

Tips for Attending a Networking Event

- ❑ **Your cell phone is a distraction to yourself and others.** Put it away.
- ❑ **Volunteer your name when meeting others.** If you have met before, remind them of the context. When you are feeling anxious, your cognitive skills may not be in top form, and recalling others' names and where you met may be too difficult. Many people are anxious at networking events.
- ❑ **If you are able, introduce people to each other and explain how you know them.** Mention anything you think they might find interesting about each other.
- ❑ **The purpose of networking events is not for you to eat or drink; however, think of how to use the context and the available props to create an attractive, calm, and pleasant image.** If you are standing in the drink line, you already have something in common with the other people in line.
- ❑ **Everyone at a networking event has the same purpose of meeting new people,** so you are helping yourself and others if you avoid spending all of your time with people you already know.
- ❑ **Ask questions.** Look for topics of mutual interest. Offer a compliment. Ask others for introductions to people they know.
- ❑ **Be positive.** Do not complain. Smile, and it is likely that someone will smile back.
- ❑ **Start a conversation with someone who is standing alone.** It is likely that networking is even more difficult for them than it is for you.
- ❑ **Use props to help you exit a conversation.** Mention that you need to freshen your drink or want to try the food. Perhaps you see someone across the room and want to say hello. The biggest prop of all is the event itself. Everyone is there for the same purpose—to mingle and meet people. Use that shared purpose to exit a conversation.
- ❑ **When exiting a conversation, mention how much you have enjoyed the conversation.**
- ❑ **Ask for a business card.** If you are able, make a note on the back of the card that will help you decide what to say when you follow up. Keep your cards and store others' cards in an easy-to-reach place.
- ❑ **Not everyone is a decision maker who is able to buy what you are offering; however, everyone is in a position to strengthen or weaken your brand image.** Some people influence decision makers directly, while others will be your brand ambassadors, spreading news of your reputation, credibility, and trustworthiness. Never ask a person to make a decision he or she does not control.



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