



# SPEED NETWORKING

## Pre-Employment Professional Skills Development

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**BATEC**

*National Center of Excellence in Computing and Information Technologies*

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About BATEC:

[www.batec.org](http://www.batec.org)

BATEC (Broadening Advanced Technological Education Connections), a National Science Foundation-funded Center for IT Education, is dedicated to the complex mission of developing career-focused pathways to high technology education and practical work experience for motivated, typically underserved high school, community college and university students in four urban regions – Boston, Chicago, San Francisco and Las Vegas. These four regions feature a high demand for skilled labor coupled with great opportunities for building new connections in skills-training and workforce development.

About Bunker Hill Community College:

[www.bhcc.mass.edu](http://www.bhcc.mass.edu)

Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) is a comprehensive, multi-campus urban institution. The Charlestown Campus is situated on 42 acres in the historic Charlestown section of Boston, Massachusetts. The College has a campus in Chelsea, Massachusetts, in the historic Old Post Office Building in Bellingham Square.

The College operates three satellite campuses in the greater Boston area located at the Education and Training Institute of the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center in East Boston, at Malden High School, and at Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción (I.B.A.)/Villa Victoria in Boston's South End.

Founded in 1973, BHCC is the largest community college in Massachusetts and ranks among the 25 fastest growing public two-year colleges in the United States. The College currently enrolls more than 14,000 students in day, afternoon, evening, late-evening, midnight, weekend, and web-based and distance-learning courses and programs each semester.

About College of Southern Nevada:

[www.csn.edu](http://www.csn.edu)

The College of Southern Nevada (CSN) creates opportunities and changes lives through access to quality teaching, services, and experiences that enrich our diverse community.

The largest and most ethnically diverse higher education institution in Nevada, CSN has three main campuses in [Las Vegas](#), [North Las Vegas](#) and [Henderson](#) and [multiple sites and centers](#).

Students can choose from [180 degree and certificate options](#) in more than 100 areas of study, including [over 25 degree and certificate programs](#) available entirely online.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Speed Networking represents a component of the pre-employment professional skills development designed and supported by the BATEC National Center of Excellence for Computing and Information Technologies. It aims to advance networking and communication skills for students pursuing an education in a computing discipline.

Speed Networking is a program designed to give students exposure to supportive industry professionals and an opportunity to practice their communication and interpersonal skills. The speed networking event emphasizes training in resume preparation, mock interviewing, researching companies, and post-interview follow-up. This program was inspired by Michigan State University's "Speed Networking Event", University of Rhode Island's "Tell Me About Yourself: Good vs. Bad Interview", and the National Science Foundation's "What Skills Do I Need to Get Hired?".

Our typical format is to offer a one or two hour meet-and-greet program. The program should consist of multiple sessions where industry participants can socialize with a certain number of students and engage them in a group dialogue/discussion for a specific amount of time - we recommend approximately 8 minutes for each session. All of the applications, flyers, letters and surveys we created for implementing this program are available by request.

Another format is to have a "flash event" which consists of having students prepare for a short "meet and greet" session by preparing for the event by writing down three interesting and unique facts about themselves. We encourage them to consider describing who they are, what they are interested in, and what they are passionate about. Each session can consist of two ten minute sessions. During each session, the industry professional can socialize with a number of students and engage them in a group dialogue/discussion.

Historically, the speed networking event has been an overwhelmingly popular element, enabling an introduction quick enough for qualified students to meet every industry professional, but long enough for each meeting to be evaluative.

We hope you find this guide comprehensive for planning and implementing a speed networking event at your community college. We are available to provide additional guidance if you seek it, and invite your feedback on how we could improve our model.

