



Networking Tips for Building Relationships & Gaining Access

“Your Networking is youth Net-worth.” Here are tips for building and expanding your relationships for gaining access to opportunities and information to enhance your personal and professional agenda.”

1. **Get out and Make Connections-** Networking is a contact sport. It is essential, throughout all stages of your professional life to attend events, business forums and other places to meet and interact with people.
2. **Be Authentic-** Be who you really are. Have an agenda, know why you’re there, what you want to accomplish.
3. **Be in the Moment and Make Others Feel important-** It’s not all about you. Be willing to listen and don’t over talk. Ask good questions about the other person and be willing to shut up and allow the other person to talk. Offer sincere compliments.
4. **Don’t Be Boring-** Go beyond the typical topics and share your personal passions and interest. Read and keep up on trends and general information in order to have a wide range of topics to engage in lively conversation. People like to talk about their interest and family (especially their children)
5. **Don’t ask for favors before you establish a relationship-**Asking others for favors too prematurely is negative. Instead, it is better to give and add value to others first. When you do things for others it comes back to you in many ways.
6. **Always Have Business Cards!**
Ladies: Put cards in very own purse
Men: Insert a small card holder in your cell phone case that’s attached to your belt.

Also keep a stash of your cards in your car. Make sure the surface of your cards can be written on, and make it a point to jot notes on cards that you receive to facilitate specific follow-up recall soon after you meet someone.

- 7. Put the Cards you Receive to Use-** As you meet people be sure to make a note on the back of the card for your later recall. Either input the info into your “outlook contact file.” Or some other location in your office for use at a later date.
Use the Green-Yellow-Red coding system:

Green= Immediate connection and opportunity to stay engaged

Yellow= Not an immediate opportunity for further interaction but possible future prospect

Red= Not much chance of further interaction

- 8. Always Follow-up!** It is always good to send a quick e-mail to reinforce your meeting. If your discussion generated a commitment to do something be sure to follow-through promptly. Failure to follow-up tarnishes your image and reputation.

Remember to develop your “sound-bite” or “elevator speech” that briefly says who you are, what you do or are known for (not necessarily your job title); and a memorable fact about yourself that will help people remember you.

