

Instructions for Network Assistant



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Using Network Assistant: Instructions

This exercise is your mid-class exam. Start it early, as it will take you time to complete it. It is designed to help you identify patterns in your approach to developing networks of relationships. Your “interpersonal network” refers to the set of relationships that help you get things done, and more generally, develop personally and professionally. Managers in established organizations and entrepreneurs seeking to launch new ventures use networks to obtain the information, resources, and social support required to identify, evaluate, and exploit opportunities for themselves and their firms.

You will begin by filling out information about the people you were networked to in your last job, prior to attending CBS. When you have finished providing network information, the network program, called network assistant, will do two things. First, it will generate a personalized report about your network. Second, it will generate a graphical representation of your network, which you will customize to your needs. You will then download a workbook that you must fill out to complete the assignment. You must fill out the first part of the workbook, in order to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of your network. Based on this analysis, in part II of the workbook, you will be asked to explain how you could have modified your network in order to make it easier for you to do your job and to be rewarded for doing so.

The remainder of this document outlines four steps that you must carry out in order to use Network Assistant, a Web-based network program, in order to complete the network assignment due at the beginning of session 5.

- 1) Enter your network information, generate your report, and develop your network graph by **Friday, November 3rd** (see step 1 below).
- 2) On **November 4th**, download your workbook off the course web site.
- 3) Fill out parts I and II of the workbook and hand it in by **the beginning of class 5**. Start this assignment early, as it is time-consuming to complete and is your mid-class exam.

If you have a problem with any of these steps, contact Barnabas Gero at bg128@columbia.edu. Barnabas will also be scheduling workshops and office hours to assist you, if necessary.

Step I: Entering data about your network contacts (by November 3rd).

In this step, you enter information about your network contacts in your last position prior to CBS, generate a report about your network, and a graph of your network that you then customize.

To use Network Assistant, go to [personal network assistant](#). You should have received an email with your user name and password. If not, contact the teaching assistant.

A network contact is any person that you knew or who knew you in your last position and who had any bearing, whether positive or negative, on your work, development, and career in that position. This would include peers, superiors, and subordinates in your unit, in your function, or in other functions in your organization. This would also include people you knew outside your organization: clients, friends, family, government regulators, suppliers, competitors, and so on.

For each contact, fill out the page and submit the information by pressing the “add contact” button at the bottom of the page. For example, if you were adding information about your superior, named Joe or Josephine Boss, your page might look like this. You would scroll down the page using the arrow down button. Upon submitting the information using the “add contact” button at the bottom of the page, Joe Boss’s name would appear in blue in the contacts area. By clicking his/her name in the contacts area, you can also modify the information you entered.

network for abc-houston Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Refresh Home Search Favorites History Mail Post Edit Discuss Resources MostFrequent Translate

Address http://localhost:8080/org/network/Forms.pl

[view report](#)

contacts

add a contact

contact's name:

Joe Boss

Which function(s) does this person serve?

Friends/Support Discussing Work Getting your job done Advance your career

How close do you feel to this person?

Very Close Close Not So Close Distant

Which Category best describes where this person works?

Not in my organization My organization, but not my unit In my work unit

If you had to would you say this person is:

Higher rank than me About the same rank as me Lower rank than me

About how often do you talk with the person?

Daily Weekly Monthly Less Often

When you enter the name of a contact, be certain to enter both first and last names. If by chance that contact name (e.g., John Smith) has already been used by another person using network assistant, you will not be able to enter that name, and you might have to modify the name you do enter (e.g., John Smith1). After pushing the “add contact” button for your first contact, repeat this step with each of your contacts. There are no limits to the number of contact that you can enter. You will learn more from this exercise by being very comprehensive.

Step II: Generating and saving your network report (by November 3rd).

When you have entered all the information about your network contacts, generate your network report, which you will fill out to complete the workbook. To do so, click on the “view report” tab at the top of the page. Your network report will be generated in a new page.

