

Must-do Tips No 77 - Networking At Noel

Alright....just as Rudolph and the reindeers, Santa and his elves, Ebenezer Scrooge, the Grinch and all the other festive characters are not renowned for their schmoozing abilities, so Christmas parties are not a traditional hothouse of good networking.

Indeed, the accent can be much more on other things.....like getting a bit too "merry"; creating karaoke hell for one's colleagues; falling asleep in the lift/elevator; or attempting to photocopy various hidden body parts for the embarrassing amusement of others in the months to come :-).

This is a pity because the sheer volume and concentration of partying at Noel offers much potential for those looking to make new contacts or refresh old ones. But there are some specific issues to address if you are to make the most of such gains. For those willing to give it a go, here are our three best pointers for capitalising on the merry mayhem of the season.

From all of us here at People Scope, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a (hopefully more) prosperous 2011.

Tip 1 – the early bird....

Being fashionably late to the average Xmas 'do' doesn't tend to work if you want to network. For the obvious reason that latecomers will usually be faced with a wall of inebriation from people who will talk varying degrees of nonsense that they are unlikely to remember afterwards! Get there within the first hour and work as hard as possible before you and the rest of the party hit the wall. Oh yes, and make a few notes there and then of what you discussed with whom.

Tip 2 - get invited to other parties

One of the most persistent moans from clients, managing partners, and business development directors alike is how 'unjoined up' are the various practice groups of many professional firms. For clients, it is because they have complex needs that often cross practice area boundaries and so which can remain unfulfilled; for the other two, it's because by sitting in departmental silos, their professionals fail to capitalise on chances to do more profitable business.

With an eye to such opportunity, seasoned operators make sure that they get invited to or attend as many other parties as possible in the firm (as well as their own), focusing on those practices where there is most overlap, and so where getting to know colleagues within them will deliver most return. The same goes for celebrations in relevant **external** organisations - in particular, those of other professional service providers, suppliers to the firm, and so on.

Tip 3 - have an aim (or two)

This is one of the biggest universal truths of doing business and so it applies here. If you are networking, set yourself a few specific aims and achieve them early (see Tip 1). Make sure that they are business-like and so very different to some of the usual Xmas ones (e.g. "meet at least two new partner contacts in Employment" rather than "sink as many tequila slammers as possible in the first 30 minutes"). That way something useful **will** be achieved...and you can still enjoy the party.

We run networking training events for professional firms who want to improve their capability and achievements. Hit 'Reply' and type **Noel Networking** if you want to know more.

For fuller information on us, what we do, and who we work with, go to our website at www.peoplescope.com. To further inspire, we have a suite of over 20 new workshops on **Client Relationship Management, Business Development** and **Leadership & Management**. These are available as off-the-shelf Master Classes and as tailored Bespoke courses, covering key areas from *Fundamentals of Practice Development, The Art of Cross Selling* and *Good Fee Negotiation* to *Professional Appraisals* and *Handling Difficult Situations & People*. A comprehensive, non-technical development resource. To find out more, just go to <http://www.peoplescope.com/training-programme.php>.

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We welcome feedback on what you think about "Must-Do Tips". If you like it hit 'Reply' and tell us specifically what you have enjoyed. If there is a topic or issue that you would like us to cover what is it? And if there is something that annoys, tell us too! We want to improve. Finally, if you do NOT wish to receive "Must-Do Tips", [unsubscribe]click here to unsubscribe[/unsubscribe]. Or press 'Reply' and type 'Unsubscribe': we will do exactly that.

Best regards.

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