!

Best,  
*-JJP*