

## A Fresh Look at Networking

The weather is very cool where we are, and I hope you're enjoying the onset of Fall where you are. The change in temperature makes everything seem so new and comfortable again, and there is a freshness in the air that can really help put a bounce to your step; it's not the dead heat of the summer, and we're not yet into the gray freeze of winter.

It's important to keep a fresh outlook and light step in the job search process as well. We've outlined the interview agenda on page 3, helping you navigate and control your way as the interviewee. If you enter with an agenda, you can essentially change the focus of getting the job to actually determining if it is the right fit for you. It gives some control of the process back to the you, the job seeker.

We also welcome this new change of season with the delivery of our new board game, *The Game of Networking: The Board Game*. After planning and preparing all summer, we are very excited to finally be sending you the copies you've ordered! Our premiere Webinar will be held in October, and we're also giving away a free copy of the game to a lucky contest winner, announced at the beginning of December.

As usual, I encourage you to forward newsworthy articles or ideas for future editions. Feedback and article ideas can be emailed to [newsletter@flowwork.com](mailto:newsletter@flowwork.com) at anytime to be evaluated for placement in the next suitable edition.

John-Paul Hatala, Ph.D., Flowwork Founder



This month's FlowTIP:  
**To be good at anything,  
you have to practice.**  
See page 3 for more information.

## What's New?

### **The Game of Networking Webinar in October**

*The Game of Networking: The Board Game* Webinar will be held on October 16th at 1:00 pm Eastern Standard Time. If you haven't already signed up, please email [gameofnetworking@flowwork.com](mailto:gameofnetworking@flowwork.com) to reserve a spot. Due to the number of participants, questions will need to be emailed ahead of time. You will also require a computer and telephone to participate in the event. Instructions on how to link to the webinar will be distributed by email a few days prior to the session. The webinar should last 45 minutes and will provide the theoretical underpinnings and an overview of the game.

### **Win The Game of Networking: The Board Game**

In the spirit of networking, Flowwork has introduced a contest that will give one lucky winner a complimentary Game of Networking board game. To enter, think of someone you may know who could benefit from using the game and simply provide his or her name and email

address. The individual with the most referrals wins. Send your referrals in a spreadsheet with your name and email at the top and email it to [contest@flowwork.com](mailto:contest@flowwork.com). The contest closes November 30th, 2008, and the winner will be declared December 10th, 2008.

Have you checked out the new website for *The Game of Social Networking: The Board Game*? Housing complete information on playing the game, downloadable instructions and online ordering, the site is located at [www.gameofnetworking.com](http://www.gameofnetworking.com)



# Stay Ahead Of The Game

## Play The Social Networking Board Game

You can now practice social networking with a board game! Flowork International presents *The Game of Networking*, an interactive board game designed to illustrate the process of social networking and provide a playing field to practice this important skill. By simulating real-life experiences, the game demonstrates the skills and techniques essential to increasing social capital – all in a direct, highly effective manner.

Networking is essential to success. It is nearly impossible to achieve our goals without the help of others.

“The game is based on the concept that we all have relationships that are separated by degrees, and in those relationships are embedded social resources,” says Dr. John-Paul Hatala, an adjunct professor at Louisiana State University in the U.S. and founder of Flowork. “It would be impossible to identify all the resources that exist, so instead of writing down every resource, we start off by establishing our goals and then try to link the contacts in our network that can help us accomplish them.” The better you are at making contacts and uncovering resources, the easier it will be to achieve your goals.

Unfortunately, not all of us are good networkers and practicing networking is a real challenge. To combat this, Flowork has created *The Game of Networking* to mirror real life in a fun, relaxed setting, allowing players to gain firsthand experience in a stress-free environment. The game is simple: each player is assigned a goal, and the first player to achieve this goal wins. Of course, networking is a game of strategy. Each goal rests on top of a web of associated tasks. Players move through a step-by-step process, making connections, determining which resources are useful to their purposes and negotiating the exchange of these resources with one another.

Since resources aren't simply there for the taking, cooperation is key. Players give and take, maintaining their social networks through mutually beneficial relationships. Throughout the game, a facilitator helps each player reflect on their moves and relate the steps they've taken to real-life experiences.

Dr. Hatala has conducted research on the importance of leveraging social capital to accomplish our goals. “It's a much more difficult task than most people think when it comes to networking,” he says. “Networking to most of us does not come naturally so we really have to work at it. The problem is that there are few opportunities to practice and get feedback at the same time. That's where the idea of a board game came from.”

Social capital is an indispensable resource. No matter what your goals are, every network you belong to – your family, your friends, your community – contains innumerable resources to help you on your path. The trick is to identify what these resources are and to learn how to use them – a process made clear and comprehensive by *The Game of Networking*. Networking is an intuitive skill, more an art than a science.

