Yo. Starting to reorganize my notes / typing out my thoughts as they come. Feel free to comment on /or question anything

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What is the core problem I am solving?
1. Taking friction out of the informational interview process (i.e higher quality / easier to schedule)
    a. so its worth paying for

What is the "mission" of the company?
1. To inspire people to improve themselves and do something meaningful w/ their lives
    a. That's what a really good informational interview should accomplish (of course 99.99% of them won't live up to that high standard. But it'll improve things)

Company slogan ideas
1. Talk to who you (actually?) want to meet
2. an informational interview w/ anyone
3. bringing the world together
4. connecting you w/ anyone
5. making the world a better place (cheesy?)

Explain the informational interview process?
1. Figure out what type of person you want to talk to (i.e figure out your career interests / goals)
    a. this step is difficult for many people (career coaching, personality tests, friends / family etc already try to solve this problem)
2. Figure out who you want to talk to -
    a. via
        i. LinkedIn
            1. may be tough to narrow things down to a specific person (but it's costly / time consuming to reach out to more than one. So you may not feel confident you chose to message the right person. And you have to factor in stuff like how likely is this person to respond to my message/email when making the decision.)
        ii. emailing / messaging personal network
            1. this may be limited
            2. especially difficult when you don't know what you want to do b/c

- a. you don't have specific questions
- b. you don't even know who to ask for help
  - iii. some people start process knowing who they want to talk to
- b. this stage can be skipped via
  - i. Weave etc
  - ii. suggestions from personal network
3. find the contact info of the person you want to talk to via
   - a. LinkedIn
   - b. googling the person's name
   - c. web scraping / scraping tools ex: Connectifier etc (many people don't know about this)
   - d. sometimes you
     - i. have to ask a LinkedIn connection if they know one of their connections well enough to make an introduction (that person often says no. I just met him/her at a networking event one time, may not even know who that person is, may not respond to you)
     - ii. may have to resort to Tweeting someone
     - iii. can only contact one via LinkedIn message
       1. Many people aren't active on LinkedIn when they're not job searching
       2. You can make connection request / wait for it to be accepted. Then you can message the person for free
       3. Some messages sent on LinkedIn are junk
       4. LinkedIn's $29.99 / month job seeker plan only lets you send 3 messages to recruiters / job posters https://www.linkedin.com/premium/products?trk=nav_responsive_sub_nav_upgrade
       5. LinkedIn's $59.99 / month business plus plan lets you send 15 messages to anyone on the site https://www.linkedin.com/premium/products?trk=nav_responsive_sub_nav_upgrade
       6. You can buy more inmail for
          - a. 1 for 10.95
          - b. 3 for 30.95
          - c. 5 for 50.95
          - d. 10 for 100.95
          - e. https://www.quora.com/Why-does-LinkedIn-make-it-hard-to-buy-InMail **(double check this)**
     - iv. can't find one's contact info
4. Write the message to the person you want to talk to by…
   - a. many people don't know what to say initially.
     - i. leads people to google what to say
     - ii. Could cause some people to stop

b. explaining who you are
c. explaining why you are writing to that person
d. explaining your goal for the meeting
e. deciding whether to mention other things that make you interesting to that person (ex: similar hobbies)
    i. or to pretend you have the same hobby and research that (ex: I've exaggerated my interest in ultimate frisbee / improv b/c I saw the person I wanted to talk to did that)
f. trying to schedule the meeting
    i. decide whether the meeting will be in person / over video chat / over phone
        1. and exchange extra contact info if necessary
    ii. people need to research locations near the person to meet (and coordinate their own schedules accordingly. ex: find the right train to take)
    iii. may take multiple emails
g. Hurdles in this process
    i. people find contacting others they don't know to be awkward
    ii. people may not know much about the field and want to talk to this person because he/she is having trouble understanding it
    iii. people may need to more thoroughly research the person they want to talk to
        1. or they may know what they find interesting about the other person but have trouble explaining it
    iv. people may be interested in learning about the company this person works at but is having trouble phrasing it so it doesn't sound like he/she is pandering (i.e solely doing this to get a referral & doesn't care about this person) (or this person only cares about the company and needs to come up w/ another thing to say)
    v. people may not be able to provide any value for the person they want to meet with
        1. it's not easy for people to figure out why they'd be an interesting person to talk to (let alone be able to help the other person)
            a. and everyone's different requiring more research
    vi. the person requesting the informational interview is more likely to want an in person meeting but would tolerate a skype or phone meeting and needs to carefully frame the message to offer all 3 options while showing a clear preference for an in person meeting. Or decides to just offer all 3 options w/o indicating his/her preference
    vii. people are not sure whether they would be able to propose a location that requires him/her self to travel less vs a location closer to the person they're meeting
    viii. people may need to follow up if their email is ignored in the 1st place

1. that's always awkward too. Most people don't know if their email was actually seen. Some feel like they've been rejected when they don't hear back in the 1st place. You never know if that person happened to just miss the email or was really busy at that moment.

5. If you have the meeting…
   a. you're expected to dress appropriately
   b. there's pressure (largely internally) to try to make the meeting as worthwhile for the other person as possible
      i. may lead people to hesitate to ask "stupid questions" (which are often the questions people need the answers to the most. since people are afraid of doing something that's stupid)
         1. stupid questions are what people feel they already should know

So how do I intend to remove friction in the informational interview process?
1. Expand one's potential network. (Ideally one would be able to quickly purchase a meeting with hundreds of millions of people in the long term)
2. Save time
   a. don't need to figure out if you can ask for an intro
   b. don't need to search for one's contact info
   c. don't need to do as much research about the person you want to talk to (most importantly you'll have to do less before reaching out to try to meet w/ the person. It's especially important to do the research w/ no guarantee the person will talk to you)
   d. Make the scheduling process easier
   e. don't need to worry if you'll get a response
      i. no more follow up messages ever again!
3. More specifically target who you want to talk to (NOTE: Weave concierge etc doesn't do this)
   a. A lot of current networking is reactive not proactive
      i. Ex: you're meeting this person randomly assigned to you via Weave
      ii. Ex: attend an event / meetup that's not relevant to you (or not the right context b/c you're listening to a speech the entire time)
         1. Not personalized enough
      iii. Ex: talk to my friend
4. Save money compared to LinkedIn?

Who am I solving problems for? (anyone that wants to expand network / save time)
1. some overlap in these people
2. Influencers
   a. get dozens of invitations per week and hundreds of emails per day

     b. bombarded with Facebook and LinkedIn connection requests, not to mention endless requests to "pick their brain."

     c. people we want to be early adopters

3. Ambitious people w/ jobs (ex: Medium / Quora / Product Hunt / Reddit users)
- a. have less time to go through the hassle of the informational interview process. (finding the email, writing the cold email etc)
- b. As you advance in your career, you have more experience and more connections to draw on for networking.
  - i. But chances are you've also become a lot busier
  - ii. and you have more money
- c. hard to stand out among all the people trying to talk to influencers
- **d. natural early adopters / people we want to be early adopters**

4. People that don't know what they want to do.
- a. may not want to take the time to thoroughly research many possible careers / people
- b. may feel uncomfortable sending an email along the lines of I don't know what to do can I talk to someone (and it's hard for people to help that person.
- c. may come to the site b/c they feel totally clueless
- d. it's not easy for these people to know specifically what they want. As a result, it feels like even more of a burden to research & email someone they don't necessarily care about
- e. not knowing what to do is paralyzing (you feel clueless and don't know where to start)
  - i. you can't apply for every job / sometimes feel like you should just apply for whatever jobs you see
- f. maybe this person would buy a lot of cheap interviews for different jobs

5. People that aren't qualified for the jobs they want and don't know how to get to that point (i.e become qualified)
- a. I got good at passing the 1st round of interviews w/ HR but I didn't know what I needed to learn to get the job
- b. people that have trouble knowing how to apply the knowledge they learned in school to a project

6. Lazy job seekers (want to save time. ex: I just want a job, I'll just pay to meet x person rather than research him/her)

7. Job Seekers who want to talk to someone not in their network (ex: recent grads, bootcamp grads, really anyone)

8. Curious people (ex: what does a bitcoin engineer do?, people who always want to learn / teach others)

9. Career switchers / Potential Career switchers (ex: I'm having a mid-life crisis, but I want to talk to someone before I quit my job)

10. People that want to make money while eating, taking their coffee break, on weekends etc (i.e The engineer who also drives Uber in his spare time for fun, the founder who uses dogvacay to help him/herself get started)

a. people w/ annual salaries theoretically not incentivized to stay in office beyond trying to get a raise / not get fired, may be tempted by extra income
b. getting paid for lunch sounds more fun than driving Uber
11. People that are not well paid (i.e entry level product assistant at CNBC who can make extra money by talking to people that want to get started in TV production)
12. People that need to talk to someone ASAP
a. ex: I'm interviewing for an assistant producer position in 2 days. I need to schedule a meeting w/ one tomorrow.
b. ex: I'm considering accepting a job offer at x company. I want to talk to someone at x company before I have to decide.
13. People that need really specific help
14. People that aren't well enough connected
15. People that are shy / lack confidence (too afraid to reach out to someone for help /or easily discouraged)
16. People that are afraid to say what they want to do (easier to purchase a meeting w/ person in the field you really want to talk to then fully admitting what you want to do)

What Other Feelings Could Cause Someone to Go To The Site?
1. Anyone who is anxious to talk to someone about something career related?
2. Anyone who is impulsive and decides he/she needs to meet a certain person?

