

NETWORKING SKILLS INVENTORY

INTERPRETATION SHEET

Plot your scores on the triangle by drawing a dot on each of the three heavy lines inside the triangle to represent your score for each dimension. For example, your "relevant information" score should be plotted on the vertical line.

After the three dots are drawn, connect them with the straight lines. Now shade in the triangle you have drawn.

Networking is the ability to create and maintain an effective, widely based system of resources that works to the mutual benefit of oneself and others through the skill dimensions of using relevant information, having good working relations, and maintaining and communicating a good track record.

The three networking skill dimensions are explained below. They will aid you in determining which areas of your networking ability need enhancement.

- 1. Relevant information.** This dimension relates to seeking information by learning and remembering who all the relevant parties to your job are and what different responsibilities, perspectives and personalities they have. It also includes discerning where these responsibilities, perspectives and personalities are in conflict, what goals and sources of power each group (or individual) has and to what extent the group or individual is prepared to act on those goals and use that power.
- 2. Working relations.** This dimension includes building and maintaining positive relationships with everyone on whose cooperation and input you depend in accomplishing your job. This can be done by engaging in activities that yield respect, admiration, and friendship - such as addressing people's needs, being considerate, and showing appreciation.
- 3. Track record.** This refers to developing a reputable performance record that demonstrates credibility. You can build a good track record by doing competent work that involves excellent problem solving, decision making, and implementation in a timely manner.

The size and shape of your networking triangle indicates several aspects of your current networking style. First, the larger your triangle, the more actively and consciously you probably engage in networking from a mutual-gain perspective. Second, the more equal the sides of your triangle, the more balanced is your networking focus and the better the dimensions are working together.

The bias of this model is that the larger the triangle, the more effective you are at networking. The balance between the three dimensions is also important. If one side is significantly larger or smaller than the others, pay attention to the skills and behaviours that make up the dimension(s) of the smaller side(s).

More important than your actual scores is how the information derived from the size and shape of your triangle can be used to improve your networking effectiveness. If your dimensions are fairly balanced, you may want to review your scoring sheet and circle the lowest-scored item in each dimension. If there is a significant difference in the scores of any of the dimensions, review the dimension(s) that is/are most in need of improvement and circle one to three of the lowest-scored items. Once you have identified your lowest items, reread the item statement to determine behaviours on which you will want to place emphasis and concentration for improvement.