Learning it requires firsthand experience and practice. This is exactly what *The Game of Networking* provides.

By simulating the steps integral to the networking process, the game allows players to practice networking in a low-pressure setting while internalizing the relevant skills and knowledge.

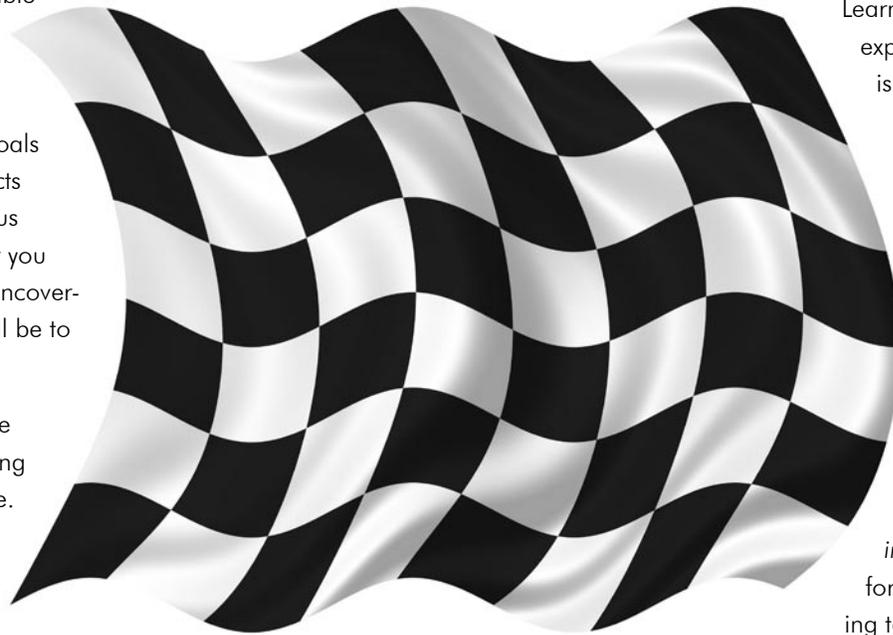
“*The Game of Networking* board game is ideal for those who are working to build and develop

their careers. It's a great resource for

high schools, colleges, universities, employment programs and corporations” says John-Paul Hatala. Since different goals require different social routes, Flowork is releasing a complete series of card set editions. Future editions will be customized for newcomer integration, career transition, parenting, MBA achievement and leadership development.

*The Game of Networking* is the perfect way to prepare yourself for success. Sharpen your social, strategic and negotiation skills and learn the art of networking – as simple as rolling the dice!

To reserve your copy, go to [www.gameofnetworking.com](http://www.gameofnetworking.com).



# Giving the Job Seeker Control in the Job Search Process: The Interview Agenda

## WHAT EXACTLY IS AN INTERVIEW AGENDA?

The idea of an interview agenda is easily illustrated with an example.

A job seeker has recently been offered an interview one morning the following week. They begin preparing for the interview by doing some basic research on the company. *Where is the company located? How long will it take to get there?*

They then begin to formulate questions to ask the interviewer. *How long have you been with this organization? What do you look for in a model employee? What is the long-term plan for the company?* Though they are not often asked during an interview, these questions can ultimately provide pertinent information that can move the job seeker forward in the job search process.

Ideally, these questions are asked near the beginning of the interview since it is their responses that are critical in determining the the job seeker's next step. Understanding the agenda for the interview is another way of sharing control of the job interview process.

Depending on the company, the agenda will vary and can potentially change very quickly. The interviewer will try to set the tone for the meeting—their main goal is to gather as much information about the job seeker as possible, to find out if the candidate is the right person for the job. Essentially, to assess and determine the level of risk they would incur if they were to hire the job seeker.

## WHAT'S ON THE INTERVIEW AGENDA?

The goal of the job seeker is to gather as much information as possible so

that an intelligent decision may be made about working for the employer. The job seeker's main goal is to find the opportunity that best fits their unique career plan. It is extremely important to be aware of what type of employer is doing the interviewing. This is especially important when a job is truly needed.

If the job seeker wishes to manage the job search, however, it is critical that they approach each opportunity with as much control as the employer. Going through the job search process is a frame of mind. Rejections are inevitable and often occur much more often than actual job opportunity acceptances. This is a fact of life that needs to be addressed early on.

The interview agenda is one way of dealing with this issue.