Summary of Holla's Benefits
For one buying an informational interview
1. Save time
2. Higher reliability
a. Fewer cancelled meetings than for free services like Weave Concierge
i. (w/ my weave meetings I've had 1 noshow, 2 reschedules and other times people have been a few minutes late. Someone never confirmed the meeting for Emmanuel. Marshall always has cancelled his meetings and once he was matched w/ Trent)
b. I've had traditional informational interviews delayed too
3. Connect to anyone
4. Learn from your meeting
5. Expand your network w/ every meeting
6. get referral (don't push this too much) (just say maybe get a referral?)
7. learn about company's culture, news update on the company, interview tips etc (also don't push this too much)
For one receiving an informational interview (mainly the first one)
1. Make money
2. Get to meet people / connection could still be valuable / Joy of helping others
3. Learn by teaching
4. referral bonus (don't push this too much)
Other benefits

1. Will lead to informational interviews being scheduled at a larger variety of times (ex: I've never asked to do one on the weekends) (Weave concierge has 4 possible times and it always seems to be Friday at 10am)
2. More natural conversations (if one isn't job seeking he/she won't be as afraid to ask "stupid questions" - what people feel they already should know, ask about salary, dress nicely)
3. Increase the amount of job info you know
   a. lots of unlisted jobs per Purple Squirrel's site
   b. lots of jobs required to be listed that'll almost definitely go to someone w/in the company (I remember I'd see this all the time when looking at NBC jobs. My cousin would say someone's switching from freelancer to staff / they're required to post it online)
      i. plus I've seen colleges post jobs like Head Football Coach (Wisconsin did this I think?) that the average Joe obviously has absolutely no shot to get
4. Learn more regarding whether you actually want to work at a company (ex: learn more about culture, if you don't like who you meet less likely to be a good fit) (not that that's an appealing pitch)
5. Improve actual interview performance
   a. ex: You're not going to panic when asked about salary if you've already spoken to someone etc
   b. ex: better idea of company culture
   c. People may feel hesitant to use this at companies they're currently interviewing at, but they might and it could at least help them in the not too long - long run
6. Don't have an informational interview w/ someone you don't really want to just b/c you feel like you should network (i've done this)
7. Could people end up using Holla as a journalism tool to land an interview w/ someone. Maybe over long term as newspapers die?
8. More informational interviews overall (not that an individual user would necessarily recognize this or care)
9. Could decrease reliance on resumes which are often full of exaggeration / lies (lots of scandals in press about some politician faking he went to college x. Guy I did informational interview w/ Aria Ghanaat complains that people say they have 3 years of experience while he has 1.5 but took on more responsibility, but the people w/ 3 years exaggerate their experience so they get the interview)
   a. lots of startup articles emphasize hiring people you know / feel comfortable with (getting a referral is like the same thing, interpreted as someone at the company says this person's normal enough /or cool)

How else do people network? (Go over the process of these events more thoroughly) (lots of location based networking apps about meetups / events haven't done well)
1. Meetup Groups (career related groups often full of speeches)

      a. people have told me to try to network at social events w/ people who have similar hobbies (there's no way this is the best way to network if you can target people better)
2. Events / Conferences (full of speeches)
3. Group talks often aren't helpful. You can see the vast majority content in speeches online in articles / blog posts People want personal advice for their own problems. (I felt this way about Tradecraft mentors)
      a. if you were to ask a personal question that's only related to you it may annoy everyone else or the question might not be answered fully b/c it's irrelevant to everyone else

Who is my competition?
1. See Competition Notes sheet
2. Holla Competitors spreadsheet

Industry Notes (Will say if I've confirmed the fact from a non-competitor source. Currently nothing's confirmed)
1. Simply look up what people say online are the benefits of informational interviews / networking
2. Lots of people online say find a mentor, but its not that easy. Plus you should learn from more than 1 "mentor"
3. look up articles like should you hire a career coach (to potentially get more info on competition)
4. "70% of all jobs never posted online" https://www.purplesquirrel.io/
      a. same claim made using the copy: 70% of all jobs never appear on job boards or anywhere online https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/landing_job_seekers
      b. i'm especially suspicious of this claim
5. "Employee referrals represent 7% of all applicants, but 46% of all hires have a referral" https://www.purplesquirrel.io/
      a. I've also heard 80% of jobs come from networking.
6. Personalized advice boosts your interview performance 3x https://www.purplesquirrel.io/
7. Job boards have a 1-4% average response rate - https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/landing_job_seekers
8. referred candidates have a 20x better chance of getting hired - https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/landing_job_seekers
9. 10% - the average pay increase when changing jobs - https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/landing_job_seekers
10. 86% of hiring managers say referrals are the #1 source of hires https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/landing_job_seekers
11. 50% of Google's hires, 58% of Salesforce's hires & 46% of Ernst & Young's hires came from referrals https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/landing_job_seekers

12. Google's referral bonus is $4500, its $2000 for Salesforce, its $5000 for Ernst & Young https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/ambassador_landing
    a. is it really the same for every job (w/in a company)?
13. Some Applicant Tracking Systems that use keyword searches and advanced algorithms to weed out more than 75% of applicants' resumes before a human ever sees them. https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/job_seeker_faq#faq10
14. 46% of organizations have trouble sourcing enough qualified candidates to fill openings https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/ambassador_landing
    a. in the section of the site: Here's Why Your Company Wants You to Join Purple Squirrel
15. Approximately 40% of all professional recruiting efforts are classified as failures https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/ambassador_landing
    a. in the section of the site: Here's Why Your Company Wants You to Join Purple Squirrel
16. 77% of companies rely on employee referrals to help meet hiring demands https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/ambassador_landing
    a. in the section of the site: Here's Why Your Company Wants You to Join Purple Squirrel

Type of Hires	Job Boards, Recruiters, etc	Employee Referrals
Hiring Costs	$4,285 - $18,000+	$1,000+ Referral Bonus
Hiring Rate	1 in 72	1 in 10
Average Time Hire	39-45 days	29 days
Retention After 2 Years	20%	45%

17.
    a. https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/ambassador_landing
    b. if Purple Squirrel were to be extremely successful than referrals could become so commonplace that they're ultimately meaningless
18. 71% of HR professionals believe HR needs to be reinvented. - Bersin by Deloitte (per Purple Squirrel https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/ambassador_landing
19. Unfilled jobs costs the US economy $160 billion every year - Indeed.com (per Purple Squirrel)
20. Recruiters spend an average of six seconds reviewing each resume and 93% of recruiters rely on social media to vet candidates.
    a. So despite all the training and resources poured into corporate recruiting, between 30% and 50% of all recruiting efforts are effectively failures.https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/ambassador_faqs#faq0

21. Articles on charging for emails:
    a. Points out telegrams / phone calls cost money
       http://joshsternberg.com/2012/12/22/stupid-thoughts-charging-for-email/
    b. The more you want someone's attention the more you'll pay for it
       http://www.slate.com/articles/business/project_syndicate/2013/02/too_much_email_a_crazy_way_to_cut_down_on_inbox_clutter.html
    c. Wrte.io a service where they give you an email address, and you can charge people to email you http://bgr.com/2015/06/02/how-to-charge-for-email/
        i. In beta as of June 2015
    d. Another article on the service
       http://www.esquire.com/lifestyle/money/news/a33837/charge-for-email/
22. Everyone needs help even CEO's. https://hbr.org/2015/04/ceos-need-mentors-too
23. We surveyed 45 CEOs who have formal mentoring arrangements, and 71% said they were certain that company performance had improved as a result.
    a. Strong majorities reported that they were making better decisions (69%) and more capably fulfilling stakeholder expectations (76%).
    b. More than anything else, these CEOs credited mentors with helping them avoid costly mistakes and become proficient in their roles faster (84%)
    c. Just put this article here to show that CEOs would consider purchasing on Holla
24. Maybe look at research on income inequality or research on how rich / poor people live in different areas and analyze / speculate how that affects networking opportunities

