

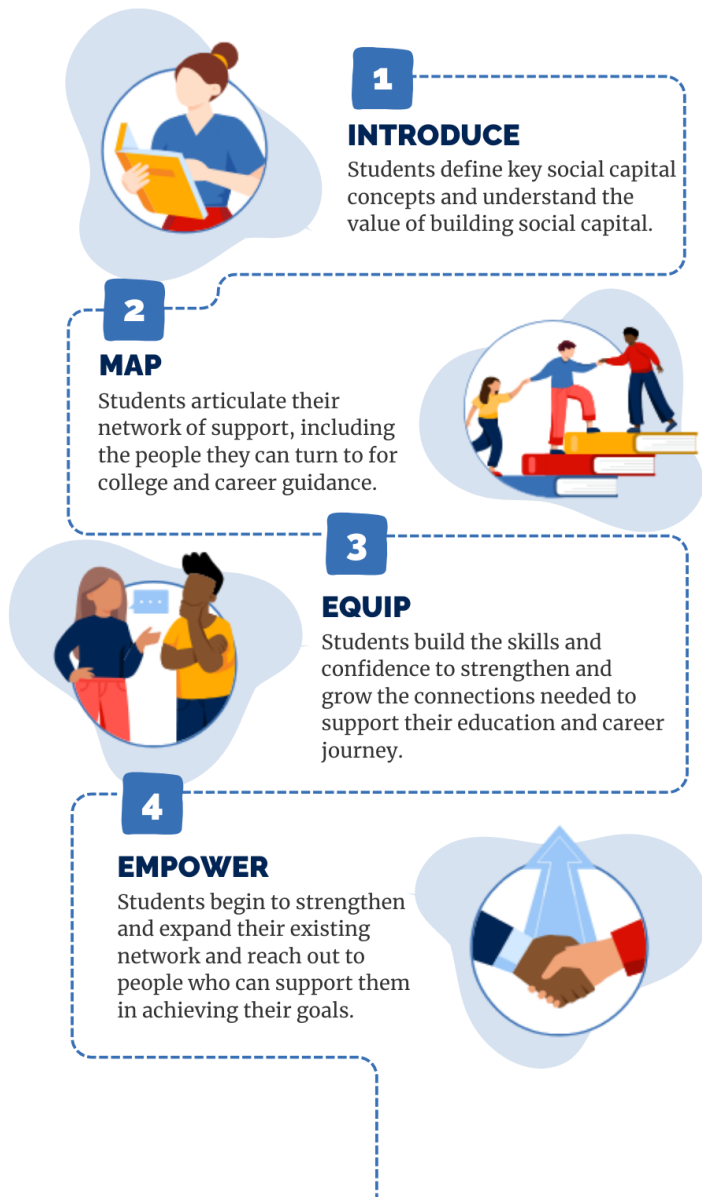
Social Capital Lesson Plans

Lesson to help students learn social capital concepts & build social capital skills

Introduction

These lesson plans represent a starting point to help practitioners guide their students through the [Social Capital Scope & Sequence](#), which provides a progression of learning objectives aligned to typical competencies for students at the secondary grade level. The lessons are organized according to each step in the progression (below). The lessons can be adapted to fit the needs of educators' students and context, and be used in conjunction with the [Social Capital Individual Student Plan](#).

Scope & Sequence Progression



Corresponding Lesson Plans

Step 1: Introduce

- Introduction to Social Capital (page 3)

Step 2: Map

- Relationship Mapping (page 6)

Step 3: Equip

- Building a Resume (page 9)
- Creating an Elevator Speech (page 12)
- What is an Informational Interview? (page 15)

Step 4: Empower

- Introduction to Networking (page 19)
- Conducting an Informational Interview (page 21)
- Engaging with Professionals at a Career Event (page 25)

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The following principles have shaped the development of our resources - including these lesson plans. **Practitioners should reflect on these principles as they deliver these lessons in order to responsibly and mindfully support student social capital development.**

PRINCIPLE 1: Every student should be learning to grow, expand, and leverage their social capital. Social capital learning isn't just for extroverted students or those on a pathway to a four-year college. These skills and tools are essential for navigating a continuously evolving labor market and for easing inevitable career transitions. Strategies and resources may need to be adapted to better reach particular groups of students but every learner should be developing this skill set and receiving the support to actively build their network.

