

# 10 Tips for Networking

## 1. Go alone to networking events

- When you take friends you tend to stand in the corner and talk only to your friends, whereas when you are alone you are forced in to a situation where you have to meet new people

## 2. Always remember to take business cards, and wear a name badge

- This seems simple, but many times when people go to a networking even they forget something as simple as packing business cards. Do this the day/night before so you don't forget.
- A name badge is always advisable as it often has your company name on it and it is easy for people to see where you work, it helps avoid those awkward situations where people forget each others names

## 3. Treat people's business cards with respect

- A persons business card is very special to them, it represents their success and hard work
- When someone gives you a business card, don't just throw it your pocket, hold it, look at it and if you can make a comment about it. Wait a few moments before tucking it away.

## 4. Keep one hand free for shaking hands with people you meet

- Networking events often have nibbles and drinks.
- Try to eat nibbles in your left hand so that your right hand is not all greasy when you go to shake someone else's hand
- Try to stand near a table or somewhere so you can put your drink down
- Don't take too many belongings (eg. A briefcase) or you will look very awkward when trying to greet people.

## 5. Ask lots of questions, and do more listening than talking

- It is a widely known fact that people tend to like other people better when they talk less and listen more. Listen like you are interested, and don't just wait for your turn to talk.
- The more you listen and show a genuine interest in someone, the more they will like you and therefore you are more likely to achieve a positive relationship and some referral business from them.

## 6. NEVER EVER try to ask for business or referrals the first time you meet someone

- By focusing entirely on what they can do for you at your first meeting, people will not trust you and will take an immediate dislike to you - you need to appear as a friend not a sales person

- Try contacting them after your initial meeting via email, again via phone, perhaps in person for a coffee and any other way you can think of.

**7. Only talk to a handful of people (3 good contacts are better than 20 contacts you can't even remember properly)**

- The fewer people you have a conversation with the more detail you can go in to with them and the better you get to know them. This is important in developing a lasting relationship.

**8. Make contact after your initial meeting**

- After you meet people, go back to your office with your business cards and send them all an email (within the next 48 hours).
- It is advisable to include the following – “it was nice to meet you”, and then some sort of comment on what they do or a compliment even.
- If you feel it is appropriate then discuss the next time you are going to catch up, for example a coffee to talk further.

**9. Keep a log of communication, try using Outlook or some other database software**

- If you are serious about relationship building and networking you will need to establish a database such as the one that Microsoft Outlook has.
- You can have all details entered in and even log all your conversations and points of contact in so that you don't forget anything.
- You can set tasks for when your next point of contact is – for example, if you know the person is going on holidays you might set a task for after their holiday to phone and ask how it went...

**10. It takes 5 points of contact before you can build up enough trust to ask someone for their business**

- This is self explanatory, no one likes to do business with a stranger. Make them your friend first.
- Communicate with the person like you are not looking to gain anything.

These are just some tips, there are many more out there and lots of great websites you can access with more tips. Happy Networking!