When putting together an Interview Agenda, five key agenda items are required:

1. Identifying the right person (To whom does this position report?)
2. Ensuring a "fit" for the position (Does the opportunity fit in with the job seeker's intended career plan?)
3. Identifying the hiring process (Will there be more than one interview?)
4. Identifying the hiring timeframe (When would the chosen candidate start?)
5. Identifying the right dollars (Does this opportunity meet the job seekers financial expectations?)

A job seeker who enters with an agenda shifts the goal of the interview toward gathering the information needed to make an accurate assessment of the opportunity. In essence, this changes the focus of getting the job to actually determining if it is the right job giving some control of the process back to the job seeker.



## This month's FlowTIP:

**To be good at anything, you have to practice.** That's especially true when it comes to networking. When was the last time you went to the shopping mall and went up to someone you don't know and started a conversation? If you're typically the type of person who would avoid doing something like that, you might consider doing it the next time you're out. Why? It provides you with the opportunity to practice your conversation starting technique. The act of connecting has to be a conscious activity. If you continue to practice by introducing yourself to people you don't know, you may find someone that can help you or better yet you might be able to help them. Remember, top performing athletes don't become winners unless they continue to practice.

# The Importance Of Social Capital

Posted September 29, 2008 on The Rocky Mountain Collegian Online



This week I feel like my column mimics the commercial for the Capital One credit card. The commercial asks viewers "What's in your wallet?" This week I ask, "Who's on your cell phone?"

Again, this year, in my first semester class on community we study a concept called "social capital."

Different from other ideas such as economic capital (things) and cultural capital (human capabilities), social capital is measured in the strength of the social networks that any one person has with the wider community.

How could I make the importance of this concept clear to these first semester students in a way that would resonate with them?

I'm sure you are thinking that the warm and fuzzy term "social capital" was just a word created by liberal hippies like Anne Marie. Au Contraire, mes amis. This term was first used in social science research in the 1960s and 1970s to make statements about the value of social connectedness.

Before them, 19th-century thinkers like social James Madison, Alexis de Tocqueville and John Dewey used this concept, although it remained unnamed.

I first explained the form of capital that would most easily resonate with them. Living in the U.S., most of us most easily can relate to economic capital -- things.

I picked up my cell phone to show them "something."

To set my students up for the idea that other types of capital are more important to me, I pointed out the physical attributes of my cell phone. It is over 3 years old, bulky, clunky, cracked, the charger cord frequently does not plug in, the numbers on the outside have shrunk in the last year, and I can no longer read the display.

Not many students would envy this piece of capital. A student of mine, though, humored me, and traded cell phones with me so that I could make a point about how we value "things."

This student's phone was way better than mine. It was thin, sleek, and I am sure, much easier to use. We traded cell phones for a

minute or two so that I could make the concept of social capital clear.

More importantly than the physical phones, we traded something much more important -- the names of our friends and relatives programmed onto our cell phones.

These names, I noted are the representatives of our social capital. These are the numbers of the people and organizations that are most important to us. These numbers represent the people that we call to live our lives, talk about our days, and connect with those outside of the radio signals of the cell phone.

I scrolled through my cell phone for a moment to give the students an idea of the people and organizations whose numbers I have stored over the year. Those on "speed dial" represent those most important in our social lives. On mine are my younger brother, my boyfriend, my roommate, my son's father and my female friends who are my pillars of support on an everyday basis.

For first semester students, many of you will find that your social circles will change dramatically over these first few months of college (as will the content of your cell phone).

You will use this seemingly magic device to keep in touch with those far away, as well as connecting with a residence hall mate so that you can meet up in the dining hall for dinner. As always, mom and dad will want you to pick up when they call you to find out what you are up to while there are no parental units overseeing your comings and goings.

My question to you this week is: What do you value more, the cell phone that you have or the social support on the other end of those pre-programmed numbers?

What is true for me, I am sure is true for most -- that even though I will someday trade up my cell phone for another that works better, I would never trade the social capital on my cell phone for any piece of economic capital on earth.

*Anne Marie Merline is an instructor for the University Honors Program. Her column appears biweekly Mondays in the Collegian.*

Flowwork offers the benefits of social capital to anyone of any age. The Education Flowwork Program offers educational institutions (Kindergarten through higher education) to ensure their students, faculty and staff become aware of the power of information by networking. Corporate Flowwork and the Flowwork Workforce Development Program introduces corporations, non-profit organizations, government, and workforce development groups to ways they might increase the flow of information between individuals, departments, divisions and units. Flowworks founder Dr. John-Paul Hatala is available for speaking engagements nationwide. If you are interested in booking him for an on-site speaking engagement, please call us at 1-877-flowwork or visit [www.flowwork.com](http://www.flowwork.com) and click "contact us" to discuss your needs.



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