PRINCIPLE 2: Student needs, goals, and ambitions should be centered. Students should have access to meaningful opportunities to build social capital that are aligned with their goals and interests. Centering student voice and choice can ensure that the skills and connections they are building are directly connected to where they see themselves in the future. Building networks with intentionality can bring greater clarity and purpose for students than simply adding connections for connections sake.

PRINCIPLE 3: Every community has assets that can be leveraged. No community is starting this work entirely from scratch. There are pockets within every school or system in which students are building relationships - with peers, school staff, or community partners. Leveraging these existing spaces and expertise can help accelerate this work and build a more cohesive thread across these efforts.

PRINCIPLE 4: Every student has a network to build on. Regardless of their background or circumstances, every student has a network and those relationships can carry value in a variety of ways. Avoiding assumptions about who a student might or might not know and judgement about the value of those connections opens the door for more productive and asset-based conversations about the importance of social capital. Students should be encouraged to examine their networks for strengths and opportunities, with the understanding that their connections are already valuable but networks can always be enhanced to better support their goals and aspirations.

PRINCIPLE 5: Aim for authenticity. There's a risk that conversations about social capital can be seen as transactional and inauthentic when talking about value. Encourage participants and students to think about the importance of investing in and maintaining relationships before needing to call upon them. Invite them to reflect on the ways they serve as a resource and support, often without expecting anything in return. Relationships should be continually fostered, even as networks grow and change over time and connections may be called upon for different types of support over the course of one's life.

PRINCIPLE 6: Social capital is a long game. It is important to emphasize for students that the practice of building their social capital is a lifelong one. The skills they are developing will serve them throughout their educational journey and career. As such, this work cannot be limited to one program or course. Students should be building social capital and relevant skills all along their secondary path, revisiting conversations and continually reflecting on their growing networks.

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Lesson Plan 1: Introduction to Social Capital

Duration	One 50-minute class period
Step in Sequence	Step 1: Introduce
Learning Objectives	Students will: ★ Define social capital & relevant terms, such as network, strong ties and weak ties ★ Differentiate between types of social support & categorize real examples from their lives
Materials:	• Projector or SmartBoard • Lesson slide deck • Handout for group activity

In-Class Activity

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- **Warm-up Activity:** Begin with a discussion on the concept behind social capital. Ask the students to think about a person in their life who has helped them in school, extracurricular activities, or at home. Give students about 5 minutes to share examples with their class.
- **Social Capital Definition:** Let your students know that the people they named are part of their "Social Capital". Use Slide 1 of the lesson slide deck to provide them with the following definition of social capital:
 - ★ *Social capital refers to the relationships and networks you have AND your ability to use these connections for information, resources, and opportunities (for example, career advice, emotional support, or, in the future, job interviews).*

2. Whole Group (20 minutes)

- Watch the two-minute [Social Capital: The Power of Relationships](#) video (linked on Slide 2). Facilitate a discussion on what the students learned from the videos.
Ask: Why is social capital important? Who are the people that make up your social capital network? How can you use social capital to help you on your journey?

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- **Optional:** Find media clips that demonstrate social capital in action to watch and analyze as a class.
- **Think-Pair-Share:** Have students share with a neighbor the ways in which they *provide* help to people in their social network. After about 5 minutes, allow students to volunteer to share what they've discussed with their partners.
- Transition your class discussion to categorize the types of support students receive from their social capital network. Use Slide 3 of the lesson slide deck to talk through each type of support, and allow students to volunteer examples from their own lives.

3. Group Activity (20 minutes)

- Group students into groups of 3-4. Using [this handout](#), have students draw pictures with a brief caption describing a person who gives them each type of support.

Assessment:

You may opt to do one or both of these

- **Informal Assessment:** You can gauge students' understanding of these concepts during a debrief discussion following the group activity. Ask them to provide examples of strong and weak ties to assess whether or not they grasp the difference.
- **Student Social Capital Plan:** Assign the reflection questions in Tab 1 of the [Social Capital Student Plan](#).

Lesson Extension:

- **Encouraged:** As the topic of connections comes up, either through subject matter content or personal experiences, take a moment to name how these connections contribute to a person's social capital. If applicable, categorize connections into weak and strong ties.
- **Optional:** If you would like to hold an informal discussion for a brief review (for example, the next class period), have students provide examples of a character's social capital network from popular TV shows, movies, or books. Students can discuss the main characters' strong and weak ties, and ways that they support them in the plot. You could use three to five examples and write the class's examples on the board.

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- **Level it up:** Have more advanced students identify an occupation of interest. Ask them to consider how social capital might be important for preparing for and being in that role. Who does someone need to know and why?
- For additional ideas for activities, refer to Step 1 in the [Social Capital Scope & Sequence](#).

