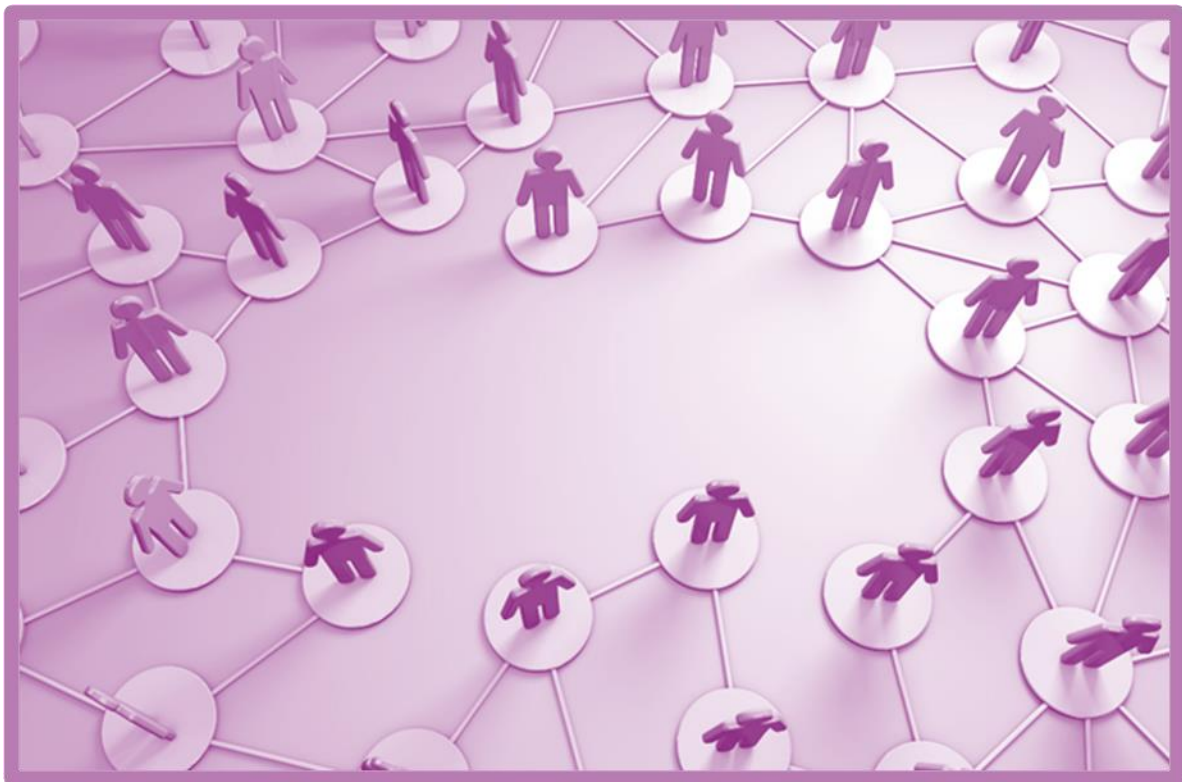# NEW MEXICO 4-H

Aggie Next Step

Networking
and
Elevator Pitch

Post Secondary Pathways

Newt McCarty, State 4-H Agent and Chelsey Juenemann, Education Specialist

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Networking & Elevator Pitch

INTRODUCTION

Building a strong network and learning how to introduce yourself with confidence are key steps in becoming career-ready. This lesson helps participants understand the value of networking, create a business card, and practice delivering a brief elevator pitch to communicate who they are and what they offer.

SET UP

Review lesson materials and determine which worksheets and handouts you will use for the lesson. Print enough pre/post assessments, worksheets, and handouts for each participant.

ACTIVITY

1. Have participants complete the *Pre-assessment*.

2. Ask guiding questions to spark conversation:
   Q: What does "networking" mean to you?
   Q: Why might networking be important in school, work, or life?
   Q: Can networking happen online as well as in person? How?
   Q: What makes a strong first impression?

   (*Note: Networking is about building mutually beneficial relationships, not just asking for favors.)

3. Explain the purpose of a business card: a professional, tangible way to share your contact info and leave a lasting impression.

4. Highlight the elements of an effective card: name, title/role, contact info, and a professional visual style.

5. Distribute *My Business Card* and have participants design their own card as themselves or based on a career they are interested in. Encourage creativity while keeping it professional. Show the sample business card provided or another example. (*Note: If time is short, assign this as homework to leave time for the Elevator Pitch.)

Supplies
- Worksheets
- Handouts
- Pens/Pencils

OUTCOMES

Students will be able to:
- **Explain** the purpose and benefits of networking for career development
- **Demonstrate** professional communication skills, including verbal and nonverbal techniques.
- **Design** a professional business card.
- **Engage** in networking with peers and practice elevator pitch interactions.