Things to say to present / market the company
1. When it comes to finding a job its all about who you know - From Purple Squirrel's video
   https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/HowItWorks
    a. Everyone knows that when it comes to getting a job its not what you know, its who you know and those that don't have great connections are at a tremendous disadvantage. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4GdmlUdE0M
2. What makes Silicon Valley special (or NY for finance / DC for politics) is that people are able to interact w/ each other (face to face)
    a. meeting the right person / being in the right atmosphere can change your life
3. Maybe discuss something about career building
    a. books / articles on the subject basically all say to network (NOTE: cite this)
        i. find the one's that say network via twitter by commenting on someone prominents posts for 6 months
           https://medium.com/@patrickh/why-twitter-is-more-important-for-business-networking-than-linkedin-f5ee7d04a604#.cd0t7xatd
        ii. find the one's that say network through your hobbies (that shouldn't be the most efficient direct way to meet someone for career purposes. Do people really want to give someone career advice at the improv meetup or the watch sports meetup etc?

1. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20140819225613-28830640-your-hobbies-an-untapped-network (could probably find a better example)
2. "use nontraditional expertise to build multidimensional connections. Bill Gates and Warren Buffett could certainly have a decent conversation about business. But it's their expert-level seriousness about the card game bridge that cemented their bond, eventually leading to Buffett's decision to entrust billions to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation."
3. you need to meet the person in the first place before you can bond over bridge or whatever w/him or her https://hbr.org/2016/01/how-successful-people-network-with-each-other?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=%2A%20New%20BOTW%20Template%201/31/16&utm_term=Sunday%20-%20Best%20of%20The%20Web

   iii. "the best way to get invited to the party is to host the party. "
1. what if you can't get anyone you want at the party?https://hbr.org/2016/01/how-successful-people-network-with-each-other?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=%2A%20New%20BOTW%20Template%201/31/16&utm_term=Sunday%20-%20Best%20of%20The%20Web

  b. programs on interviewing (look up if there's more, esp non-technical ones and see what they emphasize) (I'm assuming non-technical ones would emphasize networking)
   i. http://www.interviewacademy.io/?ref=producthunt (programming interviews, 4 weeks)
   ii. http://outco.co/ (programming interviews, 4 weeks

4. Get more out of your meetings (informational interviews)
  a. what are you really getting out of your Weave meetings?
  b. (something along these lines)
  c. if someone's paying a lot for an informational interview they'll probably have a purpose (weave is just like sure I'll meet random salesperson & you aren't even given a salesperson)
5. "The best jobs aren't just for the best connected anymore" - From Purple Squirrel's why join page https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/landing_job_seekers
6. Tinder for networking is not a well filtered search (Tinder itself has this problem too. I don't even use it anymore. I would if it was good)
  a. demonstrate the flaws of a Tinder for networking app in my presentation?
   i. Ex: say imagine you're a single guy, do you want to meet her? (show a hot girl, or vice versa)
1. How long did it take you to make that decision?
2. How about her? (now show an ugly girl)
3. How long did it take you to make that decision?

4. Then do the same thing saying you're a job seeker
    ii. Ex: say imagine you're a job seeker, do you want to meet him/her? (they probably won't know)
        1. If they do say yes / no ask why they made that decision? (if they say yes to the hot girl say is it b/c they're hot. If they say yes to the ugly girl ask if they think ugly people are smarter?)
    iii. Then show 2 kind of attractive people and do the same thing (for dating / job seeking)
        1. Point out the tinder interface is not good for job seeking (and it's not even that good for dating)
            a. You need a more filtered search
    iv. NOTE: probably ignore the below
    v. Ex: say imagine you're looking to meet a developer, how long does it take you to know you want to meet w/ him/her?
        1. You'd want to do more research. See a summary, google this person etc. You'd ideally want to do a more filtered search

7. Need to be careful to pitch site the right way (esp. if going after bigger names in the beginning to show anyone can sell their time and its not just pay to meet someone kind of famous)

8. Libertarian VC's would like this
    a. "free market capitalism is the best path to prosperity" - Larry Kudlow (my 1st boss)

9. Who our network is, is only becoming more important. What we're exposed to is who we are / our dreams
    a. Ex: Even news is becoming more social now. people are getting a large portion of their news from Facebook now (Twitter too)
        i. So if your friends are only posting Buzzfeed listicles / sports stories that's all you'll see
    b. Ex: someone said black kids want to become basketball players / rappers b/c that's what they see
    c. Ex: people expect me to be a lawyer b/c that's who my parents are

10. Get across that successful people are sick of poorly written meeting requests. ex: this blog posts expresses frustration w/ people using the phrase pick your brain (the VC Rob Bailey also personally told Tradecrafters he hated that phrase)
    https://m.signalvnoise.com/a-few-words-of-advice-to-brain-pickers-642ec2a562b9#.6an738u7b

11. Networking apps stink. Best networking apps articles have recommended stuff like an app on how to network, the iwatch so you could glance at notifications w/o disrupting conversation and an app called intoxicase so you make sure you don't drink too much at a conference
    http://www.cio.com/article/2369869/mobile-apps/100203-12-iPhones-Apps-That-Will-Make-You-a-Networking-Star.html#slide13

12. Man spent $650k on lunch w/ Warren Buffet and says it was worth every penny
    http://www.businessinsider.com/lessons-from-lunch-with-warren-buffett-2015-6
    a. 15 year old spent $8500 to meet w/ Alexis Ohanian and helped mentor him to found a startup
    http://upstart.bizjournals.com/entrepreneurs/hot-shots/2014/12/02/erik-finman-bitcoin-alexis-ohanian-reddit.html (granted there aren't many 15 year olds who made $100k in Bitcoin)
13. Music for presentation: dun dun dun, dun dun dun dun dun dun, dun dun (no idea what beat I'm thinking of. Probably the stupidest thought I've written down so far)
14. Economy of Hours: Marketplace where you trade time instead of money
    http://economyofhours.com/?ref=producthunt
    a. Not a bad idea, but what if you have money, but don't have time? (some people's time is more valuable than others too)
    b. NOTE: use this in presentation
15. If I was guaranteed to succeed I'd ask for a way higher valuation than whatever I initially ask for now, [getting connected with others] is very random,"
    http://techcrunch.com/2015/01/20/shapr-raises-3-million-for-its-business-networking-mobile-app/

Thoughts on Fundraising
1. venture capital is still super important, but not all business should take it - Exponent 55
    a. its good for any ad business or enterprise network or one w big scale (i.e big userbase) needed before profitability

Meeting Facilitation
1. What should the policy be when someone is late to a meeting? Does it depend on how late someone is? Should the policy be different depending upon whether the person paying or receiving the meeting is late? Would it have to be a little different?
    a. definitely seems like the person getting paid should choose the location before someone buys the interview. They'd be allowed to change it later
    https://m.signalvnoise.com/a-few-words-of-advice-to-brain-pickers-642ec2a562b9#.6an738u7b
        i. and people getting paid get to choose whatever time they want
2. How can Holla assist w/ facilitating the scheduling of locations for informational interviews?
    a. just let seller choose 1 or more possible locations. Or choose a possible area (ex: zip code, 5 mile radius, 3 restaurants/coffee shops, whatever)
        i. have a default location, have default weekday / weekend locations?, have a default location for every Wednesday etc?
    b. let the seller choose if he/she is okay w/ 1-3 of in person, video chat & phone call?
        i. is there any reason we shouldn't give them this freedom