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Lesson Plan 2: Relationship Mapping

Duration	One 50-minute class period
Step in Sequence	Step 2: Map
Learning Objectives	Students will: ★ Map the people who make up their current network and their different contexts (school, extracurriculars, family) ★ Describe the different types of social support the people in their network provide ★ Distinguish between the weak and strong ties in their lives and specify the types of resources each provides to them ★ Develop a goal for strengthening and/or growing their network
Materials:	● Projector or SmartBoard ● Lesson slide deck ● Relationship Mapping Worksheet

In-Class Activity:

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- **Review:** Revisit the concept of social capital with your students with a short discussion on what social capital is and why it's important. Be sure to also review the types of support that one's social capital network provides. (If needed, you may use Slides 1-2 to review these concepts).
- **Strong & weak ties:** To extend students learning about social capital, introduce the concepts of weak and strong ties, pictured on slide 3 of the deck. Explain each one and highlight the fact that you need both in life to be successful. Ask students to provide examples of each type of tie in their own lives (Note: You might want to share examples first to help illustrate each one).

2. Relationship Mapping Activity (30 minutes)

- **Introduce the Activity:** Illustrate relationship mapping using one of the two options:

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- (1) Create a web map on the board (modeled after the Relationship Mapping Worksheet), with your name at the center. Spend about 5 minutes creating your own relationship map and explaining your network, the types of support you receive from different people, and whether or not they are strong or weak ties. This is designed to be brief (about 5 minutes) so that students can spend the bulk of class time on their own relationship maps.
- (2) Show slide 4 in the lesson slide deck to show an example of what a completed relationship map looks like. Walk through the different settings (School, Family, Community, etc.) and highlight some examples of the relationship map to demonstrate the types of relationships students might include.
- **Student Relationship Maps:** Provide students with the [Relationship Mapping Worksheet](#). Explain that they will create their own relationship map to visualize their social networks and understand their social capital. Encourage students to note the types of support they receive from each person in their network. You may also have them indicate strong vs weak ties, either with color coding or using symbols such as a star.

Note: You may have students do this individually or in small groups depending on your preference.

3. Closing (10 minutes)

- Using the discussion questions on slide 5, facilitate a whole-group discussion on what students included in their relationship maps. Allow students to volunteer examples to reinforce that all students have a network that supports them and get them thinking about how they might consider expanding their network.

Assessment:

- **Relationship Maps:** Review students' relationship maps for completeness and accuracy. Look for a variety of connections and thoughtful representation.
- **Student Social Capital Plan:** Assign the connections table and reflection questions in Tab 2 of the [Social Capital Student Plan](#).

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Lesson Extension:

- **Level it up:** After they've mapped their networks, have students indicate (through different colors or symbols): (1) the individuals they would feel comfortable reaching out to today to ask for college and career advice, and (2) the individuals they *could* feel comfortable reaching out to, with some preparation and support. Let them discuss their observations with each other. Refer back to this exercise in later lessons.
- For additional ideas for activities, refer to Step 2 in the [Social Capital Scope & Sequence](#).

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Lesson Plan 3: Building a Resume

Duration	Two 50-minute class periods
Step in Sequence	Step 3: Equip
Learning Objectives	Students will: ★ Describe their achievements, skills, and career goals ★ Identify the tools, knowledge, and skills they need to best connect with the people in their network ★ Begin to seek help from adults in their school and community ★ Articulate their value to their relationships with people in their network
Materials:	● Projector or SmartBoard ● Lesson 3 Slide Deck ● Step 3 (Equip) Tab in the Social Capital Student Plan (Note: The spreadsheet requires each student to have their own device; if this is not possible in class, you can use a pdf handout version) Note: For the Resume Building Activity, you will either need to be in a computer lab, or have students bring their own device.

First In-Class Activity:

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- Begin with an introductory discussion of the components and uses for a resume.
Ask: Have you ever heard of a resume before? What do you think it is used for?
Why might it be important to have a resume in the future? Record student answers on the board.
- Show examples of a few high school resumes (provided in slides 1 and 2 of the slide deck) to give students a sense of what a final one would look like. Highlight the fact that these are broken up into sections.

