



## Tips for networking and making a lasting impression

Who actually enjoys mingling with complete strangers? Not many of us! But if you want your business to succeed it is advisable that you get out of your comfort zone and start networking.

Networking is so simple and effective! Why? Because building a successful business today depends on making connections and of course making sure you offer exceptional customer service.

A lot of networking events give you the chance to participate in a discussion or ask questions. Provided you can add value, use this as the perfect opportunity to showcase your knowledge. Share an intelligent point, ask a good question or use a relevant analogy as this will show your professionalism and expertise.

1. **Key Tip:** Start Networking! Get on Google, Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook and search for local events. Make a list of the top 3 you would like to attend over the month, schedule them into your calendar and GO!

Leave an impression! 'Easier said than done', I can hear you say. When talking to people, be present. Maintain eye contact, show an interest, ask relevant and thought-provoking questions, listen attentively and respond quickly. While you're asking questions and chatting, listen closely for points you have in common. This will help you build rapport, which will make your new connection feel more at ease with you while giving them more reasons to remember you.

2. **Key Tip:** Make sure you understand the principle of active listening. This will help you to be more present and engaging when networking.

Add value when connecting. Remember that everyone is interested in what's in it for them, so try to approach them with a win-win outcome. Is there someone at the event you could introduce your new friend too? Do you know anyone who could help solve a challenge they may have? Do you know the person they would like to connect with? Could you suggest a good alliance for them? People always remember those who add value.

3. **Key Tip:** Make meaningful connections by adding value.

Use your appearance to stand out from the crowd. Be impeccably groomed, wear bright colours, nice shoes, distinctive jewellery or an interesting tie, even a nice perfume or cologne can capture attention and don't forget your business cards!

4. **Key Tip:** Be unique and stand out in the crowd

Have you ever collected a handful of business cards at a networking event and the next day wondered what you are going to do with them. Successful networking isn't about grabbing business cards and not doing anything with them. Build an amazing group of business besties and reach out to them and say hi!

5. **Key Tip:** Follow up after a networking event. Reach out and chat about business in general or how great it was to meet them and share how your business could benefit them or maybe you know a good alliance that they could connect with. Share ideas, ask feedback just make sure you connect after every networking event.

It's about connecting, making a lasting impression and building rapport so a relationship can start to be built even in the brief time you have with your new business bestie.

*The opportunities are truly endless when you start networking*