

# 12 QUICK NETWORKING TIPS

## #1 - Start with Current Contacts

With whom are you already connected? Think of classmates, coworkers, mentors, and friends from different areas of your life. An easy way to start is to scroll through your phone contacts or even scan your friends on Facebook or connections on LinkedIn. You might be surprised by how many people you already know!

## #2 - Build Relationships

When reaching out to contacts or establishing new ones, remember that it's fundamentally about building a relationship. Get to know people not for what they can do for you but who they are as a person. Be confident in asking for help if you need it, but remember that sometimes it's better to offer to help first knowing that they will likely be more willing to return the favor in the future.

## #3 - Take and Give Business Cards

Invest in a nice business card holder that you can keep in your purse or coat pocket at an event. Ask for someone else's card before offering yours. After the event, write on the back of the card anything you'd like to remember including where you met them, conversation topics, and follow-up ideas.

## #4 - Remember the Multiplier Effect

If after a conversation with someone you discover they know someone else who you'd like to meet, ask them if they wouldn't mind introducing you. Make sure you've established some level of rapport, however, before asking someone to trust you enough to introduce you to someone else.

## #5 - Ask Good Questions - Learn to Listen

Avoid being one of "those" people who only talks about themselves! Get to know people by asking good questions that go deeper into their profession or likes and hobbies. The goal is to find a commonality and build relationship.

## #6 - Practice Your Elevator Speech

Inevitably, someone will ask you what you do - be prepared to answer! Rehearse your elevator speech before the event to give you confidence. On the other hand, though, don't sound too mechanical either!

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## #7 - Don't Ask for a Job / Résumé Critique / Interview

If someone happens to mention a new position in their company, do not ask for an interview. Instead, say something like, "That sounds like a very interesting job. Would you be able to get me in touch with your HR representative so I can find out more information?" Sometimes the best kind of networking is the kind that leads to future communication, so do not ask for too much too soon.

## #8 - Remember That You're Not the Only Nervous Person There

Networking events can be nerve-wracking for someone who is not comfortable meeting new people. Remember that not everyone seems as confident as they appear. This should make you more confident to introduce yourself first.

## #9 - Know Current Events

Do a little research before going to a networking event - what is a trending news story in your city or industry? Try to stay away from anything too political or controversial. Bringing up an interesting topic might be a great way to rejuvenate a dying conversation or get to know someone better.

## #10 - Don't Hold Anyone Hostage

Learn to read non-verbal cues to see if someone is wanting to leave the conversation. Be courteous by being aware of the time you spend with someone, realizing that they are probably there to talk to other people, too.

## #11 - Communicate How You Will Follow-Up

If you would like to schedule a follow-up meeting with someone, clearly communicate it at the end of the conversation. Take initiative and follow-through with a call or email within 24 hours.

## #12 - Set Up "Reconnect" Prompts

For those with whom you'd like to have regular communication (ex: monthly), set up an automatic reminder in your calendar to reach out to them. Send them an interesting article you read, invite them to an event or share something you learned that you know they will find interesting or pertinent.