1. if there's some reason the buyer wouldn't want to do one of in person, video chat & phone calls then yes (maybe buyers would prefer not to do phone calls? or video chats? leaning towards just letting seller choose any of the 3)
3. How can moving appointments be facilitated?
   a. just let someone request a change in time / have the other person accept. This would occur via messaging after the interview is purchased.
4. Is it smart or cruel to make people pay for moving their appointment like the way they change their flight? (would probably lead to less cancelled appointments. Could work if you charge the fee w/ a limited amount of time before the meeting is scheduled. What would the fee be? Who would get the money? Site or person who would've gotten paid for the meeting that now can't sell the timeslot to another person)
   a. maybe offer refunds for the first few times users move / cancel their appointment (so people make sure to use them when they're actually sick)
   b. when the person getting paid cancels let the buyer get a future time on their calendar for the same price) (and give some sort of refund to the buyer?)
5. Should there be a minimum amount of time for a meeting? Should meeting times be set in 5 or 10 minute increments? (ex: require 10,20,30,40 or 15,20,25,30,35 etc)
   a. this guy claims there's no such thing as a 15 minute meeting
      https://m.signalvnoise.com/a-few-words-of-advice-to-brain-pickers-642ec2a562b9#.6an738u7b
6. Do we need to verify people in any shape or form to make sure they're who they say they are?
   a. via their Facebook etc?
      i. probably not necessary (at least to start, probably never)
   b. have verified users like Twitter?
      i. I think this is a good idea

Unnecessary Features
1. Mobile app (iOS / Android. iOS first presumably)
2. International Expansion
3. Should there be an Airbnb / Purple Squirrel esque option to accept / reject meetings?
   a. leaning towards no.
   b. adds time
   c. part of the point is that no meeting is that bad since you're getting paid
4. Let people request trying to get specific people on the platform?
   a. almost definitely should be done. especially in short-term
5. Should people have to sign in to view profiles? What's easier technically?
   a. probably no. Maybe let them view part of it
6. Should there be a refund / give back button? Should there be a donate to charity button? (Purple Squirrel says they "enable" ambassadors to donate their earning to charity)
   a. maybe that could help sell the model to people who find it icky / weird to receive money idea for informational interviews

    i. i.e you helped someone and the money went to a better cause
    ii. It doesn't hurt us if the money is given back as long as we can collect the service fee
    iii. put ? next to the word refund to indicate you can give a partial refund
  b. maybe partner w/ charities
    i. have option to split all of the proceeds w/ all the partner charities or to choose their own charities

7. Feature to let people request a specific date / time not listed as available on one's calendar?
  a. should they be allowed to say why in a message? (should they be forced to pay for the message or message above a certain length)

8. How should we encourage people to set their prices?
  a. in short term: ?
    i. auction to buy interview
      1. allow poster of time to set minimum price
      2. maybe only allow auction pricing for certain users (or even remove the option over time)
      3. keep people engaged on the site (are auctions fun? are auctions stressful? both?)
      4. how long should the auctions be? how long should they end before the meeting?
        a. let seller decide? (but that may annoy buyers who want to confirm their plans farther in advance)
      5. let people set max so they automatically raise bid to a certain point?
    ii. add buy it now option for any auctions (like ebay)
      1. not immediately to keep users engaged on the site in the short term
      2. maybe require a buy it now in the long term to encourage faster transactions (granted one could just set ridiculously high price)
        a. to save people time of having to check out the site repeatedly
    iii. Maybe require auctions to end 24 or 48 hours before the meeting, but non-auction buys can end only 1 hour before the meeting or something like that
    iv. Is there a way to let the 2nd highest bidder get the meeting if the winner cancels? (do it automatically? probably not)
    v. Let people choose b/w the top 3-5 bidders or 3-5 people that say they'll pay for the timeslot at that price?
      1. person getting paid for the meeting might like it
      2. those offering to pay for the meeting definitely may feel bad if they get rejected

vi. BUT: maybe the person can see who the other interested people are / can figure out / offer a time for those people at the price those bidders / buyers said they'd be willing to pay

vii. Let one accept the highest bid at any moment in time?

viii. Should the users bids be public? (all the time, only to the seller, just at the end of the auction?)

b. in long term use algorithm to recommend based on data they give us (ex: salary, experience, twitter followers, klout score, profession, location etc)

9. Should we allow for free informational interviews? (we'd get no revenue from this or we could add a small service fee)

10. Gift a meeting (ex: buy a meeting w/ x for your son/daughter, buy a meeting w/ x influencer for your friend for his/her birthday etc)

11. Let people set requirements for the type of people they'll take interviews with?

a. ex: I'll only accept a meeting w/ an iOS engineer w/ 5 years of experience (would improve quality of meetings for those getting paid, but limit the amount of money they get.)

i. after there's a big enough network those who buy interviews may be cool w/ this

b. This makes it impossible for one to just meet anyone (but also satisfies those who won't just meet anyone)

c. theoretically limits the amount of money one can receive

d. the odds are the people that match the criteria are the type of people who would pay more anyway

e. tough to enforce criteria for meetings anyway (people lie / exaggerate on their resume / the internet all the time)

12. Let people see history of bids for their time / that person's profiles. Give them the option to reach out to that person w/ another time for that price

13. Partner w/ companies (ex: Prosper) for informational interview payment plans

a. would presumably only be used for expensive meetings

b. risky?

14. Should there be a feature for group meetings? (maybe do stuff like what Weave is doing)

a. Let people pool together money for a meeting? Just have it be a number of strangers?

b. would be in the very long-term

c. Weave Concierge is offering a roundtable w/ Tristan Pollack EIR/VP at 500 Startups

15. Let people save profiles they're interested in meeting eventually to a favorites / bookmarks list?

16. Let people show who they've had informational interviews w/ (both people need to agree?)

a. would people want to show off I've had an informational interview w/ Mark Zuckerberg? etc (could that help people market themselves to others? Pay for me to tell you what Mark Zuckerberg told me)

17. Should the site list your history of informational interviews?
    a. yes. At least in the long term
    b. making them public should be optional (ex: one may not want their current employer to see what they're doing)
18. Email newsletter recommending people to meet
    a. and eventually jobs to apply for (a la LinkedIn)
19. Figure out some way to help maintain relationships. Remind people to stay in touch w/ people they've met before?
    a. awkward if this person didn't actually get the contact info of one he/she met in person
    b. could be done in a timeline format?
20. Could the company have an editorial side? (maybe over the long-term)
    a. company podcasts?
        i. one that is similar to the startup podcast (on how the company is started)
        ii. one that is similar to the working podcast (but better, someone talks about his/her job)
    b. company blog
        i. basically write what I'm doing every day / make sure it's interesting to start
        ii. blog idea: tell employers to stop offering employees on free lunch (say meeting people on Holla would help them develop their skills / help the world (not convinced at all that this is a good idea)
            1. if there were no free lunches that would drive people out of the office / lower prices on Holla (probably the increased volume would make up for the lower fees)
            2. free lunches by companies could actually really hurt the bottom of the marketplace
    c. interview guides - basically cover the stuff that traditional career counselors cover (and emphasize the importance of informational interviews)
    d. write profiles like the ones Weave does on good experiences users have
       http://blog.weave.in/2016/02/13/weave-success-priyank-singh-co-founder-stilt/
       (how meeting people on Weave helped a guy get into YC)
21. Is there any way to improve on LinkedIn endorsements?
    a. don't think this would be easy. probably ignore feature like this to start
22. Should people still be able to "connect" / "friend" each other on the app?
    a. Maybe not b/c then its easier to just ask others for an intro (although people don't really know their linkedin connections well)
        i. could also allow for 2nd / 3rd degree connections a la LinkedIn (I always found this mildly fun)
    b. If this happens there could be a newsfeed of meetings
23. Should people be able to follow someone like Twitter / LinkedIn / Facebook / Medium / Quora etc?
    a. only a question if people can post content

24. Show hobbies on the site to make people seem more relatable (and have an algorithm to show common interests)
25. Let people post their current classes on the site and search by that?
26. What if it becomes a platform to learn skills?
    a. ex: juggling etc
27. Make it a platform to find study partners?
28. Make it a platform to find tutors?
29. Request a paid informational interview? ex: let anyone say $20 to the first 3 iOS engineer, in SF w/ 5 years of experience that claim this time (getting kind of close to an Upwork like platform)
    a. or just make it an algorithm. Press a button and get a match like Weave (for people who are willing to save more time for less precise targeting. Basically Weave Concierge or a Weave Concierge where you get instantly matched)
30. Partner w/ companies to have them let their employees schedule a minimum number of time a week (not sure if this would work. Purpose is that many employees never quite know if they'll be called into a meeting w/ little notice or get extra work)
31. Have company pages
32. Eventually have job postings on the site
33. Could this platform be used for other types of events? Even social events?
34. Should there be a window on the bottom of the site to instantly message the company to ask questions? (Purple Squirrel does this)
35. When there are recruiting tools on the site let people show recruiters what companies / types of companies they specifically want to work for
36. Some sort of user reputation system? (like Treatings)
37. Video profiles to let users promote themselves? (like Acopio)
38. Have people give 1-5 stars and a box for commenting like Uber/Lyft on the mobile app after a meeting