You must then copy and save your report. With the report page open press Ctrl-] or Ctrl-[to shrink/expand the report so that it appears in full on the screen. With the full report in view, hold down the “Alt” key and press the “Print Screen” key. This copies the image of the report that is on the screen. Then, start Microsoft Word and open a new word document. Position the cursor where you want the network to be copied and paste it (click Edit and then Paste). Save the Word file so that you can find it again. When done, click “submit report” at the bottom of the page.

Step III: Viewing a picture of your network

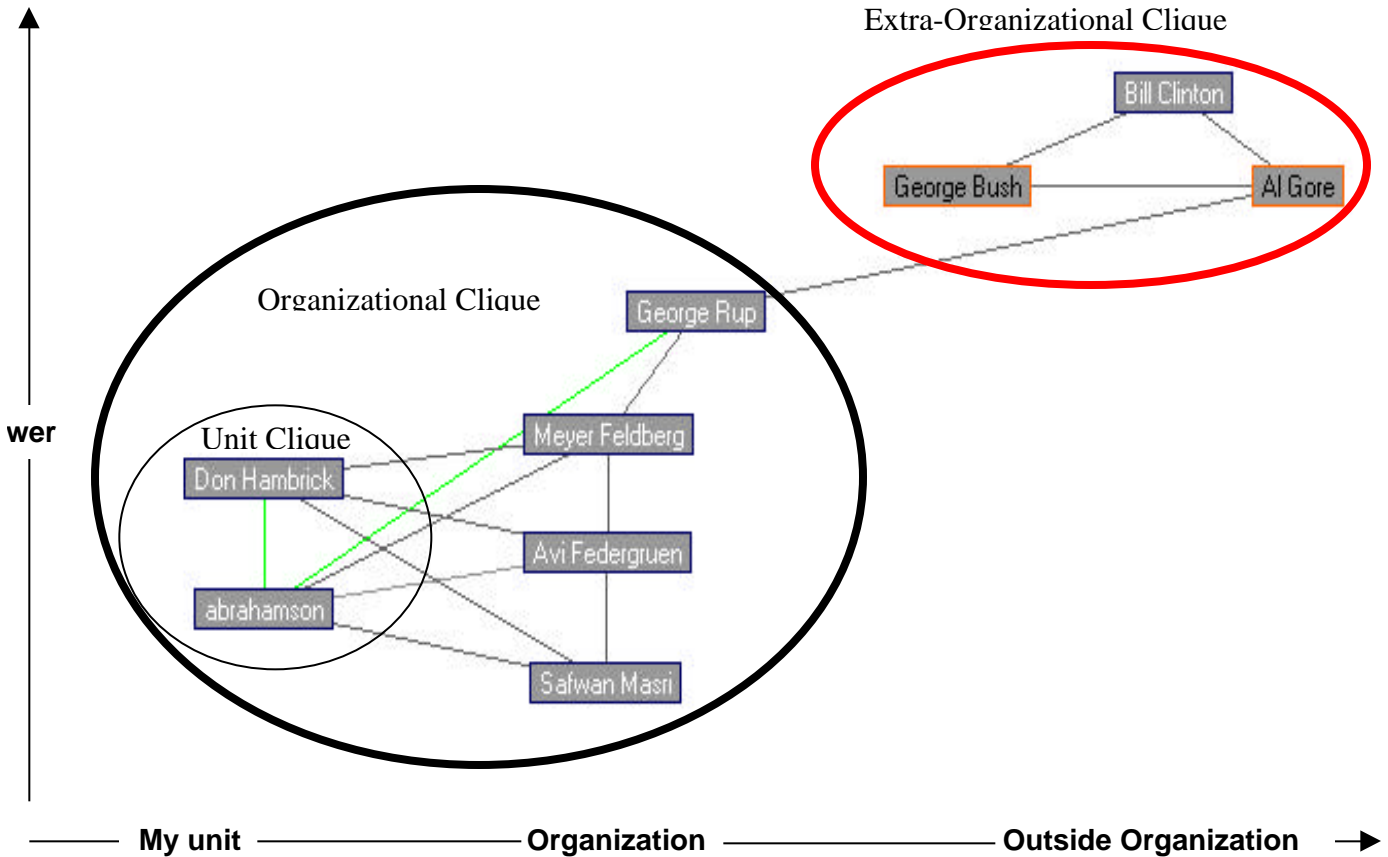
In this step, you view and modify a picture of your network.