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6. Introduce Elevator Pitches: An elevator pitch is a 30-60 second introduction that communicates who you are, what you do, and what makes you unique. Structure:

- Greeting & Name
- Current role or area of study
- Key skills, strengths, or achievements
- Goal of what you're looking for

7. Distribute *Networking Tips* and read out loud as a group.

8. Elevator Pitch activity: Separate class into pairs. One member of each group will draw or be randomly assigned a role and serve as the target audience. The member giving their pitch has 60 seconds to determine context and prepare their pitch and 30 seconds to deliver it. The "pitcher" should introduce themselves formally, shake hands, greet, and maintain eye contact. Repeat the activity by reversing the roles (*draw new cards).
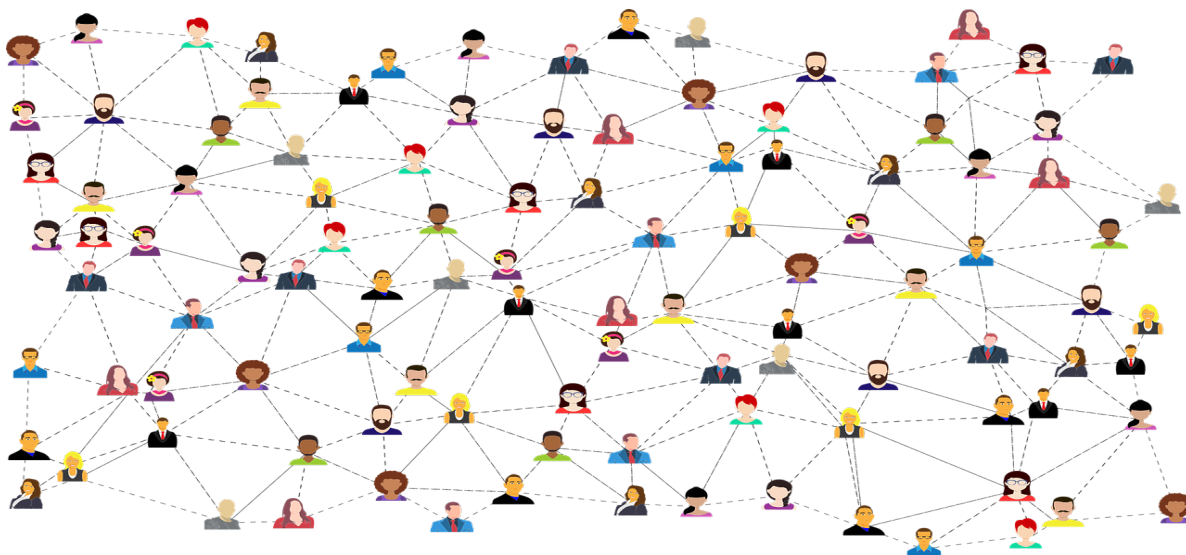
9. Wrap up this lesson by playing *Networking BINGO*. Distribute the BINGO cards and follow the instructions on the page.

10. *Exit Ticket* – depending on time, this can be done as a class discussion, or students can complete the worksheet in class, as homework, or in the following class.

11. Have participants complete *Post-assessment*.

WRAP UP

Building a network and practicing your introduction skills helps you leave strong impressions, connect with opportunities, and communicate your value. Your business card and elevator pitch are tools to start those connections with confidence.

Networking & Elevator Pitch

Resources

NM Standards:

NM PED Standards: Career and Technical Education (CTE):

CTE 1.1.2: Demonstrate knowledge and skills in language arts required to pursue the full range of postsecondary education and career opportunities

CTE 2.1.6: Develop and deliver formal and informal presentations

CTE 2.1.7: Interpret verbal and nonverbal cues/behaviors to enhance communication

CTE 7.1.2: Establish and maintain effective working relationships

CTE 7.1.3: Employ teamwork skills to achieve collective goals

CTE 9.1.1: Identify and demonstrate the use of positive work behaviors and personal qualities needed to be employable

Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) Standards: Career Ready Practices (CRP):

CRP-4: Communicate clearly, effectively, and with reason

Optional ELA Alignment (Grades 6-12):

SL1: Participate in a range of conversations

SL6: Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks

L3: Use knowledge of language when speaking or listening

L6: Use appropriate technical and domain-specific vocabulary

Video Resources:

Note: Please preview all videos before showing them to students to ensure they are age-appropriate, relevant, and aligned with your classroom needs.

Best Networking Tips: How to Make a Connection
https://youtu.be/OVf5c7NthSw?si=QWMTfhustRt11Ohb

What is an Elevator Pitch? Examples for Students and Job Seekers
https://youtu.be/hGkIVxwxrCk?si=nE_FjBHs7hz5xtQQ