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For more information, please contact:

Simon Haile, Outreach Coordinator  
BATEC  
Email: [Simon.Haile@umb.edu](mailto:Simon.Haile@umb.edu)

Warren Hioki, Faculty  
College of Southern Nevada  
Email: [Warren.Hioki@csn.edu](mailto:Warren.Hioki@csn.edu)

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

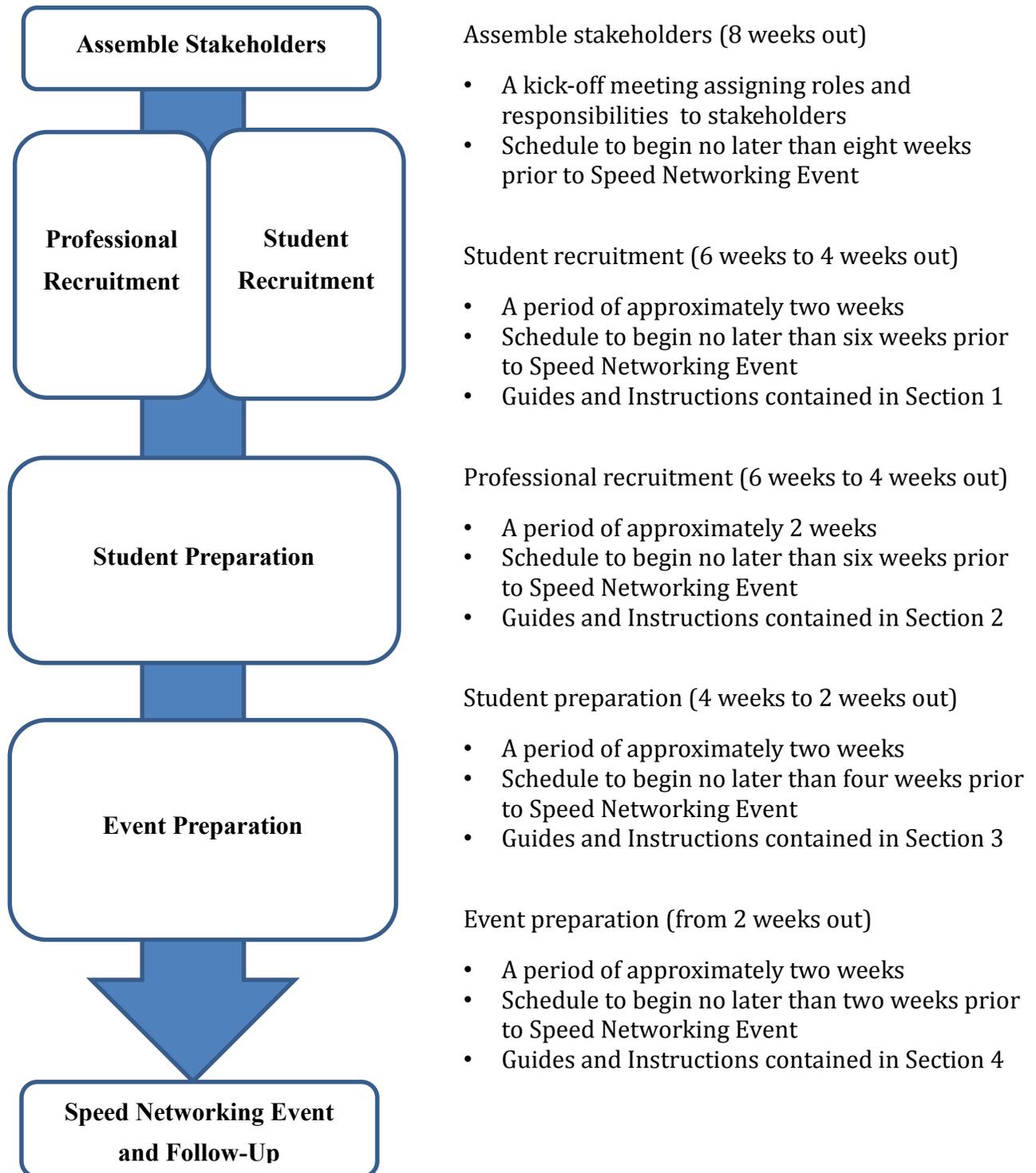
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The target audience for this guide is community college faculty and career services personnel who are interested in learning how to structure and manage a speed networking event. It offers step-by-step instructions for each of the following key activities:

- Section 1: Student Recruitment
- Section 2: Professional Recruitment
- Section 3: Student Preparation
- Section 4: Event Preparation

# TIMELINE

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# SECTION 1: STUDENT RECRUITMENT

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## This Section Includes:

- Sample recruiting flyer
- Sample student application

## Job Description

<b>Owner</b>	A faculty member
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disseminating word of the program to students and enlisting other faculty to do so for their students</li><li>• Acting as the administrative interface for students and faculty</li></ul>
<b>Time Commitment</b>	One to three hours per week during the two week recruiting period (at the institution's discretion)
<b>Time Window</b>	The recruiting period should start no later than six weeks prior to the Speed Networking Event.
<b>Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• E-mail blasting students in computing concentrations</li><li>• E-mail blasting students in business-oriented concentrations</li><li>• Personally appealing to qualified students</li><li>• Posting physical flyers</li></ul>

## Program Standards

<b>GPA</b>	2.0 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Required Skills</b>	<p>For Web Design/Social Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proficiency/familiarity with: HTML, CSS, WordPress, and/or JSS</li><li>• Experience with: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and/or Blogging</li></ul> <p>For Help Desk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proficiency/familiarity with: VMWare, Microsoft Exchange Server, Windows Server</li></ul>

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<sup>1</sup> The minimum GPA is at the discretion of the faculty member organizing the event. It makes sense to draw the line at which students would represent your school well.

# RECRUITING FLYER

The sample recruiting flyer below includes the industry professionals that are participating in the event for IT students at the College of Southern Nevada. Flyers like this should be e-mailed to technology students and posted on social media throughout the department.


## CSN Internship Speed Networking Event

**When:** Friday March 21, 2014  
**Where:** Cheyenne Campus Whitley Lounge  
**Time:** 12pm to 2:00pm

CIT and MT Students: Are you interested in a Spring or Summer Internship?


- Arcata Associates
- BONN Corporation
- Century Link
- Dell Computer
- DRI
- Holman's of Nevada, INC.
- Link Technologies
- RRG
- VerdeClean USA
- Virtual Work Corporation
- City of Las Vegas
- City of North Las Vegas
- Cox Communications
- Coxman Gaming, LLC.
- Intel
- JT3
- National Security Technologies
- Qualifyor
- Zyxi Inc.



# STUDENT APPLICATION

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The student application should record contact information, areas of interest, technical skills, and coursework. The areas of interest should be the same categories presented to professionals on their intake registration, which will allow you to cross reference your professional responses with your candidate pool to ensure alignment in advance of the speed networking event. Below is a sample student application from the College of Southern Nevada.

## CSN Speed Networking Internship Program Application

Please complete this application to be considered for our 1<sup>st</sup> CSN Speed Networking Internship Program event. This event will take place during spring break on Friday March 21, 2014, 12 noon to 2:00 pm in the Whitley Student Lounge on CSN's Cheyenne campus. This fun and exciting event will allow you to be speed interviewed for 5 minutes by multiple employers. They have been instructed to provide constructive feedback on your interview and may even offer an internship opportunity for you. Please be mindful that employers will make hiring decisions based on your interview performance and paid or unpaid internships will be at their discretion.