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2. Whole Groups Discussion (15 minutes)

- **Key Sections of a Resume:** Discuss each section of a resume (these are listed on slide 3 to view during discussion). For some of these components, you might have students volunteer real-life examples to illustrate each.
 - **Contact Information:** Name, phone number, email, and address.
 - **Objective or Summary (Optional):** A brief statement of your career goals or what you hope to achieve.
 - **Education:** Schools attended, relevant coursework, honors, and expected graduation date.
 - **Experience:** Previous jobs, internships, volunteer work, or relevant projects.
 - **Skills:** Specific skills related to the job or field (e.g., computer skills, language proficiency).
 - **Extracurricular Activities:** Clubs, sports, and other activities.
 - **References (Optional):** People who can vouch for your skills and character (make sure you ask people for permission before including them as references).
- **Formatting Resumes:** Next, discuss important formatting expectations for resumes (shown on slide 4)
 - **Layout:** Clean, professional, and easy-to-read.
 - **Font and Size:** Use professional fonts like Calibri or Roboto, 10-12 pt size.
 - **Length:** Ideally one page.

3. Resume Content Brainstorm (25 minutes)

- Using the Student Social Capital Plan (Step 3: Equip), allow students to reflect on their skills, achievements, and goals to generate content for their resumes. You may choose to have students do this individually or in groups.

Second In-Class Activity

Note: If time does not allow for two class periods, you may assign the following for homework.

1. Review (5 minutes)

- Hold a short review discussion reviewing the following:
 - Purpose of a resume
 - Key sections of a resume

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- Formatting do's and don'ts in a resume

- 2. Resume Building Activity (45 minutes):** Either in a computer lab or in a classroom with 1:1 devices, allow students to build their resume. You can have them use Word or Canva templates, or web-based resume builders, such as [Resume Builder](#) or [Resume Now](#).

Assessment:

Grade final resumes using [this rubric](#).

Lesson Extension:

- **Level it up:** If appropriate, have students create a LinkedIn profile using their resumes and invite them to browse the profiles of different people featured on the site. What do they observe about the skills and experiences they include? Does it inspire new ideas for them?

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Lesson Plan 4: Creating an Elevator Speech

Duration	One 50-minute class period
Step in Sequence	Step 3: Equip
Learning Objectives	Students will: ★ Understand the purpose and key components of an elevator speech. ★ Develop a clear and concise elevator speech about themselves or a topic of interest. ★ Practice delivering their speech with confidence and clarity.
Materials:	• Elevator Speech handout • Timer or stopwatch • Teacher background: 7 Essential Tips for Crafting a Winning Elevator Pitch (Northeastern University Online)

In-Class Activity:

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- **Warm-up:** Start with a quick discussion: Ask students if they have ever had to introduce themselves briefly in a new situation. What did they say? How did it go?
- **Introduction to elevator speeches:** Inform the students that an elevator is a short, 1-2 minute speech to introduce yourself to others that lets them know your goals and what you have to offer. **Ask:** When might you need an elevator speech? (Possible responses might include: a job interview, a college interview, having a career conversation). What kinds of info should you be ready to tell someone for these kinds of occasions?

2. Key Components of an Elevator Speech (10 minutes)

- **Whole group:** Pass out the Elevator Speech handout and discuss the general structure of an elevator speech:
 - **Introduction:** Briefly introduce yourself.
 - **Value Proposition:** Explain what you offer.
 - **Goals & Call to Action:** Convey what you would like to connect with a person about in the future.

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- Note: You might want to ask students to think of examples of each one to give the class a concrete idea of what each piece looks like.

3. Activity: Crafting & Practicing your Speech (25 minutes)

- **Individual writing time:** Using the template in the handout, give students some quiet time to draft a quick elevator speech for themselves.
- **Partner practice:** Divide the students into pairs or small groups and have them take turns delivering their elevator speech to each other. Make sure students have some way to time each other to keep their speeches at an appropriate length. Encourage peers to give constructive feedback on clarity, content, and delivery.

4. Presentation and Reflection (10 minutes)

- **Volunteer Presentations** (Optional):
 - Invite a few students to present their elevator speech to the class.
- **Class Reflection:**
 - Discuss as a class: What went well during your peer practice time? What could be improved?
 - Highlight key points and common areas for improvement.

Assessment:

Note: You can decide to do one or multiple of these options.

- **Participation/Observation:** Observe students during the writing, practice, and presentation phases to provide immediate feedback.
- **Written elevator speech:** Allow students to take their initial elevator speech home to refine based on their peers' feedback. Evaluate the final elevator speech based on clarity, engagement, and structure.
- **Live elevator speech:** If you have time during another class period, allow students to refine their speeches and deliver it to you individually. Grade their delivery based on clarity, engagement, and structure.