Business Model Questions
1. Always remember it's a network effects business. Vast majority of the reward will come over the long run
2. Should we focus on in-person meetings, video chats or phone calls?
    a. in the long run I'd like all 3 to be an option (probably would actually just be fine to let the person getting paid choose in the short-term or to just offer all 3 in the short-term)
        i. Should people be charged per minute over scheduled time for video chats, allowed to talk longer for free, or cut off after the amount of time scheduled is done? (leaning towards letting them talk for free longer, at least for some time) (could let the person getting paid choose) (this is when we have a native video chat platform)
        ii. competitors in the career counseling / talk to expert side seem to be doing phone calls for now
        iii. Could we just have people exchange google hangout / skype info to start

1. is there anyway you can do a private google hangout / skype like a restricted call? (person being paid may want to do this?) (could open up a 2nd account too)
2. are google hangout / skype reliable enough? (probably good enough for now)
   b. in the short run, I'd like to focus on in-person meetings. (but it may be easier to do something else)
      i. see research question: Study the effectiveness of communication b/w face to face, video chats and phone calls?
   c. do prices change based on the type of meeting?
3. It'd be a social network that isn't incentivized to sell ads (appealing in case user privacy becomes more of an issue)
   a. well is there any way to sell ads in the long run?

Technical Questions
1. Use Near-Me? (for an MVP type product?)
   a. Near-Me's slogan is Create your own peer-to-peer marketplace
   b. http://www.near-me.com/ (check out the site more, video on there)

   Ryan Hoover — Product Hunt

   As @davidspinks mentioned on Twitter last night, Near Me is a great platform for quickly testing a product/business idea. Neat concept.
   c.
2. How long will it take to do the MVP? (figure out the MVP first)
3. Could I use ionic to do the initial mobile app? (it basically lets you code a mobile app via JavaScript http://showcase.ionicframework.com/)
4. Purple Squirrel makes payments via Pay Pal. Is that smart? What about Amazon Pay?
   a. Trent was saying he likes Amazon pay. Basically it allows you to use your payment info stored on Amazon w/ other sites
5. It's easy to integrate w/ calendar applications to remind people of their meetings right?
6. Is there a way to do anonymous video chats like a restricted call (*67 for that) or will people getting paid have to use their normal video chat accounts or create a new one for the informational interviews?
7. How can Holla use LinkedIn's API to get information transferred to our site / for other useful purposes? (definitely look more into this)
8. Is there any way to integrate w/ Google Maps etc to help people find nearby coffee shops / wherever to meet near their workplace/home etc?
9. Allow developers to build on the platform like FB apps? (not sure what for, could this be a revenue source?, let people build a similar tool for different verticals, is that just stupid)

Algorithms
1. Price setting tools - to help people set their meeting price / allow us to collect data
   a. key to protecting 1st mover advantage (or whatever # we count as)

2. In the long term have advanced dynamic pricing features so users could change their price based on the person
    a. ex: charge less for people who'll be more likely to add value to you based on their profiles (could be useful for non-auction pricing based meetings)
    b. more simply
    c. ex: charge less for Stanford grads b/c they're more likely to add value to you in the future
        i. charge more for someone w/ less education
    d. ex: charge less for someone who is likely to be poor b/c he/she is from a certain area / doesn't have a job listed on Holla
        i. charge more for someone who is rich
3. Tools to bump up people in search filter when they have an open time slot in the near future
    a. would this lower the quality of the site too much? (probably okay if all else is even based on the search)
4. Figure out times users generally prefer to meet others based on their past history (ex: don't show someone as high in search who only has 10am on Saturday available when this user has been to 20 meetings and none of them were on Saturday)
5. Use feedback from user reviews to improve filtering
    a. maybe publish the reviews (maybe anonymize them and release them in increments of 10)

Reputation Questions
1. How will the media / public feel about Holla when they first hear the idea?
    a. strong free market proponents will like it or be indifferent
    b. others will think it's ridiculous to pay for an informational interview or its likely to fail (but people thought something like Twitter sounded stupid at first)
2. How would companies feel about their employees joining Holla?
    a. most likely indifference, but the one's that do have an opinion may worry it will cause them to lose employees
3. If people criticize the company for helping the rich get connected
    a. It's not the company's job to improve economic inequality. We're all for the government providing welfare (i.e basic income, better healthcare system, job transition programs for unemployed, stuff they currently do like food stamps and unemployment insurance, whatever)
    b. Even if a poor pregnant woman can't afford an Uber in an emergency, its not like there'd be taxis on the streets in hurricane sandy or whatever w/o surge pricing
        i. or someone will be able to pay for the most important emergency but not other stuff (i.e if one spends their money carefully / efficiently w/ Holla it's still better that Holla exists for that person)

Additional Company Questions
1. Am I sure the idea is good? Do I need to do more to test it out?

a. When I applied for a Weave group meeting w/ Tristan Pollock they asked me why I wanted to meet w/ him.
b. Could a company rather than the individual reading requests or an algorithm analyzing the informational interview request actually be how things are done in the future? (instead of being paid)
    i. ex: but then there will never be an example where someone like me pays 10k or whatever to pitch Holla to Paul Graham after feeling YC messed up (but that may be really rare)
    ii. would take time before any algorithm is good enough to determine who should meet w/ who better than the free market?
c. What's going to stop someone from saying I'll put my time on Ebay or Craigslist and tweet out the link? (Holla's user experience should be better)
    i. I've seen 30 minute phone calls advertised on ebay before
    ii. not every influencer will necessarily be excited about making informational interviews into a marketplace
    iii. there are fees to sell on ebay too: http://pages.ebay.com/help/sell/questions/what-fees.html (look into this more specifically when it comes time to set prices)
        1. since the buyer, not the seller pays the fee Holla doesn't disincentivize listing your availability on Holla (slightly disincentivizes buying by raising the price via the service fee)
    iv. Hopefully Craigslist would be seen as a little sketchy. (especially by influencers)
d. I think the idea is good, but it'll be really hard to change user behaviors and I feel like it's important to get influencers to start out (but I'm not sure influencers will like it b/c they don't need the money)
2. What would the landing pages look like? (if any?)
   a. do we just want anyone to sign up even if its our friend who isn't actually interested in the project (probably not)
   b. Maybe reflect what the product would initially be like (ex: pay to talk to experts to improve your career) (that wording makes it sounds like every other site)
   c. have pictures like the Tradecraft mentors on the landing page
3. What is the MVP?
   a. What were the MVP's like for prior social networks?
   b. it's impossible to MVP a digital product that requires massive network effects to be effective - From Exponent 57
    i. ex: ad network, something that relies on ads to back it
4. What features / guidelines are necessary to start out?
5. Users won't interact w/ each other except for when they buy / sell informational interviews at first. How should this affect our thought process when developing the product?

Industry Research Questions

1. Need to do more of this
2. my Wash U career counselor says to do 4-6 informational interviews a week (I don't)
   a. this is probably above normal, but I'd be curious what the typical advice is
   b. (Not sure how I'd actually find the answer to this either. Just quote top people in the field)
3. Research the effectiveness of meetup groups / events / conferences more thoroughly
   a. what % of these are boring speeches? (no way to find out easily)
4. Study the effectiveness of communication b/w face to face, video chats and phone calls?
   a. pretty sure face to face is supposed to be better for building bonds (based on prior reading I vaguely remember / my own hunch)
5. What % of informational interview requests are accepted?
6. How many people give up during the process of writing an informational interview email request?
   a. How many plan to write an email and don't even bother to get started that would've paid for a meeting?
7. What is the best way to contact someone currently besides getting an intro? (cold email, LinkedIn inMail, LinkedIn message, Twitter, Facebook)
8. How can job titles be categorized? (remember Russ would say they're meaningless in Silicon Valley, obviously an exaggeration. This site could actually make them slightly more meaningful)
   a. probably just look to see what LinkedIn does (or a job search site, or even the Department of Labor's categories if necessary)
9. Look up the % of job postings that are essentially guaranteed to go to someone else (think I've seen something like 20%)
10. How many people drop out of the labor force not b/c they're old but b/c its too hard to find a job? (getting this answer may make fun fact for a presentation)
11. Do companies typically give employees referral fees when they hire someone he/she's referred? (some definitely do)
12. Per Manuel Ebert, there was a study where VCs charged money to receive emails so they'd get messages people really wanted to send them (so there was no spam)
    a. I couldn't find it so email Manuel about it
13. Book partially on networking: Love the Killer App by Jim Sanders (networking / dealing with people / social life)