Name:

NSHE ID:

Email Address:

Degree Major:

Expected Date of Graduation:

**What is your primary area of interest? Check all that apply:**

- Network Security
- Network Administration
- Service and Support
- Computer Forensics
- Computer Programming
- Graphic and Web Design

**List all IT-related courses that you have completed. For example, IS 101 Intro to Information Systems; CIT 112B Network+; CIT 217 Security+; CSCO 120 Cisco Internetworking Fundamentals; CF117B Computer Forensics, etc.**

**List all IT-related courses you are currently enrolled in. These include courses with prefixes CF, CIT, CS, CSCO, GIS, and IS.**

**List any IT certifications that you now have. For example, A+, Net+, Security+, CCNA, etc.**

# SECTION 2: PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT

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## This Section Includes:

- Registration and intake information
- A method for showcasing student resumes and work to professionals in advance of the speed networking event

## Job Description

<b>Owner</b>	Ideally, this would be a Career Services staff member owing to their experience interacting with employers and number of existing contacts. However, anyone who can execute the responsibilities below is viable. This could be a faculty member, a work study student, a part time hire, a combination; whoever.
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruiting industry professionals to participate in a speed networking event for Computer Science and Information Technology students.</li> <li>• Cataloging information from professionals who agree to participate.</li> <li>• Being the contact person for professionals prior to meeting students</li> </ul>
<b>Time Commitment</b>	5-10 hours per week
<b>Time Window</b>	Professional recruitment should begin six weeks prior to the event.
<b>Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appealing to career services contacts</li> <li>• Appealing to deans, administrators, and other staff of the school</li> <li>• Appealing to donors and alumni of the school</li> <li>• Appealing to the board of trustees of the school</li> <li>• Appealing to contacts on advisory boards</li> <li>• Internal blogs and social media</li> </ul>

# REGISTRATION & INTAKE INFORMATION

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The recruitment letter that is sent to the professionals should include a link to an event registration, for example hosted by Constant Contact, but also conducive to other online registration tools. This can be disseminated internally through alumni services and contacts within the career services and technology programs, and externally through local Chambers of Commerce. The intake data we recommend recording from each professional includes:

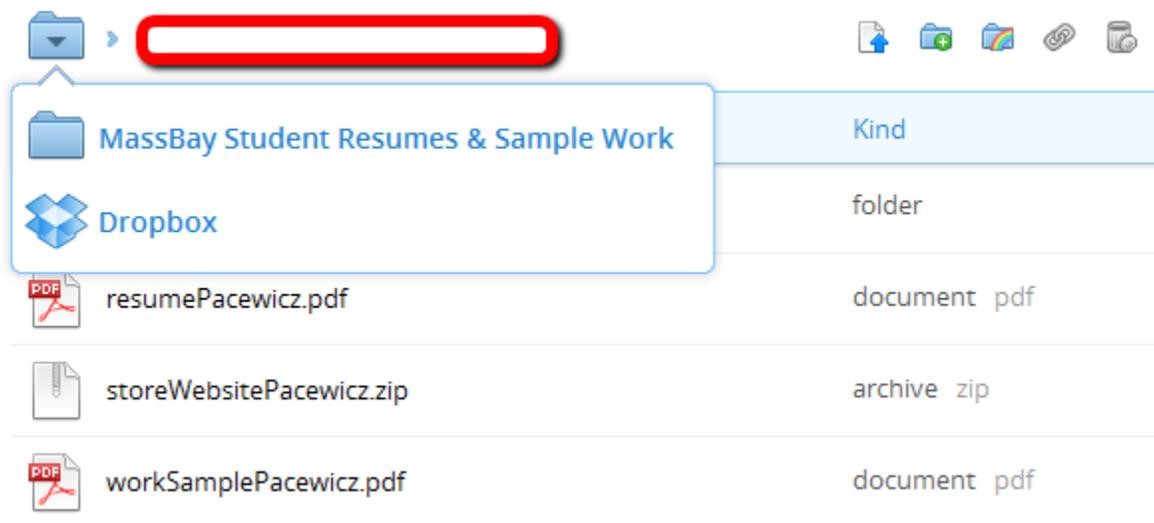
- **Contact information** (company name, contact person, e-mail, and phone).
- The **technical skills** the professional is seeking in students - we recommend presenting these as categories matching those presented to students (ex: Web Technologies, IT Support, Database, etc.). This allows you to seamlessly check for alignment between student and professional interest
- Lastly, **the medium through which the employer heard**, allowing you a sense of your recruiting efficacy.