Lesson Extension:

- **Guest Speaker:** Invite a guest speaker who frequently uses elevator speeches in their profession to provide additional insights and examples.

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- **Level it up:** Challenge students to use their elevator speeches in real-life situations at least once before the next class period, such as introducing themselves at events or meetings. Alternatively, students can practice at home with their families or with another teacher to continue refining their elevator speech. Have them report back on the experience.

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Lesson Plan 5: What is an Informational Interview?

Duration	One 50-minute class period
Step in Sequence	Step 3: Equip
Learning Objectives	Students will: ★ Understand the purpose and benefits of an informational interview. ★ Develop effective questions and strategies for conducting an informational interview. ★ Create a draft informational interview plan.
Materials:	• Informational Interview Handout • Computer Lab or 1:1 devices for research and drafting

Optional Pre-work:

Career Interest Inventory: In order for students to engage in this activity, they will have to have an idea of what career field, and ideally a particular role, they are interested in. They may or may not have something in mind already, but in order to refine their thinking on this, it might be helpful to administer a career interest inventory to gauge their interests and skills. Your school or program might already be using an inventory but some free online resources include [Career One Stop](#) and [O*NET Interest Profiler](#). For a paper option, teachers may use the [Career Interest Survey: Motivators Edition](#) from Advance CTE.

In-Class Activity:

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- **Warm-up:** Start with a quick discussion - Ask students to think about what they would ask someone who was in a job they wanted to do when they grew up. As a class, brainstorm a list of topics they think might be important to cover and record them on the board. (Possible examples include required training for the job, how they got into their field, what the day-to-day job is like).

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- **Introduction to informational interviews:** Inform students that these kinds of chats are called “Informational interviews”. **Ask:** Why might it be important to talk to someone working in a job you're interested in before you try to enter that field?
 - **Reinforce Lessons 1 and 2:** Remind students that building their social capital can help them as they pursue their goals. Connect this idea to informational interviews by letting them know that this is a strategy they can use to help them increase their networks and add to their relationship maps.
2. **Class Discussion - Preparing for an informational interview (15 minutes):** Using the [Informational Interview handout](#), discuss the steps outlined below to get students thinking about what they would need to do before conducting an informational interview.
- **Background Research:** Keeping your career goal in mind, think about different industries you would be interested in and what roles you would like to pursue. Students can include a basic description for the sake of time (e.g., Elementary school teacher, Engineer, Dentist, etc.). To start, students can refer to their Relationship Map (Lesson 2) to identify potential interviewees they can reach out to for a career conversation. If inclined, they might also browse different organizations or companies related to career interests and search staff titles and bios to get a sense of what kinds of people they might reach out to for an informational interview.
 - **Draft Questions:** Think about what kinds of questions you would like to ask people working in a career you could see yourself in. Draft 4-5 open-ended questions about the professional's career journey, daily tasks, industry trends, and advice for someone starting out.
 - **Drafting an Email Request:** After doing the research and preparation for an informational interview, inform students that they will need to reach out to the people they identified with an email to request to set up their interview. This would be a good time to discuss some guidelines for professional emails. Possible topics for discussion include:
 - **Professional email addresses:** Instruct students to use their district email addresses, if they have one. Alternatively, if they use a personal account, go over the basics of a professional email address (i.e., ensuring appropriate language, avoiding suggestive words).

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- **Use of good grammar and professional language:** Remind students that this form of communication is different from how they would text their friends or family. Let them know that this is not the place for slang, acronyms, etc.
- **Structure of an email:** Review the basic structure of an email to include the subject line, a greeting, the body of an email (in this case, detailing the purpose of the student's request for an informational interview and scheduling details), and the closing of an email. You may even pull up email templates to illustrate what an email should look like (example resources [here](#) and [here](#)).

3. Student Informational Interview Prep (25 minutes):

- In a computer lab or using 1:1 student devices, allow students time to go through the preparation steps discussed as a class to prepare for their own informational interview. Have them type up the following as an assignment:
 - **Professional to contact:** List the professional they would like to contact; if applicable, list their title and the organization they work for. Either way, ensure students explain how the person relates to their own career goal.
 - **Informational interview questions:** Draft 4-5 questions that students can ask to get insight into the professional's background, career path, and the nature of their work.
 - **Email request:** Have students draft an email request to the contact requesting an informational interview.
- Note: If students cannot finish the assignment during class, assign the rest for homework.

Assessment:

Review students' informational interview preparation and evaluate it for completeness, clarity, and professionalism.

