

THE CONNECTION LOOP

Participant Reference Guide

What this guide is for

Networking is a system with specific steps and logic behind each one. This guide gives you the full framework, the key actions at each step, and exact scripts for the moments that are hardest to navigate. Use it during the session and keep it afterward.

The Connection Loop — 5 Steps

1 Start With Who You Know

What: Make a list of people you've worked with, studied with, or met through organizations — people who know your name, but you've lost touch with. These are called dormant ties.

Why: Dormant ties respond at nearly twice the rate people expect (MIT Sloan research: 70–80% response rate). Starting here is lower risk and higher yield than cold outreach.

2 Connect Online, Build Relationships In Person

What: Send a short, written message to one person on your list. Work toward a real-time conversation — phone, video call, or in person. You can have the camera off. You choose the format.

Why: A real-time conversation lets you ask follow-up questions and exchange more information faster. Written connection is also valid — the goal is a quality exchange, not a specific format.

3 Listen and Give

What: When you get on the call: spend most of it asking questions about what they're working on. Then give them something useful based on what you heard: advice, an introduction, or a recommendation (A.I.R.).

Why: When people talk about their work, they associate the conversation with a positive feeling. Giving first activates reciprocity — they will ask how they can help you in return.

4 Be Easy to Help

What: When they ask, "how can I help you?" have your Target Company List ready. Hand it to them (or email it). Ask: do you know anyone at any of these companies?

Why: Vague asks ("pass my resume along") are hard to act on. A specific list gives the other person one clear action: look at the list and ask themselves if they know anyone there.

5 Make It a Habit

What: Do one small action from the loop every day. Pick any one: add a name to your list, send a reconnect message, add a company to your target list, or have one call this week.

Why: One pass through the loop produces one conversation. Repeated small actions produce a growing network. Five minutes a day is enough.

How the loop repeats

Each person you meet through Step 4 (an introduction from your target company list) becomes a new starting point for Step 1. You reach out, have a conversation, listen and give, share your list, and the loop starts again.

Scripts for the Hardest Moments

These are exact words you can use. You can copy them verbatim or adjust a word or two. Each script includes a note on the implicit rule it's based on.

STEP 2 Asking for a Meeting

Implicit rule: *A short call is a normal professional interaction, not a favor. A specific ask (time, format) is easier to say yes to than an open-ended one.*

SCRIPT “Hi [Name] — I was thinking about you recently and realized we haven’t been in touch for a while. I’d like to catch up — would you be open to a 20-minute phone or video call sometime in the next few weeks?”

**IF NO
REPLY IN
2 WEEKS**

“Hi [Name] — just wanted to resurface this in case it got buried. Happy to find a time to connect if you’re interested. No worries if the timing doesn’t work.”

STEP 2 / 3 Introducing Yourself

Implicit rule: *Prepare a fixed-length answer in advance so you don’t need to read engagement signals to know when to stop. The last line is your built-in endpoint.*

SCRIPT “Here’s a quick version: I’ve been working in [field] for the past [X] years, most recently at [company]. Right now I’m [looking for my next role / focused on Y]. I’d love to hear what you’ve been up to.”

**IF
BETWEEN
JOBS**

“I’m currently between roles — I was at [company] until [timeframe], and I’m focused on finding the right next fit in [area]. What have you been working on?”

STEP 3 Offering an A.I.R. Give

Implicit rule: *A give works best when it is tied directly to something the other person just said. Listen for: “I’ve been trying to…” or “I’m struggling with…” — those are your opening.*

A Advice “What you just described — I ran into something similar. What worked for us was [specific approach]. Might be worth trying.”

R Rec.

“You mentioned [X]. There’s a [book/podcast] called [title] that addresses exactly that. I’ll send you the link after the call.”

I Intro

“I know someone who does exactly that kind of work. Would it be useful if I made an email introduction? I can send it this week.”

STEP 4 Responding to “How Can I Help You?”

Implicit rule: *This question is an invitation, not a pleasantry. The expected response is a specific ask, not a deflection. Deflecting signals you don't need help — and they will move on.*

SCRIPT	“Actually, yes. I've been putting together a list of companies I'm interested in. Would you be willing to take a look and let me know if you happen to know anyone at any of them? I can email it right after this call.”
---------------	---

STEP 4 Ending the Conversation

Implicit rule: *Conversation endings follow a three-part structure: signal the end is coming, say something positive, name a next step. Taking the initiative to close is a courtesy, not rudeness.*

SCRIPT	“This has been really useful — I'm glad we got to catch up. I don't want to take up too much of your time. Before we wrap up, is there anything I can do for you or send your way?” “[After they respond]: Great. I'll [follow up / send that] by [specific day]. Thanks again — let's stay in touch.”
---------------	---

FOLLOW-UP EMAIL (within 48hrs)

Subject: Great catching up — [their name]

Hi [Name] — really glad we got to reconnect. As promised, I'm sending [what you mentioned].

Let me know if anything comes to mind on [topic you discussed]. Talk soon — [your name]

Your Working Pages

These pages are yours to fill in during and after the session. Nothing here gets shared.

STEP 1 Your Dormant Ties List

People you've worked with, studied with, or met through organizations — who know your name, but you haven't been in contact with for a while. Go through your resume or LinkedIn experience section. Aim for 5–10 names. Start with 3 if that's easier.

Name	Where you know them from

STEP 2 Your Reconnect Message Draft

Pick one person from your dormant ties list. Draft the message below. You can use it word for word or adjust a line. The goal is a message you could send today or tomorrow.

Sending to:

Template (copy or adapt):

“Hi [Name] — I was thinking about you recently and realized we haven't been in touch for a while. I'd like to catch up — would you be open to a 20-minute phone or video call sometime in the next few weeks?”

Your version:

STEP 4 Your Target Company List

Companies you're genuinely curious about. They don't need to have open jobs right now. Think: industries you find interesting, companies whose work you've noticed, places where you know someone works. Aim for 5–10. Add to it over time.

Company name	Why you're interested

STEP 5 Your Daily Actions

One action, five minutes, every day. Pick any one of these:

1	Add one name to your dormant ties list	2	Send one reconnect message
3	Add one company to your target list	4	Have one voice-to-voice conversation this week