

Must-Do Tips No 38: The Rules of Networking Part 2

So your professionals know why they are at the seminar. Now all we have to do is get them to perform. Most of them know the drill backwards when it comes to the fee-earning work that they do. Unfortunately, many lack such a drill for business development when attending your expensively-wrought events.

“I don’t know what to do” “How do I talk to someone I’ve never met before?”

This month we offer three tips to help them do better at some of the ‘crunch’ points during a networking opportunity.

Tip 1 – upon entering a room...

...panic, make a bee-line for the safety of your colleagues, or just look like you’d rather be anywhere else. That’s how we see many people behave when entering the room full of many strangers that is your seminar. There are a number of tactics that they can employ to help achieve their aims (meet new people, develop prospective client relationships etc.) and to give them confidence. Like them all, this one is very simple. Most events contain people who are in exactly the same boat as your professionals. They are often alone, don’t know anyone, nervous, uncertain of how to behave - and very grateful when someone talks to them. These **wall-flowers** represent the best opportunity for first conversations. So target them.

Tip 2 – breaking in

There’s someone that you want to meet – but (s)he is engaged in conversation with two others, and has been for some time. What do you do? Well first, you need to assess the intensity of the conversation (body language here is the indicator). If it looks heavy, then best to try another time. If not, approach and join the group, making eye contact first with its members, listen, and then join in if you have a contribution. Of course it’s a bit more complicated than that – but not much.

Tip 3 – breaking out

Being stuck with someone - who is not relevant as a potential client or intermediary and/or is just plain boring - appears high on most professionals’ networking nightmare list. The best get-out clause we know is to tell a *palatable truth*. For example: “It’s been nice to meet you, but there are a number of people in the room that I must talk to before they leave, so I’m going to have to go”.



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Best regards.

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