Lesson Extension:

- **Mock Interviews:** If you have more class time to dedicate to this activity, divide students into pairs. Assign one student to be the interviewer and the other to be the professional (they can choose a profession or be given one). Allow students 5-7 minutes to conduct a

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mock informational interview, using their prepared questions. Then have them switch roles and repeat. After the role-play, have students give each other feedback on their interview skills and the quality of the questions asked.

- **Level it up:** See the “Conducting an Informational Interview” lesson in the Empower Step to challenge students to conduct a real informational interview with someone from their relationship map that they felt they could be comfortable with preparation and support OR with someone completely new to them.

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Lesson Plan 6: Introduction to Networking

Duration	One 50-minute class period
Step in Sequence	Step 4: Empower
Learning Objectives	Students will: ★ Describe the importance and purpose of networking. ★ Simulate the experience of networking with their peers. ★ Identify potential contacts they can reach out to on their networking journey.
Materials:	• Handout in the Networking BINGO activity

In-Class Activity:

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- **Review:** Begin by reviewing the lessons learned in Introduction to Social Capital and Relationship Mapping. Discuss the importance of social capital and how it can help students. Reinforce the importance of their current network and the types of support they receive from the relationships they already have.
- **Introduce the concept of networking:** Ask students to think about why it is important to add to their relationships maps. Have students volunteer some examples (e.g., to get informational support in pursuing a career or insight into applying for an internship). Tell them that this process of interacting with others to exchange information or develop professional or social connections is called "networking". Discuss the benefits that students might realize from networking (e.g., expanding opportunities, gaining insights, building relationships, and finding mentors.).

- 2. Networking BINGO Activity (25-30 minutes):** Using the handout and lesson in Workforce Solutions' [Networking Bingo Activity](#), facilitate a simulation of networking in your classroom. This will help students practice the act of networking with their peers and potentially develop new connections within their own class.

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3. Closing (10-15 minutes)

- Bring the class back together to discuss the four questions at the bottom of their Networking BINGO worksheet. Reinforce that this activity can be done in real situations (such as at a career fair) to help students build their social capital.

Assessment:

Grade students' participation in the Networking BINGO activity. Watch for how engaged they are with their peers, how seriously they take the activity, and their reflections during the class debrief.

Lesson Extension:

- **Article Discussion:** For homework or during another class period, have students read [Learn to Love Networking](#). As a class, debrief the major points in the article and discuss how students can get more comfortable as they learn to network outside of the classroom.
- **Level it up #1:** Invite other teachers, administrators, and/or program staff to join your students for an in-class networking event. Have students create their own Networking BINGO or develop prompts for jumpstarting conversation.
- **Level it up #2:** If possible and time permits, conduct this lesson and have students practice these skills at a real career event (see this lesson). Ask them to reflect on the new connections they made and how it can help them, as well as what the networking process was like in real life, and how they might improve their networking skills.

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Lesson Plan 7: Conducting an Informational Interview

Duration	Two 50-minute class periods + additional time for interview
Step in Sequence	Step 4: Empower
Learning Objectives	Students will: ★ Understand the purpose and structure of an informational interview. ★ Prepare thoughtful questions to ask during an interview. ★ Practice professional communication skills. ★ Reflect on their experiences and insights gained from the interviews.
Materials:	• Informational Interview Handout • Computer lab or 1:1 devices (for Day 1) • Informational Interview Reflection

Note: This lesson has similar aspects to Lesson 5: What is an Informational Interview? While Lesson 5 is focused on helping students prepare for an hypothetical informational interview, this lesson requires students to actually conduct one with a professional of their choice. However, many of the discussion topics, such as introducing the purpose of an informational interview and professional email etiquette are the same. Therefore, if you chose Lesson 5 for the Equip step, you may want to review this lesson to see what you can shorten based on students' prior preparation.

In-Class Activity (Day 1):

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- **Warm-up:** Start with a quick discussion - Ask students to think about what they would ask someone who was in a job they wanted to do when they grew up. As a class, brainstorm a list of topics they think might be important to cover and record them on the board. (Possible examples include required training for the job, how they got into their field, what the day-to-day job is like).
- **Introduction to informational interviews:** Inform students that these kinds of chats are called "Informational interviews". **Ask:** Why might it be important to talk to someone working in a job you're interested in before you try to enter that field?
- **Reinforce Lessons 1 and 2:** Remind students that building their social capital can help them as they pursue their goals. Connect this idea to informational interviews by letting

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them know that this is a strategy they can use to help them increase their networks and add to their relationship maps.

