

TOP TIPS FOR NETWORKING

CMC Business Psychology



USE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Understanding what you want to get from the networking session and by being clear on how others can help you makes it easier for you to communicate this to others. If this feels like a challenge, training in emotional intelligence – the ability to identify and manage one's own emotions and those of others – or understanding social styles (ways of interacting and making decisions) can turn you into a networking master.



LISTEN AND ENGAGE

Although talking about your own projects can help you make connections, it's just as important to listen to others and hear about their experiences. Engaging in conversation helps people feel they're being heard, but only if you react and respond to what they're telling you. As a two-way process, networking isn't just about what you can get from new contacts, it's about sharing your contacts, knowledge and information with others too – something all good networkers do well.



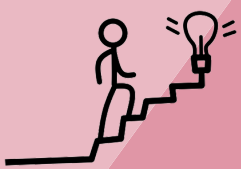
BE PREPARED

It's easy to become anxious about attending a networking event, so do some research beforehand to ease your nerves. Be prepared to explain who you are, what you do and how you do it. Your introduction can be adjusted depending on which event you are at and for what reason.



CONNECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Connecting on LinkedIn is a perfect way to stay in contact with the people you've met. When sending the invite, attach a personal message so the person remembers where they met you. This will also create a record you can refer to in the future should you come across this person again.



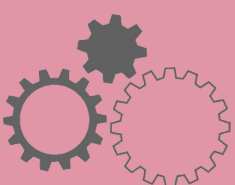
SOCIAL CAPITAL

This is the strength and diversity of your network. Think about who you need to connect with professionally to support your career and who you can rely on to support you. Make sure your network is diverse so you hear different views.



CHALLENGE YOUR THINKING

Make sure your networks challenge your ideas and knowledge. In an article from Harvard Business Review, successful leaders are characterised as those who allow themselves to be challenged and persuaded. Do your networks challenge your thinking?



HELP OTHERS

Networking is not just what you can get from your network, it's reciprocal. In his bestselling book, 'Psychology of Influence', Robert Cialdini mentions six principles of influence with the first being reciprocity. He states that the best way to network is to meet people and help them out. Once you've helped someone, they will be more likely to return the favour when you need it. Remember, this has to be done authentically, so help people sincerely with no expectation of return.