

BUSINESS NETWORKING DOS AND DON'TS

<p>Do prepare Bring lots of business cards. Genuinely useful small “goodies” may be welcome too.</p> <p>Be clear about what service or product your business offers and how you are different from others doing a similar thing. Think how you can be of help to other business people in the room.</p>	<p>Don't overdo it or have nothing at all Do not bring bulky brochures or catalogues. Do not write a 30 minute speech to be delivered to anyone you pounce on.</p> <p>Equally don't turn up without anything to leave behind or with tatty pieces of paper with outdated information.</p>
<p>Widen your circle Talk to people you do not know as well as your friends. Try to meet 7 – 8 people during the event.</p>	<p>Don't stick to just one person Once you meet someone new, don't hog them for the whole evening. Also, don't just talk to your friends – after all you are here to meet someone you've not met before.</p>
<p>Approach others If you see a person standing on their own – approach them and introduce yourself. Ask for their business card. After chatting for a few minutes, you may ask to be introduced to someone they've met or better still offer to introduce them to someone you already know.</p> <p>If there is a group, stand on the edge and listen for an opening to contribute to the conversation.</p>	<p>Don't break up a flowing conversation Two people in an animated conversation are not likely to appreciate being barged in on.</p> <p>If a group is talking don't just interrupt. Once there is a chance to speak say something short, don't make a long speech.</p>
<p>Listen and be interested in the other person Encourage others to talk about themselves and listen to their story. Ask open-ended questions that make the conversation flowing.</p> <p>What line of business are you in? What led you to choose this field? How are you finding it?</p> <p>People appreciate genuine interest and will remember it. Be careful not to make the questions too personal or it could feel like an interrogation.</p>	<p>Don't do all the talking When you meet someone, don't just talk about yourself. You may find that the other person soon loses interest.</p> <p>Don't hog them for the whole evening. Allow them to speak to others.</p> <p>DO NOT SELL! You are here to make contacts – sales will come too.</p>
<p>Look for ways to be useful Listen out for the need. If you know someone that can help let them know. If you promise to do something, make sure you keep your promise.</p>	<p>Don't be afraid to ask for help If there is something you need or someone you want to make a contact with, ask openly and specifically. However, don't ask for sales appointments!</p>
<p>Keep records If there is someone you met and want to speak to again, make sure you retain their business card. Sometimes, the person will provide additional information. It is polite to ask before writing on their business card.</p> <p>If a list of attendees is provided, it may be useful to mark the people you have spoken to.</p>	<p>Don't just forget about it After the event, don't just forget about everyone you have met. Send them an e-mail to say what a pleasure it was to meet them.</p> <p>If you promised some information or contact details to someone you know, make sure you send it forthwith!</p>