



Set Rep Meeting
School of Computing & Academic Studies
December 04, 2018 – 5:30pm
Council Chambers SE02, BCIT Campus, Burnaby

Chair: Justin Cervantes

Staff: Tania De Ridder, Student Development Coordinator

Guest Speakers: Amy Smith, Career Specialist, BCIT Student Association
Dalena Nguyen, Community Manager, BC Jobs
Yossarian King, CTO, Blackbird Interactive

Meeting Called to Order: 05:45PM

1.0 Amy Smith – Introduction of her role, career services and keynote speakers (5 minutes)

Chair Justin introduces Career Specialist Amy Smith.

Amy briefly talks about networking & making networking work for you. Introduces guest speaker, Dalena Nguyen, who works with job seekers and employers.

2.0 Dalena Nguyen – Networking in the Computing Industry (30 minutes)

Shares tips & strategies to make networking work.

What is networking?

- Part of community
- Getting to know people
- Telling and listening to stories
- Building relationships

Why is networking important?

Concept of 6-degrees of separation: Everyone is connected to each other based on 6 points of contact. When attending lots of events, you will start to recognize people.

Referrals are important. Who you know can help you get opportunities at companies. Not all about now – can lead to future opportunities.

Networking done right:

- Why – For example, do you want to learn about a company?
- Who – Recruiter? Thought leader?
- Where – There are so many events. It can be broad or niche.
- How – To approach: Do research. Have questions prepared to stand out.
- Then – After the event: Stay connected. Connect on LinkedIn. If you take a business card do connect.
- Track – Liking someone's status on LinkedIn. Share interesting articles. Be cautious not to do it too much.

Habits of successful networkers:

- Go with a goal & stay focused but be open to other conversations too.
- Be active and proactive: Do research and don't go to an event just to say you went. Effort goes a long way.
- Think of others.
- Show genuine interest: Engaged listener and remember it's okay to end a conversation politely.
- Quality, not quantity: Focusing on making real connections because those are the most valuable.
- Practice: Networking is hard and can be intimidating at first, but you'll get more comfortable and find your own style.

What are employers looking for?

- Culture fit - especially tech companies and startups. Are you someone they want to work with?
- Culture is a two-way street – you're interviewing for a job, but you are interviewing the company as well.
- Are you coachable? Skill and aptitude. How can you stand out? Will you thrive?
- Don't feel like you are just a student or that you're asking for something. Employers know you won't have the best skills – it's more about showing that you're willing to go up to meet them and work on your communication skills. It's about being proactive and taking the initiative.

Your elevator pitch:

- Different pitches at different times – who is your audience?
- Highlight your value
- Talk broad picture – not super detailed.
- Keep it short and sweet

Talking about your projects:

- Pick one you found interesting. What did you learn?
- What did you contribute to group projects?
- Do you have any side projects?

What are your goals?

- Do you have a dream job or dream employer?
- What are you doing now to get you closer? Reading, researching, building something, networking, etc.

Nervous about networking?

- Commit and practice. Remember what your goal is and know you'll get better. It's alright to mess up. Don't put so much pressure on yourself. Keep it casual but professional.
- Treat the room like your home. Avoid 'imposter syndrome'.
- Take a break outside. If you feel overwhelmed – It's okay to grab a glass of water, or step outside to recompose.
- Bring a buddy. But don't stay with the buddy the entire time. Meet new people.
- Remember, it's not a race. Don't do a lap of the room and then leave. Target your goals. Build a list of 3 – 5 employers you really want to talk to over the span of 2 hours.

- It's what you want it to be. Every interaction counts. You never really know who you're talking to when talking to strangers.
- "Relationships are more like muscles, the more you work on them, the stronger they get." – Keith Ferrazzi

Stay connected:

- [Linkedin.ca/in/dalenanguyen](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dalenanguyen)
- dalena@bcjobs.ca

Check out their events:

- [Meetup.com/tech-talent-meetup](https://www.meetup.com/tech-talent-meetup)
- [Bcjobsevents.eventbrite.ca](https://www.bcjobsevents.com)

3.0 Questions for Dalena:

Q: Vancouver is a multi-cultural city and it can be hard to pronounce different names – do you have a strategy for overcoming this?

