Top 5 Tips to Successfully Attending a Networking Event

You’ve just attended a great networking event where you met a ton of great contacts.

Now what?

Many people attend networking events and then don’t act on the great contacts they met. By following these easy steps, you’ll be a networking genius in no time.

1. Don’t Let Those Business Cards Collect Dust

It’s easy to go to a networking event and put the business cards in your pocket or purse and never look at them again. However, this defeats the whole purpose of attending the event in the first place. You must act on making the most of your new connections and do so within 24 hours of attending the event.

If you procrastinate, you run the risk of your new connection forgetting who you are. Your new contacts will also be impressed you took the time to reach out to them so soon after your introduction.

2. Show Your Value To New Contacts

People are more likely to want to connect with you if they think there’s something advantageous to them in making a connection with you. It’s the classic case of “what’s in it for me.” Therefore, it’s probably best to build a relationship with your new connection rather than straight out asking the person for a job right away.

Perhaps you discussed a shared interest or some other timely topic. Share additional information with your new contact by sending a link to an article you recently read about that topic. If you stay in the person’s short-term memory, he/she will be likely to contact you when there’s a job opening in your field.
3. Remember It’s Not All About You

Continuing with the value-added theme, some of the best networkers put their own personal motives aside to connect other people. This can take place at the networking event or afterwards, but try to make connections between the people who you have recently met. This also helps with remembrance because both people will remember you as the person who connected them.

4. Realize Technology Is Your Friend

One of the easiest ways to stay in touch with a contact is to connect with the person on LinkedIn. Instead of sending the boring form message, type in a few sentences about the networking event you just attended and a snippet from your conversation. People have an easier time remembering your meeting if you remind them where you met and what you talked about.

There are also some apps that can make networking easier while you're still at the event. Some of these apps allow you to exchange the regular business card information, as well as links to the person’s social media presence. With the click of a button, you can connect on-the-spot with the person you just met.

Additionally, you can use a note-taking app to record pertinent information about the person and why you need to follow-up after the event.

5. Plan For Your Next Networking Event

Networking is not a one-time thing. You should try to constantly expand your network and improve upon your networking skills. The more you practice networking, the better you will become with this skill.

Take a few minutes to reflect on what you could have done better at your last networking event and improve upon those items before your next event. Make a personal goal to attend at least one networking event per month. Reorder business cards to ensure you have plenty for your next event.

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