a) Generating the picture

When you press the “continue to network applet...” hyperlink, a new window will appear with a picture of your network bouncing around. Press the freeze button to settle your network. You will note that you are linked to all your network contacts by differently colored lines that indicate whether you were very close, close, not so close or distant from that contact.

b) Moving the position of a contact

By clicking on a network contact with the left mouse button and holding the button down, you can drag it on the map. Group, in close proximity, contacts who belonged to a clique. A clique is a set of interlinked contacts. For example, the network picture below distinguishes an organization clique, from a subunit clique, from an external clique in Abrahamson’s network. You may also want to array your contact along a vertical and horizontal dimension (Power (vertical) and distance from your unit (horizontal) in the example below).



Disclaimer: Any resemblance to people living or dead is purely coincidental.

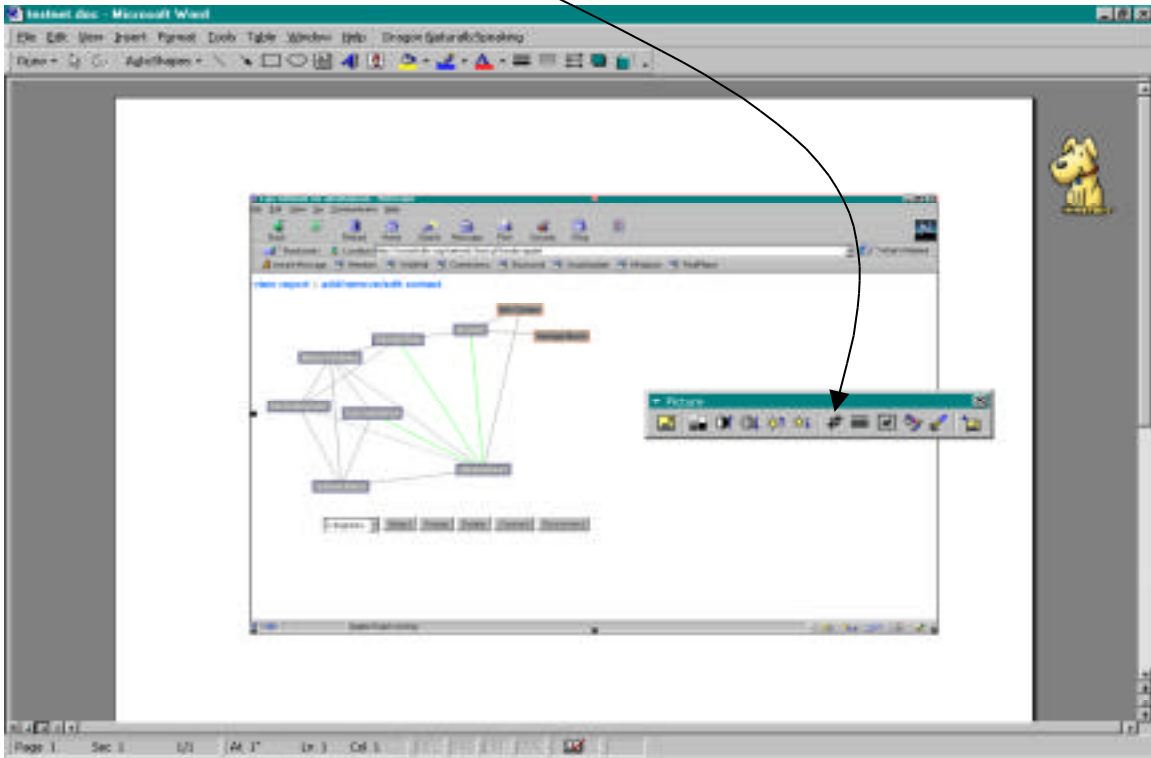
c) Adding links between contacts

You will then want to add links that existed between your contacts. To do so, click on both of the contacts you want to link. Then press the very-close, close, not-so-close, or distant buttons. This will to graphically display the nature of the link between your contacts. Enter as many links between contacts as you think necessary. If you click and nothing happens, try pressing the disconnect button, and then one of the connect buttons.