# ACCESS TO STUDENT INFORMATION

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Below is an individual entry from a Dropbox folder we created to allow remote access to student resumes and work samples in advance of an event. Each student produced a **revised resume** and a **work sample** indicating competency in whatever technical area they have an interest.

The online repository affords easy access to potential employers, allowing them to familiarize themselves with students of interest prior to screening them. This also serves as a reference tool after the speed networking event.



# SECTION 3: STUDENT PREPARATION

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## This Section Includes:

- Overview of professional skills development components for students
- Examples of resources for professional development workshops

## Job Description

<b>Owner</b>	A Career Services staff member or anyone comfortable teaching soft skills would be suitable for preparing students. For reviewing student work samples, we recommend assistance from a member of the technology faculty at the college.
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Go over employability skills with students</li><li>• Help students polish their resume and work sample and ensure they post it for employers to see two weeks prior to the event</li></ul>
<b>Time Commitment</b>	1.5 – 3 hours per week
<b>Time Window</b>	This should begin 4 weeks prior to the event.
<b>Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extracurricular workshops, scheduled to avoid common course times</li><li>• Incentivize student attendance by making 100% attendance necessary in order to attend the networking event</li><li>• Student attendance could be further incentivized by prizes; one implementer teamed up with a nonprofit to provide suits to graduates of its professional skills workshop</li></ul>
<b>Tips</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Professionals prefer independent work samples to classroom work samples</li><li>• For a non-technical audience, work is best shown in an accessible form (not in cryptic code!)</li></ul>

# PROFESSIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

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<b>Necessary Components</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Resume revision</li><li>• Interview skills / Elevator pitch</li><li>• Researching companies</li><li>• Post-interview follow-up</li></ul>
<b>Optional Components</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Protecting digital identity</li><li>• Workplace etiquette<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Dress code</li><li>▪ Behavior</li><li>▪ Communication</li></ul></li><li>• E-mail etiquette</li><li>• Networking</li><li>• Time management</li><li>• Task prioritization</li></ul>

# RESOURCES FOR WORKSHOPS

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## **Resumes and Cover Letters**

Riley Guide to Resume and Cover Letter Writing  
<http://www.rileyguide.com/letters.html>

## **Speed Networking**

MSU Video  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OX6M9RKiMec>

## **Elevator Speech**

Pepperdine Preparation Worksheet  
<http://bschool.pepperdine.edu/career/content/elevatorspeech.pdf>

## **Dress for Success**

College Grad website  
<https://collegegrad.com/jobsearch/competitive-interview-prep/dressing-for-interview-success>

## **Professionalism in the Workplace**

Buzzle website  
<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/professionalism-in-the-workplace.html>

# SECTION 4: EVENT PREPARATION

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## This Section Includes:

- A procedure for running the “Speed Networking Event”
- Sample surveys for students and employers
- Event follow-up

<b>Owner</b>	The matching process is necessarily a collective effort between all involved stakeholders.
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<p>Event Prep:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bring students and professionals together for a speed networking event that enables professionals to initially screen all qualified<sup>2</sup> candidates, and for qualified students to get an opportunity before every professional</li><li>• Ensure student resumes and work samples are available for employers at the event</li></ul> <p>Following the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure the policy for following-up with students and professionals is clear</li><li>• Administer and analyze student and professional surveys</li></ul>

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<sup>2</sup> By ‘qualified,’ we mean students who have skills aligned with what the industry professionals are seeking.

# RUNNING THE EVENT

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The following procedure breaks down how to conduct a speed networking event. The benefits of the event are that it offers students a fixed amount of time with industry professionals; it simulates a real job interview or networking event; it guarantees students get to meet many potential employers; and it generates interest within your program.

