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## **NETWORKING TIPS**

1. When you arrive at a networking event, **avoid gravitating to people you know**. You should initially thank the host and then immediately **find someone new to introduce yourself to**. This will help keep you in the right frame of mind as to why you came.
2. Stop selling and **start listening!** When you meet someone for the first time, use it as an opportunity to get to know them. Don't try to sell them anything. Rather, begin to establish a relationship.
3. When receiving a **business card** from someone, **take a moment to write yourself a note** on it such as where you met. If you do this while you're still talking to the person, it will help convey your sense of personal connection.
4. During the course of a conversation at a networking event, **use the other person's first name two or three times**. People always like to hear their own name and it will help you to remember it when the discussion is over.
5. Rather than telling a new contact all about yourself, spend your time **asking them questions**. It's amazing how much you'll learn!
6. Connect with the person you're talking to by **tilting your head as you listen to them**. It is an effective body language technique which communicates that you're paying attention to what they're saying.
7. When a person is talking to you, **be sure to look directly at them**. Giving a person full attention with your eyes will encourage them to share more.
8. The **best location for networking is by a high-traffic area** such as a main door or near the food.



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9. **Never approach someone if they are walking towards the restroom or if they have a phone in their hand.** Wait until they have returned to the networking area or put their phone away.

10. **After the person has shared something with you, ask them another question** about what they just said. This shows that you're paying attention and that you care about what they're telling you.

11. **Always keep one hand free to allow yourself to shake hands with people.** This means that you shouldn't eat and drink at the same time. Remember, you're there to network, not eat a full-course meal.

12. As a way of demonstrating your networking skills, **introduce each new person you meet to at least one other person.**

13. **Never try to barge into a group of four or more people.** Come along side of the group, but do not attempt to enter into the discussion until you've made eye contact with everyone and a minimum of two other people in the group have said something.

14. **Do not approach two people who are talking with their shoulders square to each other,** as you may be interrupting an important discussion.

15. **Initiate conversation with someone who is standing by themselves.** They'll be happy to have someone to talk to them and, as a result, will many times open up with valuable information.

16. When you meet someone for the first time, **you have 48 hours to follow up** with them before they will completely forget about meeting you.

17. A networking event is not a time to see how many business cards you can acquire. Rather, it is **a time to develop a few relationships** that have potential.



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## **MORE NETWORKING TIPS**

### **Start Small**

If the idea of approaching people you don't know intimidates you, begin your networking efforts by seeking out familiar faces, such as relatives and friends.

A logical next step after talking with friends and family is to pursue individuals who graduated from your high school.

### **Don't Apologize**

Introverts and inexperienced networkers often apologize when asking for an individual's help because they see networking as an imposition, not as an exercise in relationship building.

Apologizing merely demonstrates your lack of professionalism and confidence. It's also annoying and juvenile. You don't have to apologize for asking for help. You don't have to apologize for wanting to learn more about the individual with whom you're networking. One day you may be able to help him/her out.

### **Be Yourself**

Many people think they have to act like an extrovert in networking situations. While you do have to make an effort to talk to people, you shouldn't be artificial or make things up.

"You don't have to be the schmoozer," says [Never Eat Alone's](#) Ferrazzi. The problem with the schmoozer's approach to networking is that he doesn't have the right intent: He's not interested in helping other people—only himself, says Ferrazzi.

"Be the authentic, aw-shucks, humble person you are. It can be endearing. Don't try to be something you're not," adds Ferrazzi.

In other words, it's OK if you're a little awkward. Just don't keep apologizing for it.



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## **Tap into Your Passions**

Join clubs and attend events that relate to an interest or activity you enjoy. Remember, every occasion is an occasion to network. Your friend's parent, who you meet at a football game may be an alum of the college you want to attend or she may work at a company where you want an internship.

Go straight to the stuff that interests you. When you talk about things you're passionate about, you will light up and be more engaging. You don't have to find a shared interest to connect with others. You just have to share your interests. So be sure to ask the people around you what they do in their spare time.

## **Ask for Introductions**

Ask friends and family, and your new connections, to introduce you to other people who they know who might be able to help you. After speaking with your initial contact, ask, "Is there anyone else you think I should talk to?" and then be sure and follow up with the new person and thank the initial contact.

## **Be Generous**

Sometimes people have trouble networking because they don't think they have anything significant, such as a job or a contact, to give back to someone who helped them.

Although networking works best when you do have something to offer, what you offer doesn't have to be a job or a contact. Sincere interest in the other person—even flattery—is a form of generosity and goes a long way when you're networking.

## **Be Prepared**

If you're afraid you'll freeze up or get tongue-tied in a social setting, prepare yourself in advance. Think of ice-breaker questions you can ask people you meet. Anticipate questions you may be asked, such as what career interest you have, and have clear, concise answers at the ready.



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## **Follow Up**

Sharing information—whether a website, article, report or phone number—with new contacts builds your credibility. So if you promised to email a phone number to someone, make sure you do that.

## **Get Over Your Fear of Rejection**

In the course of networking, you'll encounter people who can't or don't want to help you. That's life. Don't take it personally and don't dwell on it. It's all part of the process.

## **Take Risks**

When you overcome your fear of rejection, it'll be easier to strike up conversations with strangers.

## **Be Open & Curious**

You will have a much easier time and connect better if you look for people in the room that look interesting to you. Then be open and curious about finding out more about them. You never know what can happen!