Userbase Research
1. What times are people most often free for an informational interview? (NOTE: this question may not matter at least initially since we'd let people just set the times they're available. From there we can collect data and figure out the times people are most available.)
2. Which type of people will love the product? (our hunch is the early adopters will basically be ambitious people)
3. Which type of influencers will use the product / benefit from it the most?
   a. those w/ the most loyal (and wealthy) fans should profit the most

4. How much time will influencers dedicate to meetings on the platform / promoting their meetings?
5. Supan said important metrics (to start) are # of users, # of influencers, user retention
6. Could people still have a favorable impression of Holla even if they don't reuse it soon? ex: they met the influencer they really wanted to meet. would be open to using it again later

User Survey
1. everything is here

Revenue Model Questions
1. What service fee % should we start with? (if any at all)
   a. leaning towards a small %
   b. look at Ebay's cut of listings (and Amazon etc)

Long Term Revenue Model Possibilities
1. How would the marketplace evolve over time? (really tough for me to figure out what prices will be long term, sure it'll vary immensely based on the person)
   a. obviously we can't control the demand for the product
   b. ex: what will entry level people in advertising cost? etc
   c. how much will people make an effort to market themselves to try to get more meetings on the platform?
   d. my best guess is that average prices will be higher at first b/c it'll attract more job seekers who'll compete to pay the same employee from say Google. Then other people w/ jobs will want to get in on the mix and those who get jobs will hopefully stay on the platform and start getting paid for some meetings
   e. will the number of informational interviews given increase overall? what percentage of them will be paid informational interviews?
2. Pay to promote your listing.
   a. Like the ads on the top / side of Google searches or the ads on the top of Indeed.com pages
   b. Like the sponsored tweets in the middle of your Twitter feed (I've heard that those come off as distracting when you search for a certain topic and the ad sticks out as not fitting in. best ad is when you don't realize you're being advertised to)
   c. the problem is if these ads aren't really well targeted it makes the site slightly worse
3. How does LinkedIn make money? (copy some ways)
   a. Could they be focusing on the premium tools for recruiters / salesmen? (that's their big money maker for now, think the stuff for recruiters does better)
   b. Theoretically, Holla could become the main directory of career information giving us LinkedIn's existing advantages (since the average person doesn't actually do much on LinkedIn they might stop updating it or signing up)
4. Could user data from messages / site activity be sold to ad networks?

      a. data of what you're trying to learn could be really valuable to advertisers (obviously this could hurt our reputation, but the average Joe probably wouldn't care)

5. Could the site make money via messaging?
      a. leaning towards no messaging b/w users except one's who've scheduled meetings w/ each other to start
      b. Similar to how LinkedIn makes money via inMail
            i. but the price would be different for each person (whatever it is would be cheaper than an in person meeting / video chat / phone call w/ that person)
      c. maybe offer a free first 140ish characters for messages / charge for more
      d. charge people money to put their messages at the top of one's inbox. Price could increase via an algorithm as the total number of messages one has increases (or could be based on the rate one receives / views messages)

6. Partner w/ restaurants / coffee shops to have them be recommended locations for meetings

7. Sell customized business cards via the site?

8. If the site publishes user reviews at any point let people pay to get their negative reviews erased like Yelp (I suppose some people may want a blank slate, but I'm not actually comfortable w/ this ethically

9. Is there any way a subscription type service would work? (like an Amazon Prime for Holla? don't really have any idea how this would work. probably won't)
      a. maybe let subscribers get exclusive early bidding / price matching?
      b. would be a good way to get some sort of consumer lock in

User Acquisition
1. What types of users should be targeted first?
      a. people w/ an existing somewhat devoted following (ex: bloggers/journalists, podcasters, professional equivalent of a YouTube star)
            i. flatter them to get them to join
            ii. these people clearly are comfortable w/ attention & it would be an opportunity for them to make a little money / interact w/ their audience
                 1. and podcasters are obviously comfortable talking too
            iii. probably well connected / famous enough to prove the platform works
            iv. likely to attract loyal fans who will be thrilled by the chance to meet x person and is ambitious (the type of user we want on the product to slowly go down market)
                 1. also getting big names solves the problem of having to make sure informational interviews are well targeted w/ no network (b/c we attract people who others obviously want to meet)
                    a. Need to get people excited to initially open their wallet. Plus bigger names leads to higher service fees.

        i.   info interviews w/ nobody's that aren't well targeted (b/c there's no network) would basically be like paying for weave w/o being any better

        ii.   improvement on normal informational interview needs to be significant

                1.   ex: like how new payment systems haven't taken off in US b/c they're not much better than credit cards. Need to really improve people's lives to get them to change their behavior

b. having celebrities is what made Twitter big to start

c. once money is raised it should be easier to attract big names (x whoever funds us) / grow broadly down market

    i.   plus general network effects

d. manage the roll out of the influencers initially in the very short term onto the platform? (or should I just have influencers join ASAP?, leaning towards this. won't be easy to get them)

    i.   we'd probably only be able to control it in the very short term anyway

e. Where can I find big names to be initial users?

f. CNBC contacts (Saved some emails on my own. Not sure how much my old boss would help. He likes me, but its been a while.)

    i.   Wall St guys were actually very friendly to me (Peter Costa randomly offered me NYSE tour and got Kenny Polcari to give it to me)

    ii.   pro free market politics guys would be down

    iii.   anyone else I know that's famous?

g. Get TCers to recruit their mentors (referral % would sway them if they're initially reluctant)

h. Where to find influencers

    i.   Twitter: find influencers based on twitter followers / algorithm (how hard is this?)

    ii.   LinkedIn influencers

    iii.   Patreon (for entertainers, if we want them initially)

    iv.   iTunes list for top podcasts

    v.   Any way to find top bloggers (Medium followers?)

i. Are there people like hotshot lawyers? Would my dad know them?

j. Supan might know someone?

2. Should the company start as invitation only or w/ some sort of beta?

    a. leaning towards no for now.

3. Should users be required to set up times for informational interviews when they sign up?

    a. No way. Some people may only want to pay for the interviews. (& more of a hassle to start for others)

4. Should there be a referral program? (almost definitely)

a. Should users who refer new users get a % of the revenue? (probably a smart idea) (i.e you get 10% of the proceeds from the service fee
   i. What %? (no idea)
   ii. maybe a higher % for the 1st (5? or whatever) number for interviews that person referred purchases
b. think this could be very important

5. Use Twitter to get the first users?
a. once a "big name" is signed onto the platform use a twitter bot (or manually tweet) to people that tweet at that person inviting them to buy a meeting w/ that person
   i. ex: Want to meet @larry_kudlow? You can on Holla!
   ii. or if the person who tweets to that person is another big name (if automated do it by a certain # of followers) invite them to join x person on the platform
      1. ex: Join @larry_kudlow on Holla!

6. Should Holla provide grants for low income users and veterans? (Purple Squirrel does this)
a. How could this be verified?

Marketing Questions / Ideas
1. For some reason I'm allowed to post new products on Product Hunt now (everyone / a lot more people allowed now?)
2. Use Quora / Medium / Product Hunt / Reddit to market the product?
a. is this a demographic we're going after?
b. Would these types of people be early adopters?
3. What types of users should the company go after initially? (this one's tough: big names, tech, recent grads, bootcamp grads)
a. influencer / people who want to meet infuencers (i.e ambitious people)
b. focus on tech sector first?
4. If the company is able to raise a lot of money could we offer users money to sign up for the site?
a. or do the first informational interview free (up to a certain amount of money)
b. no service fee for the first x meetings? (don't think this is a good idea. don't want to remind people that there are service fees)
c. Long term: offer free lunches temporarily to people on the low end to get them signed up

Branding
1. I want people to say at the end of their blog posts. Follow me on Twitter and talk to me on Holla
2. Emphasize this is a platform where you can discover new interesting people
a. at some point it might be a good idea to market "featured users" - interesting people on the site you can buy interviews w/ (ex: a university professor who's

done some really interesting research? ex: Philip Tetlock, Tetlock's interesting, but I think professors are probably the wrong type of person for most people)

Design / Usability Notes
1. Just signing up for a site is easier than dividing people b/w job seekers / mentors anyway like other sites do

