



NETWORK YOUR WAY TO THE TOP

5 ESSENTIAL KEYS TO
MAKE NETWORKING
WORK FOR YOU



A NEW WAY OF NETWORKING

People tend to think of networking in one of two ways ...

1. With complete dread and would generally do anything to avoid it, or
2. See it as a great opportunity to meet a whole room of “business buddies” they haven’t met yet, and who knows what opportunities might result.

Either way, building your network is essential to your ongoing success. After all, it’s not WHAT you know, it’s WHO you know.

As an extrovert, I’d have to admit, I really enjoy networking. So much so, that I have run a number of networking groups throughout my career, ever since my early twenties. Over the years, I’ve noticed what those people with really strong networks do differently. I’d love to share some of those tips with you.



“Success is largely about who you know, not what you know.

Obviously what you know is essential to your ability to do your role well.

Who you know will help you progress faster and know about opportunities and trends that others simply never hear about.”

- Linda Murray



5 ESSENTIAL KEYS TO MAKE NETWORKING WORK FOR YOU

#1 Network your way

I could not agree more! Who has time for drinking bad chardonnay with a bunch of strangers at an event that none of you really want to be at?!

In order to network your way, you need to understand your style and then build your network in alignment with that.

For example, if you are an extrovert, you will probably enjoy being in a room of people, so an event might be a great option for you. If you are an introvert, a large event might be your idea of torture, in which case, you are probably not going to be in your best form.

In this case some other strategies for networking can be to connect with people one-on-one. To do this you can build your network by asking people for introductions or focus on building your credibility and presence on LinkedIn and connect with people there. Once connected you can then invite them for a coffee.

The trick is to be authentic to your own style and know how you best connect with others.

#2 Think before you go

Have you ever noticed that there are certain people who seem to pop up at every networking event you go to? You know those serial networkers! If you are a serial networker, I would question whether you are actually getting what you need from the events you're going to?

Do you have a purpose for going to each event? Or are you just being a busy networker, rather than a smart networker? Or, maybe you just need more friends!

In order to be a smart networker, think before you go. Before signing up to any networking event, first identify:

- 'What specifically do I want to achieve?'
- 'Who do I want me meet?'
- 'Where do they 'play'?'
- 'How could I help those people?'

Spending time to do the pre-thinking will ensure much greater outcomes from your networking experiences.

“Networking doesn’t have to be all about talking shop over appetisers and bad chardonnay – do it in a way that works for you.”
- Kathryn Minsheu

#3 Be a giver not a taker

No one likes speaking to someone who isn't listening and is just intent on selling their own services to anyone who will listen.

Instead, be curious about the other person and listen intently to their needs. Really think about how you can help them. Of course, be strategic about who you invest the time to help. Unfortunately, we simply don't have time help everyone.

It is about quality of connections, not quantity.

#4 Find a common point of interest

We do business with people we know, like and trust.

The sooner you can identify a common point of interest, the better. This could be the industry you both service, the age of your children, sporting interests.

Asking someone about their weekend is a quick and effective way to glean a whole lot of information about what makes someone tick.


#5 Give generous introductions

We all feel uncomfortable approaching strangers at an event. Empathise with the person approaching you by making them feel welcome.

The easiest way to do this is to acknowledge their presence as quickly as possible and welcome them into the conversations. Introduce yourself and the other person you were already speaking with. Share what you were discussing so the newcomer feels included in the conversation and can easily join in.

For example "Hi, would you like to join us? Hi Kate. I'm Linda Murray from Athena Leadership Academy and this is John Citizen from XYZ Corp. We were just chatting about our favourite TED Talks ..." and on the conversation goes. Instantly, Kate feels welcomed, part of the conversation and able to contribute.

Be the person to make someone feel valued and included. They will remember that forever.



"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

- Maya Angelou



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