

Networking Tips

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Networking is a way to interact or engage in formal communication with others for mutual assistance or support. Here are some networking tips:

- **Be Prepared**
 Before you confidently and charmingly sashay into a business conference room, a dinner party, or group event, do your homework. Find out who will be there, or do your best to list who you think will probably be present. Then decide who you would most like to meet. When you have your list of potential contacts, thoroughly research their work and their backgrounds and then make up some questions and conversational statements that reflect your research.
- **Networking Knows No Boundaries**
 The reality is that invaluable contacts and enviable opportunities often surprise us. Good networkers are flexible people who approach connection-making as a fluid enterprise that extends far beyond hotel conference room walls. Always be ready to make a contact and exchange business cards. And remember, don't hesitate to network someone who has no obvious connection to your ambitions: Your new contact may be able to give you relevant names of his or her friends and colleagues.
- **Follow Up**
 After you meet with a contact, it is absolutely essential to write a thank you note. In addition to immediate follow-up after a meeting or conversation, keep in touch with your contacts. It's important to stay on their radar screens without being imposing or invasive. And, of course, if you get that new job, be sure to tell them and thank them again for their help.
- **What Goes Around Comes Around**
 If you want to be treated with respect, treat others with respect. If you want your phone calls and email messages returned, call and write back to the people who contact you. If you want big-wigs to make time for you, make yourself available to others whom you might be able to help out. It's that simple. The higher up you climb in the professional world, the more you'll find that everyone knows everyone else. Thus, if you're impolite, curt, condescending, or disposed to burning bridges, you'll cultivate a reputation that will serve as a constant obstacle. Remember - the people who seem little now will one day be running companies and making decisions. If you treated them with kindness and respect when they were green, they'll remember and return the favour later.

- **Make It Easy For Your Contacts**

When you call, meet with, or write to a potential contact, make it as easy as possible for them to help you. Explain what you specifically want, and ask detail-oriented questions.

- **Stay Organized**

Keep a record of your networking. Whether you do this in a Rolodex, in a notebook, or in a database file on your computer, it's important to keep track of your contacts. Make sure your system has plenty of room for contacts' names, addresses, phone numbers, companies, job titles, how you met them, and subsequent conversations you've had with them.