What Should the Launch City be? SF or NY? Nowhere? (everything based on hunches / stereotypes for now)
1. No Official launch city?
2. SF
    a. more ambitious people than NY
        i. and these people more likely to be early adopters of products?
    b. people better connected w/ each other
    c. people seen as flaky (may especially hurt free informational interview sites)
    d. Tech is the big industry
3. NY
    a. less competition (probably)
    b. people seen as people who follow through on their commitments (i.e not flaky)
    c. people work longer hours than SF
    d. Finance is the big industry
    e. more industry diversity

Name Questions
1. Name Possibilities: Hollla, Hedwig (owl from Harry Potter, would JK Rowling or Warner Bros sue?), Hermes (messenger god), Domino, Blossom (like a flower) Mercury (roman name for Hermes), Cock A Doodle Doo, Cock a Do, Butterfly (as in Butterfly effect), Butterfly Effect, Connect Two, Illuminati, 360 degrees, Greyhound, Foresight, Conch (Lord of The Flies inspired), The Conch, Net-twerk (a horrible twerking pun), Netwerk, Purple People Meeter, whatever the name was for that pigeon messaging sabotage operation in World War II, Orello, Aurello, OneD (as in 1 degree of separation), One Degree, Zero Viscosity (i.e a fast flow of knowledge),, Assist, Low Viscosity, Finding Waldo, Waldo, Chariot of Words, PlayMaker, Point Guard, Call-a, Networky, Calla, It Takes Two, It Takes 2, Connectify, ConnectOut, Viscous YoYoYo, The Circle, The Web, Getting To Nemo, Onedee, Wondy, One World, Worlds Apart Should I try to buy similar domain names to holla to get the company holla@me to selll holla.com
    a. www.holla.com -> taken by Holla@me (the one we want)
        i. (misspelling) http://hollatme.com/ - available
        ii. hollaatme.com - taken, redircts to http://hollaatme.com/category/holla-at-me/
    b. http://www.hollaapp.com/ - taken by another app
        i. (misspelling) http://ww7.hollapp.com/ - not clear if available

    c. http://holla.co/ - available? said you don't have permission to access this server
    d. http://challah.com/ - taken by a challah company (challah is a jewish bread)
        i. hallah.com (an alternative spelling) is available for 10k
          https://enaming.com/exclusive/domain/hallah.com/
        ii. http://cholla.com/ - owned by someone who's done nothing w/ it. Maybe this is a good idea
        iii. I think challah w/ a c could be good w/ a logo that emphasizes the C to indicate connect somehow
            1. but it's possible I like the name challah b/c I'm jewish and nobody else will know how to spell it
        iv.

2. Other domain name research
    a. Hiya.com - redirected to the whitepages site
    b. http://us.hola.com/ - taken by some media site
    c. http://hulapu.com/ - available

3. Is it crazy to not have a .com as the main site?
    a. https://www.quora.com/What-are-the-cons-of-having-a-non-com-domain
        i. based on quick skim of responses its clear having a .com is better (just not clear how much)
    b. https://www.quantcast.com/top-sites/US/3
        i. twitch.tv is #237 / good.is at #244 are the highest ranking non .com or .org sites at 6.7 million and 6.6 million monthly users respectively

Logo Possibilities
1. A rooster (b/c it makes a loud cock a doodle doo and wakes people up)
2. challah bread

Other Verticals (MVP possibilities too?, Sort of like Grindr existing before Tinder? (but gays hook up all the time) too complex for that? (probably would still take a lot of time))
1. A number of possibilities. Basically anything that would attract the type of people that aren't on LinkedIn
    a. ex: poker (I could contact Phil Galfond, maybe Supan knows someone?), could just focus on Vegas and make it easier to do in person meetings)
    b. esports (Michael Burkett's starting an esports company),
    c. actors / film (could try contacting Ava S, maybe my cousin knows someone,
    d. reality stars (would only be 1 sided and not prove the model)
        i. reality stars don't have money, are popular, love attention and want to extend their 15 minutes of fame (although they're often crazy)
    e. bloggers (probably too similar to the standard info interview market, maybe the first users to go after for that)
    f. athletes (like what Thuzio was but simpler)

2. Is it worth worrying LinkedIn may be split into a vertical for each industry
   http://www.wired.com/2014/05/linkedin-unbundling/ (I doubt it / even if it did happen I
   don't think it'd necessarily affect this company

Pivot Possibilities
1. Buy a referral site (this is the same thing, but people get free referrals from those who
   want a referral bonus http://refer-me-please.com/)
   a. One can go online and pay to get one to promise to say that he referred x job seeker
      to the company if asked
   b. basically one of the many things Purple Squirrel's trying to be, so its a lot simpler
   c. referred candidates have a 20x better chance of getting hired -
      https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/landing_job_seekers
   d. "Employee referrals represent 7% of all applicants, but 46% of all hires have a
      referral" https://www.purplesquirrel.io/
   e. Google's referral bonus is $4500, its $2000 for Salesforce, its $5000 for Ernst &
      Young https://www.purplesquirrel.io/pages/view/ambassador_landing
         i. is it really the same for every job?
        ii. so maybe employees would be motivated by the referral fees if one gets
            hired more than simply getting paid a little for a referral?
   f. The Problem: People who don't know someone at the company they're applying
      to are at a disadvantage if being referred truly helps so much
         i. even though this person may be equally qualified or more qualified for the
            position
   g. so buying a referral allows a job seeker to put him/herself on an even playing
      field w/ those that are referred
   h. if this platform became huge:
         i. could become essentially a middleman taking a small amount of money in
            millions of job applications
        ii. could make referrals ultimately meaningless if everyone has that
            1. or make the referral process more complicated to prove someone
               knows someone well
   i. Not sure how much people are normally asked about the people they refer at
      work in detail, probably varies greatly by company
   j. I got my first 2 jobs via referrals from people I barely knew. I wasn't especially
      qualified for them
         i. CNBC job - a guy who was my dad's camp counselor who I'd spoken to
            for about a ½ hour total
        ii. Clarity Campaign Labs job - a guy who I interviewed with told me this
            company was a better fit for me and said he'd refer me. Spoke to him
            over the phone for about 20 minutes total
   k. Who knows how many jobs I could've missed out on partially due to others
      getting referrals? (multiply this times every other job seeker)

       l.   Let employees on the platform request how much info they'll need to know about you to refer you for their own company?

     m. A little slimy?
- i. Will definitely be seen as slimy since we're asking people to say they know someone who they don't
  1. so do the business under a fake name?
- ii. But plenty of people do give referrals to people they barely know
- iii. the people who get referrals are rewarded for their network rather than their skill

     n. Still a network effects business (but way simpler than Holla. Moreso valuable to get 1 person at any company)
- i. will be tough to show people this service exists
- ii. market to people at companies who search for terms like passive income / money on the side
- iii. job seekers normally just search LinkedIn to see who they know at x company when applying, but can't advertise there / they just type in the company's name
  1. how can they be reached? just market to people who search the word referral

     o. One interview i was asked directly about how I knew the person who referred me. But I'd said that may have been because I said Steve Forbes referred me (and lied)

     p. Ive also been asked multiples times in interviews about how I heard about the company before
- i. I suppose you could still say online and I know x who encouraged me to apply or just lie and say you know x now
- ii. or you could just say x person referred me who is a friend (simple easy lie)

     q. Limit the number of people an individual employee can refer?
- i. so companies don't get suspicious when one person refers a bunch of job seekers

     r. I guess the idea could just be tested w/ 2 landing pages
- i. would you pay for a referral?
- ii. would you want to get paid for a referral?

2. Holla for individual businesses (i.e Weave for Work: https://weave.in/companies/uber)
   a. help employees w/in a company connect w/ each other (ex: who else w/in Facebook could I talk to about this problem? Let me search)
      - i. A guy I met w/ Mohamed Shakir at a Weave meeting suggested this
      - ii. I can't relate to / recognize the problem (nor am I even confident it's that good of an idea) (thought I might've seen something like this when searching for competition, but now I can't find it)

3. Hunter Walk's suggestions
   http://hunterwalk.com/2014/07/02/the-ideas-that-wont-beat-linkedin-some-which-might/

      a. IMDB for projects

      b. Better verifying what someone puts on their resume

      c. LinkedIn w/ more selectively revealed information

      d. better LinkedIn / freelance work combo (lots of these already)

4. Hunter Walk says to avoid
http://hunterwalk.com/2014/07/02/the-ideas-that-wont-beat-linkedin-some-which-might/

      a. LinkedIn for mobile

      b. LinkedIn for vertical x

      c. LinkedIn w/ prettier UI

5. Some sort of paid messaging thing

      a. gmail extension where you pay someone to move to the top of their inbox (would this be allowed?)