2. Preparation for Informational Interview (40 minutes): Using the [Informational Interview handout](#), discuss the steps outlined below to get students thinking about what they would need to do before conducting an informational interview.

- **Identifying 2-3 People to Interview:** Keeping students' career goals in mind, instruct them to revisit their Relationship Maps (Lesson 2) to identify someone who might be a good contact for a conversation related to their career goals. If needed, they might also research different organizations or companies that they could see themselves working for to identify prospective interviewees. Inform them that they can look for staff bios and titles for people who are in roles that students might be interested in. Make sure they have 2-3 people in mind in case they have trouble scheduling an interview with professionals in their list.
- **Interview Question Preparation:** In pairs or individually, allow students to brainstorm and create a list of 5-7 personalized questions tailored to the professional they plan to interview. Emphasize that they should keep the professional, their field, and their company in mind when preparing their questions.
- *Note: If students do not finish on Day 1, have them either finish for homework or pick up where they left off on Day 2.*

In-Class Activity (Day 2):

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- **Warm-up:** Review the purpose of an informational interview and allow students to share findings from their research on professionals they might interview. Ask them to volunteer questions they drafted to ask their potential interviewees.

2. Whole Group Discussion: Reaching Out to Schedule an Interview (15 minutes)

Inform students that they will have to send an email request to the people they plan to interview. You should spend a bit of time discussing professional email etiquette prior to them reaching out to their prospective interviewees. Topics you might want to cover include;

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- **Professional email addresses:** Instruct students to use their district email addresses, if they have one. Alternatively, if they use a personal account, go over the basics of a professional email address (i.e., ensuring appropriate language, avoiding suggestive words).
- **Use of good grammar and professional language:** Remind students that this form of communication is different from how they would text their friends or family. Let them know that this is not the place for slang, acronyms, etc.
- **Structure of an email:** Review the basic structure of an email to include the subject line, a greeting, the body of an email (in this case, detailing the purpose of the student's request for an informational interview and scheduling details), and the closing of an email.

You can provide students with a template (example resources [here](#) and [here](#)), or let them draft an email request on their own. Be sure to discuss how to set up a link to a virtual meeting if they would like to conduct their interview via zoom or teams.

3. Think-Pair-Share: Informational Interview Etiquette (20 minutes)

- **Individual Brainstorm & Partner Discussion:** Ask students to spend a few minutes individually brainstorming a list of things they should do to make a good impression with their interviewees. Once they've had some quiet time to think, have them turn to their partner and compare lists for discussion.
- **Whole group discussion:** After about 10 minutes, bring the class back together to discuss what they brainstormed with their partners. Compile a list of etiquette pointers on the board to ensure that students are ready to conduct their informational interviews in a professional manner. Some topics that should come up are listed below:
 - **Respect Their Time:** Schedule the interview at a time convenient for the other person and keep it within the agreed timeframe. Provide them some guidance for how long this should take (no longer than 30 minutes).
 - **Professional Dress:** Discuss the do's and don'ts of professionally dressing for an informational interview.
 - **Come Prepared:** Have a quick introduction ready and clearly communicate their goals for the informational interview, whether it's career exploration or industry

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insight. Also make sure students have their lists of thoughtful questions ready, but they should also be flexible to follow the flow of the conversation.

- **Listen Actively:** Show genuine interest in their insights and experiences. Engage in the conversation rather than just asking questions.
- **Follow up and Express Gratitude:** Thank them for their time and insights both at the end of the interview and in a follow-up thank-you note or email. (You might want to clarify that students should not overwhelm them with messages after the interview; a thank-you note is usually sufficient.)

4. **Closure (10 minutes):** Provide students with the [Informational Interview Reflection](#) handout and go over the reflection questions to preview how you will assess them. Give students a time frame to schedule and conduct their interviews and complete this reflection.

Informational Interview (out of class activity)

Allow students 2-3 weeks to complete their interviews. If desired, you might want to keep tabs on certain milestones to make sure they stay on track with the assignment (for example, emailing their prospective interviews, scheduling the interview, and conducting the interview).

Assessment:

Have students complete an [Informational Interview Reflection](#) and grade on completeness, depth of reflection, and the specificity and detail.

Lesson Extension:

- **Level it up:** Have more advanced students conduct at least two informational interviews - one with a person they already feel comfortable with and the second with a person they don't know very well or at all. This will give them more networking practice, allow them to gather more information about fields of interest, and strengthen/add to their social capital networks.

