

Approximate time to complete: 20-30 minutes.

Students, especially freshman and sophomores, do not always realize that they are already a part of several essential networks. The purpose of this exercise is to have students begin to evaluate their existing networks and open up to the possibility that all around them is a wide variety of opportunities to explore and prepare for their future careers.

Prep: Provide students with a larger sheet of paper. Providing a selection of different colored pens may help them be creative and/or represent different categories in their network. Throughout the activity, modeling the steps on a white/chalk board is recommended

1. Have students begin by writing their names in the center of the paper. Encourage them to write small to maximize their space.
2. Starting close to their circle, have them write 7-10 influential people in their development up to this point, making sure to include family and friends. If possible their parents should be on this list. After the names of these individuals are written, they should write each of their careers or where they work, volunteer, participate in learning, etc...
3. Now ask the students to draw a cluster around each of those people that includes 3 people they work with, are in connection with, etc... The idea is to get important people outside of their close connections onto the list. If the student does not know anyone in that person's network it is a valuable part of the illustration as well.
4. At this point students can start reflecting in either discussion or an in class writing assignment on their map. Who are some of the most interesting people they wish they could talk to on the list so far? Is anyone on the list doing something they would be interested in doing? If they don't know at least 3 people in someone's network, what kind of individuals might that person's network include and is it worth finding out and making some new connections?
5. Now have students turn over the paper and start this process once more. This time after putting themselves in the center, have them write ten people they have met while attending HSU in an academic, professional, or extra-curricular capacity.
6. Now each student should write what that person does here at HSU. Do they study here? Do they work here and if so, where? What do they research? What do they study? Are they a part of any organizations or programs that sound interesting? Clubs? Volunteer work?
7. For each of these ten people, the students should write someone in that person's network that they know of but do not really know. Do they study here? Do they work here and if so, where? What do they research? What do they study? Are they a part of any organizations or programs that sound interesting?
8. At this point students should continue the reflection process. What opportunities have they noticed around them to get involved on campus either in clubs/associations, causes, special projects, classes, research, or building connections and how do those possibilities relate to the map they just created?
9. Students should share as a class the insights they've had and discuss how these connections and opportunities could help them prepare now for life after college.