A: If you remember where you met them it's alright not to remember their name. It still shows you remembered them. Even recruiters understand this.

Q: What are good ways to start a conversation?

A: Depends on the context. Can use elevator pitch. At a meetup it could be, 'What brings you out today?' or you could bring up an interesting point of a presentation. Or you can just say 'hi'.

4.0 Yossarian King – Brief Introduction to Technical Interviewing (30 minutes)

Career specialist Amy Smith introduces Yossarian who will talk about technical interviewing and first impressions when you show up for an interview. No need to wear a suit or tie. More informal than in the past. A buttoned-up shirt is good. Can make an impression but don't be too risky.

Except for his first job, all his jobs were through networking. Shares his career history. Cultivate connections as it can lead to more opportunities. Has interviewed 300 interviews in past 10 years. There are different ways to do it but what he looks for in an interview:

- Assessing skills and competencies – education and projects
- Passion for what you're doing and ability to keep learning. Really important to enjoy programming and technical creation. Wants to see interest and excitement and enthusiasm.
- Ability to learn – ongoing. They don't expect you to be fully skilled.
- Hard worker
- Collaborates well
- Not just programming but have other interests too

Don't focus on hypotheticals but on the past – what you've done before as they want to see what you are like as a communicator. Can you explain it well? Is your memory good? Can you remember the details of what you're sharing?

Often gives a coding challenge with an applicant - unwinding of the code to see how much the applicant understands. Sometimes also give a take home test of 4 questions – can work at own pace and use internet. Looking for problem-solving skills.

5.0 Questions for Yossarian

Q: Had an interview at blackbird and had coding challenge for which they had several days. Will it be beneficial the earlier an applicant submits it?

A: No. They take into account that you have school and projects. It is designed to not take more than 3 hours.

Q: Do you value team projects versus individual?

A: They assess both. Need to know you're good with both. Will ask what you feel makes a good group and how you contribute to a team. Also, will ask about team dynamics and probe into past group experiences. Need to be able to work well in a group – very collaborative environment.

Q: How valuable it is to work towards a bachelors or higher education?

A: They value education – master's degree is considered equivalent to 2 years work experience. It also speaks to a learning mindset. Can help you get your first job. But it's rare that they go looking for masters or PhD degrees in applicants.

Q: What qualities – non-technical – do employers look for?

A: Sense of humour. Interesting hobbies – non-work related. Someone who will work hard and do their share but will be balanced.

Contact:

- LinkedIn: Yossarian King
- yossarian@blackbirdinteractive.com

6.0 Amy Smith - Career Services Feedback (15 minutes)

Amy thanks speakers and gives gift bags.

7.0 Chair's Announcements (15 minutes) 7:00PM

- **Volunteers being requested for**

Community Consultation for Policies on Student Code of Conduct & Academic Integrity and Appeal

BCIT Students are invited to participate in a consultation process for revisions to two policies and their procedures:

5102 Student Code of Conduct (non-academic)
5104 Academic Integrity and Appeals

Education Council encourages input from across the Institute on these two policies, which are being significantly changed.

Date: Wed. Dec. 5, 2018

Time: 2:30-4:00

Location: SW01-1025

- **Sun Run (20 seats)**
 - 7 International student Seats **
 - First come, first serve basis in late January
 - You must send me an email where they confirm they can attend the run on April 14 and anticipate participating in as many running clinics as possible, and where they agree to pay back the SA if they fail to attend the race. Registration will open after the first set rep meeting of 2019.
 - 7 Set Rep Seats
 - 6 General Seats (one may be filled by our faculty clinic trainer)

- **Thank you to graduating set representatives**
 - Miranda Pattyn
 - Andrew Mai
 - Patrick Charles-Ludhaal
 - Kevin Oane
 - Lucas Chan

Chair hands over gift bags to graduating representatives and invites everyone to mingle.

Ends meeting with inspirational video by Baz Luhrmann, 'Everybody's Free (to wear sunscreen).

8.0 Meeting Adjourned: 07:08PM