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Lesson Plan 8: Engaging with Professionals at a Career Event

Duration	One-two 50-minute class periods + Career Event
Step in Sequence	Step 4: Empower
Learning Objectives	Students will: ★ Engage in career-connected experiences that facilitate use of social capital skills ★ Develop thoughtful questions to ask career professionals. ★ Demonstrate appropriate networking etiquette and follow-up strategies.
Materials:	• Informational handouts on the career event, such as list of companies or organizations and professionals in attendance

In-Class Activity:

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- **Review Lessons 1 & 2:** Begin by reviewing the lessons learned in Introduction to Social Capital and Relationship Mapping. Discuss the importance of social capital and how it can help students. Reinforce the importance of their current network and the types of support they receive from the relationships they already have.
- **Career Conversations Overview:** Inform the students that one way to expand one's network is to have career conversations with professionals that students might add to their networks. It might be helpful to share a brief story or example of a personal career conversation that helped you on your professional journey to illustrate what that looks like. Discuss the different settings where students can engage in these career conversations (e.g., with their families or family friends; at a career fair; during a work-based learning experience). Explain that they will engage in one of these types of activities to initiate a career conversation with a professional.

2. Small Group Planning Activity (30 minutes)

- Break students up into small groups of 3-4. Allow them time to share their plans for a career conversation to include:

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- Person they would like to connect with and why.
- 3-4 thoughtful questions to ask during their career conversations.
- Invite students to give each other feedback on their questions.

3. Closing (10 minutes)

- Ask the class for volunteers to share their plans for a career conversation to take place at a planned career event. Discuss the importance of professional etiquette, including how to introduce themselves and engage in conversations.

Career Event:

There are several ways students can engage with professionals to hold a career conversation. Depending on the structure of your class and the timing of the events of your school, you can opt to hold one of the following to provide students with an opportunity to talk to folks in a field they're interested in to get a sense of what their day-to-day looks like.

- **In-class Career Conversations**

- Invite industry or community partners to join your class for a series of career conversations in which they'll share with students their career path
- Have partners briefly introduce themselves to the entire class
- Divide students into small groups and have them rotate around (speed-dating style) to the different guests to ask questions about their background, career journey, and social capital
- If appropriate, have students ask for business cards or contact information for partners they would like to follow up with

- **At a Career Fair:**

- Divide students into small groups and provide them with a map or list of booths to visit.
- Encourage each group to speak with a variety of professionals. Assign specific goals, such as talking to at least three different careers.
- Instruct students to take notes about key insights and interesting information they gather.

- **On a Field Trip:**

- Guide students to different areas within the organization, allowing them to meet various professionals.

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- Plan specific stations or activities where students can engage directly with employees, ask questions, and learn more about their careers.
- Facilitate discussions during breaks to share initial impressions.
- **During a Work-Based Learning Experience:**
 - Provide guidance on who within the place of employment students should seek out for a career conversation (e.g., their supervisor, someone they work with on a team, someone who works in a position they are interested in).
 - Students should seek out professionals to converse with during their experience.
 - Encourage them to use their prepared questions and to be observant.

Post-Event Reflection & Discussion (15-20 minutes)

Note: Depending on the type of career event you use to facilitate this activity, you might be able to gather the students to hold a discussion directly following their experience. Alternatively, you can opt to hold this discussion during the following class period.

1. **Whole group discussion:** After the event, facilitate a discussion on the career event and their career conversations. You can use the following prompts:
 - Encourage them to share their experiences: What surprised them? What career did they find most interesting?
 - Ask how students can apply what they learned to their own career exploration.
 - Discuss how students can maintain connections through LinkedIn or email.
 - Discuss any next steps students might take, such as internships, job shadowing, or further research into careers of interest.

Assessment:

Student Social Capital Plan: Assign the connections table and reflection questions in Tab 4 of the [Social Capital Student Plan](#). You might consider holding a class discussion on the reflection questions that prompt students to assess how these connections have expanded their relationship maps and consider the skills they cultivated and new information they received as a result.

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Lesson Extension:

- **Career Exploration Project:** Have students create a project (poster, presentation, or report) based on a career they found interesting at the event. Include information on skills required, potential career paths, and personal reflections.
- **Level it up: Connecting with Professionals:**
 - If appropriate, Have students follow up with at least one professional they spoke with, thanking them for their time and insights, asking them any additional questions they might have, and/or setting up an informational interview.
 - If a student has a LinkedIn profile, encourage them to find the professional's profile and add them to their network.