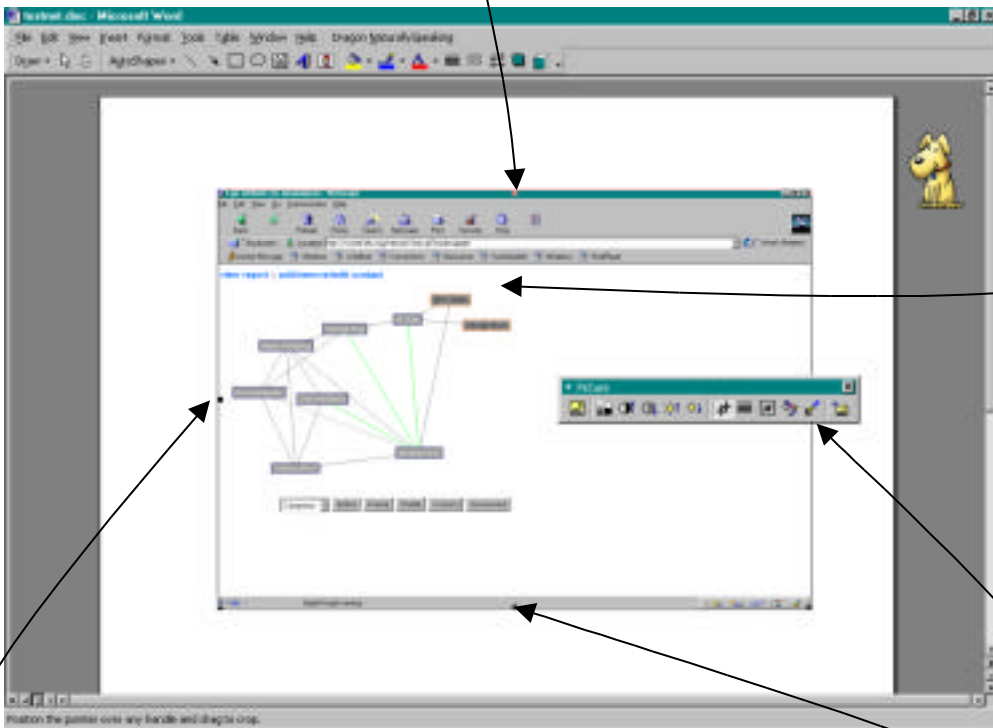
d) Adding details to your network map

When you are satisfied that you're the image of your network is exactly as you want it, you are ready to save your network image. Before exiting the page with your network image, or shifting to another page or program window, with the network graph window open and the graph in full view, hold down the "Alt" key and press the "Print Screen" key. This copies your network on the screen. Then, start Microsoft Word and open a new word document. Position the cursor where you want the network to be copied and paste it (click Edit and then Paste).



To crop unnecessary parts of the network click View and Toolbars. Click on the crop button.



Then move the crop icon to this location and click on the black square. The crop icon will change into an inverted T. Holding the left mouse button down, drag the inverted T to the point below



and release the left mouse button. This will cut the unwanted part of the image out. Repeat these steps with the other three middle black squares.

When you are finished, only the graph should appear. Click on a corner of the graph and holding the left mouse button down, drag the corner to increase the size of the image. You can then draw on the network. Click on View, then Toolbars and then Drawing. Use the  button to circle cliques and the  button to add text to the image. When you are done, save the word file so that you can insert it later into your network workbook.

There is no general way to annotate your network graph. Rather, use your creativity to annotate your graph in a way that clarifies the nature of your network.

Step IV: Generating and filling out your network report (NB: not before November 4th).

When you have entered all the information about your network contacts, generated your network report, and generated/modified your network map, you will want to fill out the network workbook to complete the assignment. To do so, go to the web syllabus, and download the workbook. Then, follow carefully the instructions on the workbook.