6. Meetings w/ interesting people

7. Weave Concierge w/ option to quickly pay for a more targeted meeting

      a. (ex: select engineer at uber and pay $20 for 30 minutes or whatever price. Not that different from what's already out there. Just a simplified interface. Weave concierge esque service gets people onto the platform

      b. Is that enough of an upgrade over what Weave Concierge gets you for free?

         i. probably only for a small number of people?

         ii. I'm not confident people that'd use the service would like the service. It's very possible that people who really want to meet someone at a company could find someone to talk to there if they try

8. Maybe I just like the Weave Concierge interface and just want to apply it to meeting people in general and other things?

Legal Questions

1. Is there going to be a sales tax on our transactions in addition to our service fee?

      a. Does that vary by state? (very possibly)

      b. Would this affect what service fee we charge? (don't want user to get too annoyed by extra charges. Granted we're going after higher end at first who can afford to pay)

2. Are there any issues is someone from another country that speaks english uses the service? (could this cause technical problems too?)

3. Should there be an age limit on the platform? (Purple Squirrel's is 18) Does it matter since there's payment?

Customer Service Questions

1. What should the refund policy be?

      a. What do you do if someone has a bad experience in a meeting? (vary it case by case?)

2. What do you do if someone is harassed or attacked in a meeting?

3. Will people lie about whether a meeting actually happened to avoid paying?

4. What if someone brings friends to their meeting?

5. What if a company pays to meet someone (through an individual name)?

6. What if career / life coaches try to use Holla to sell their service?
    a. founders at my coworking space complain about people who hold a meeting labeled as small business discussion and then spent the whole time telling people they needed to hire her
7. Should there be a window on the bottom of the site to instantly message the company to ask questions? (Purple Squirrel does this)

Exit Possibilities
1. LinkedIn buyout (might be bad that there's no other obvious candidate?)
2. Job search sites
3. Go public in a really really really long time

Engineer Recruiting / People to reach out to
1. Andrew Lin? (need to call)
    a. ask him if he'd be willing to interview potential candidates if he's not interested in joining
2. Matt Kim?
3. That guy named Chris I met the day before he was about to start Hack Reactor (couldn't figure out who he was via quick search)
4. Ben Lubkin
5. Justin Starr
6. Caitlin Mohnike
7. Cynthia Stoneburner
8. Liz Howard / Janardan Yri (doubtful)
9. look up other possibilities
10. Me!
    a. How much time would I need? (could I do it by the end of Hack Reactor?)
11. Supan
    a. i'm starting to think it makes sense. Makes Holla more attractive to investors, allows us to bounce ideas like each other regarding engineering like we can for other subjects

Designer Recruiting / People to reach out to
1. Michael Burkett
2. Daniel Schwartz
3. Other TCers (Sean, Austin, Liana, Derrick, Tommy, TC 20/21 people?)
4. Drew Koch
5. Upwork / freelancers
6. Am I the backup plan here too?

Economics / Marketplace Experts to reach out to
1. Susan Athey, Economics of Technology Professor, Stanford GSB; Boards: Expedia, Ripple.

a. https://www.quora.com/profile/Susan-Athey/session/49/?__snids__=1533006405 &__nsrc__=4 (read this again)
2. Al Roth - Market Design Expert - wrote a book on it and was interviewed on Freakonomics Radio last year

Survey Design People to reach out to
1. Lauralynn
2. Aria Ghanaat
3. Clarity Campaign Labs people
4. DNC people?
5. Data Scientists I've met?

Other People to reach out to
1. James Allworth - co-host of Exponent podcast. Director of strategy at Medallia

Incubator
1. Y Combinator / Y Combinator Fellowship? http://blog.ycombinator.com/fellowship-v2
2. 500 Startups (Supan has connections)
3. TechStars (Boston)
4. AngelPad (NY)

Additional Notes
1. It's NOT a 2 sided marketplace. I'd misused that term before https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two-sided_market
    a. It's a C2C marketplace https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Customer_to_customer
2. Holla is a marathon, not a sprint
3. What should my risk tolerance be for investing into this
4. How much should we talk to the public about what we're doing for now?
    a. for the most part share the idea
    b. don't share w/ competitors (and I suppose anyone who I'd feel uncomfortable saying it to)
5. When an investor asks what do I do? What do I say? (beyond I have passion, this idea is like my baby and I'm smart)
    a. I'll have to put in work to directly get the initial users we want on the product. sort of like the salesman
        i. what would I do b/w this point if we have an engineer / designer?
6. How fast do we need to move so one can't just copy us?
7. "top movers and shakers in the business world, who are often "super-connectors," don't get as much value out of the social network dedicated to business, LinkedIn. (Which is still a great platform for business!) Everyone wants to connect with them and they are inundated

with connections requests"

https://medium.com/@patrickh/why-twitter-is-more-important-for-business-networking-than-linkedin-f5ee7d04a604#.vpugeow2f

8. Look into LinkedIn's new job search app
   https://e.linkedin.com/pub/cc?_ri_=X0Gzc2X%3DYQpglLjHJlYQGpzeCclwlkYRkUMUAHodlzclootKdazdJOzeezeqirYo2FjrGaOXhaUaqVXtpKX%3DTBWCBY&_ei_=EolaGGF4SNMvxFF7KucKuWOAEzShzojrVPKmvXhtvHfI5qVK_92W41aneJNIxluU6HIh0a5G2vRFeZm5chzTIabwkWSYEwGk8j_5-o8Kk9l1ARU2IZ5uxckdQVRZXYXP.
   a. see the email titled: Meet the app built just for job seeking
9. Could this eventually become a substitute for some personal websites? (ex: if LinkedIn type features like blogs are incorporated)
10. 500 Startups Mentors http://500.co/mentors/#
    a. at what point is it not a bad idea to reach out to people like this?
11. From James Altucher: (job seekers can't easily write a book)
    a. book is like the new business card. puts you at the top of the list for
       i.   consulting
       ii.   speaking engagements
       iii.   being an "expert"
       iv.   networking opportunities
       v.   new business opportunities
12. http://biznik.com/2015/07/28/bizniks-story/ story of a events company that failed
13. this is going to be really fricking hard
14. I suppose its possible this could end up just being an influencer marketplace and not really grow beyond that
15. celebrities / rich people get a lot of free stuff but its not easy to get to that point
16. did Supan ever ask engineers what it takes to build something like Purple Squirrel

Matt Learns to Code
1. Learning to Code Plan

Web Vs Mobile
1. Seems like we're going to do web
2. What the Web Can Do Today https://whatwebcando.today/
3. Web
   a. easier to build a large audience on the mobile web
      http://avc.com/2015/09/mobile-web-is-top-of-funnel-mobile-app-is-bottom-of-funnel/
   b. people more likely to make larger purchases on the web
   c. people may want to do research on the person they're purchasing the interview with
      i.   a lot of people use their phone when they're not doing something important i.e something important for their career
      ii.   quicker to load a website than an app

d. desktop traffic has actually increased since 2010 (mobile traffic has exploded)
e. traffic on the web is more evenly distributed
   i. the top 5-50 apps take up 80-90% of time on mobile
      https://moz.com/blog/mobile-web-mobile-apps-invest-marketing-whiteboard-friday
   ii. average person uses 24 mobile apps / month and visits 10x - 30x as many websites
f. I'd personally prefer to use the product on the web
g. Nobody I've met on Weave Concierge actually uses the main Weave app
   i. I only use Weave Concierge / Serendipity
h. Marshall said he makes bigger purchases on the web (Trent didn't care)
i. w/ web the platform would be available to iOS / Android users from the start (granted people who have iPhones likely to be more interested in the product)

4. Mobile
   a. More overall users on mobile (especially outside of US)
   b. auction system is good for mobile
      i. but can send SMS notifications via web
   c. Weave started as a mobile app
      i. but maybe they're more so pivoting to Weave Concierge / Weave For Work rather than expanding
   d. my guess is none of the Tinder's for networking are doing very well
   e. Just feels riskier to me
   f. Are phones still getting bigger screens? (maybe, but not that fast. Pockets aren't that big. Presumably are product would be on web/mobile by the time anything significantly changes.)
   g. NOTE: I'd guess I use mobile app less than other people (granted that's for someone into tech. Plenty of people don't use them much either)

5. Most new discovery for mobile apps comes from three sources -- mobile web, word of mouth, or app store top lists.

6. Further Research:
   a. Find purchasing data of products on Amazon / Ebay if possible (granted people may do even more research when buying an informational interview)