

# Baruch EOC: The Secret to Striking Gold

By Eric Gelb, CPA

Executives on Campus (EOC) provides an excellent platform to build your skills, knowledge, expertise, friendships and network. Your success depends on you and what you put into the EOC Program. Set your game plan, take action and you'll strike gold.

## Follow these keys make the most of your EOC Mentorship:

**Devise a Strategy — Your Strategy.** The foundation of the EOC program is all about setting and achieving your career goals and objectives. Develop a realistic sense of where you are today, where you want to go, and the steps you need to take to get there.

**Clearly define what you want to get out of the EOC Program.** What kind of advice do you want?

Specific information? Communication skills? How to choose a career? How to navigate the interview process? Insight into a particular industry or company? Formulate solid ideas and pointed questions to discuss with your Mentor.

**Develop a Plan.** Some students are anxious about developing a plan because they are concerned that selecting one career path will preclude them from others paths. Although this is a reasonable concern, setting a specific game plan will help you channel your efforts. You can always evolve and adapt your plan as you learn more about yourself, your strengths, weaknesses, likes and dislikes, and the types of companies that are the best fit for you.

**Be Prepared, Every Time.** Treat your interactions with your Mentor with respect and courtesy; that includes face-to-face meetings, emails and telephone calls. While your Mentor is likely to be friendly and does truly want to help you, this IS a professional relationship. Visit the Mentor's company's website to familiarize yourself with the fundamentals of what their company does. Prepare a list of questions and discussion points that will help you move closer to achieving your goals. If you agree on a task with your Mentor, complete the task diligently and thoughtfully.

**Be On Time or Early for your Meetings.** Leave early for your meeting to allow time for delays, such as traffic, subway breakdowns, etc. If a conflict arises and you must postpone your meeting, email or call as soon as possible and follow-up to make sure your Mentor received the message so that you can reschedule.

**Use Your Time with Your Mentor Wisely.** Create an agenda to help stay on track. In short, get in; do the job; establish next steps; close; and follow-up with your Mentor thanking them for spending time with you and updating them on your progress.

**Adapt and Refine Your Plan as You Obtain More Feedback.** Examples include research online and at the Career Center, your Mentor's insights and suggestions, feedback from companies you contact, and your classmates and professors' insights.

**Finish Each Interaction with Your Mentor with a Specific Action Plan.** Confirm what you discussed, your Mentor's recommendations and what you will do next. If something you discussed isn't 100% clear, get clarification. Follow up and follow through.

**Give Back to Your Mentor.** One of the best ways you can show your Mentor appreciation is to succeed. Take their advice to heart and adapt their insights, experience and suggestions to fit your professional life. Digest their comments and suggestions in the context of where you are today, your discussions and your destination. Explain or ask whether a specific piece of advice makes sense for you. Not every tip or suggestion will work. Regardless, show that you at least considered the Mentor's information. Explain how and share the results — good and bad.

**Send a Simple Thank You Note, Update or News.** A note helps you review and analyze your game plan and refine your thinking. Email will suffice although a hand-written note or card is more personal. Share some information with your Mentor — a relevant article from a class assignment or information about new trends that will help your mentor keep their knowledge fresh and advance their career or business.



Eric Gelb, CPA



Eric Gelb (fourth from the left) talks to students at Baruch

Eric Gelb's daughter is a sophomore at Baruch, which led him to EOC. Since February 2013 he has interacted with over 15 Baruch students. He is a CPA and Director of Business Development at O'Connor Davies, LLP — Financial Services Group. O'Connor Davies is ranked as number 36 *Accounting Today's* 2013 list of Top 100 Accounting Firms in the United States." Eric's specialties include accounting, tax, administration, compliance and transaction advisory for private equity and hedge funds, family offices, private foundations and endowments. His past work experience includes PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Citigroup and JP Morgan Chase.