<b>Procedure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Place industry professionals at designated seats; if you have a variety of industry professionals, we recommend grouping by each type of industry (ex: web in the front, help desk in the back left, database in the back right).</li><li>• Create a student seating area away from the industry professionals, for students to return to during breaks.</li><li>• Allow the student to meet with each industry professional for approximately 8 minutes.</li><li>• After this period ends, cue students – verbally, with music, however – to go back to their initial area for a <b>2</b> minute break. During this break professionals will be able to log their impressions of the student, and catch a needed breath.</li><li>• After 2 minutes, have students rotate to another professional.</li><li>• Continue for up to 2 hours or until all potential pairings of students and industry professionals have been met.</li></ul>
<b>Time</b>	2 hours or less
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name tags for students and professionals</li><li>• Catering</li><li>• Copies of student resumes and work samples</li><li>• Gifts for the industry professionals</li></ul>
<b>Tips</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enforce the break between rotations!</li><li>• The event will likely cut into the work day, and to ask much more than 2 hours of employers could discourage attendance.</li><li>• Book a room large enough that employers and students won't struggle to hear one another during the event.</li></ul>

# PROFESSIONAL SURVEY

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The post-event survey is more efficiently administered online, using a survey tool that aggregates the results for you and ensures respondents don't skip over questions. The following are questions we input into Constant Contact following the speed networking event.

The sample professional post-event survey is meant to test the following hypotheses:

- Students were prepared to interview.
- Students were technically prepared for potential employment.
- The event format was an optimal method for exposing students to industry professionals.

**1. Were students:**

	All	Most	Some	Few
Able to articulate their skills?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Able to articulate their goals?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledgeable about your company?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enthusiastic?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Courteous?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confident?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**2. What skills, technical or otherwise, would make students stronger candidates?**

**3. How did the event change the likelihood of you taking on an intern?**

Significantly More Likely	Slightly More Likely	Slightly Less Likely	Significantly Less Likely
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**4. Please offer feedback on general program improvements not captured on the survey.**

# STUDENT SURVEY

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Like the employer survey, we advocate administering the student survey online.

The sample student post-event survey is meant to test the following hypotheses:

- The workshops optimally prepared students to interview
- The range of professionals at the event aligns with the interest of students
- The methodology for pairing students with professionals is in the students' best interests

## 1. Did you feel prepared to interview?

Yes	No
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 2. What aspects of the workshops helped you prepare for the event? (please check all that apply; list any other)

Researching Companies	Practicing Interviewing	Practicing Elevator Pitch	Resume Prep	Following-Up Post-Interview	Other
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

## 3. What aspects of the workshops could have used more time or should be added? (please check all that apply; list any addition under 'other')

Researching Companies	Practicing Interviewing	Practicing Elevator Pitch	Resume Prep	Following-Up Post-Interview	Other
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

## 4. Was the time you received with each individual professional:

Appropriate	A Bit Too Long	A Bit Too Short	Far Too Short
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 5. What can we do to improve the program for you?

# EVENT FOLLOW-UP

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The message below was sent to the industry professionals immediately following the speed networking event.

Dear Speed Networking Participant,

Thank you for your participation. We hope you had a great experience! After you meet the students and you leave on Friday, what comes next?

An exit survey link will be sent to you. It is very important for us to get feedback from you so that we may improve upon our next Speed Networking event.

If you are interested in following up with a student candidate after the event, please contact that student directly. There are many ways we intend to gauge the success of our speed networking event. One of those ways is to know how many students were contacted by you after the event. If you do contact the students, please let us know by sending an email to our Computing and Information Technology (CIT) address:

[CIT.Department@CSN.EDU](mailto:CIT.Department@CSN.EDU)

If you do decide to hire a student as an intern, before the internship begins, contact Margaret Taylor, CIT Department Chair.

FAQs:

- **Start date:** Students will be able to begin work as soon as the internship agreement is signed
- **Compensation and scheduling:** The decision on whether to compensate an intern by hour, stipend, or not at all and how to schedule their time is wholly subject to the agreement you reach with the individual student.
- **Constraints:** Our only constraints is that the internship advances the student's technical and soft skills.