

Tips for Networking

While each meeting is unique, these tips can help you make the most of your networking efforts.

1. Be ready to network whenever and wherever—every individual is a potential contact.
2. Select a location and time that are convenient for the other person.
3. Be clear about your goal for the meeting.
4. Keep the meeting to the scheduled time, generally no more than 20 minutes.
5. Ask questions about industry trends, keys to being successful in the field, how to break into the sector, what the individual likes and dislikes about the sector, and sources for additional information.
6. Listen for challenges the individual's employer or industry is facing, and how those provide opportunities for you.
7. Never ask a networking contact for a job—they are providing you with information and should be the one to take the lead in discussing actual job opportunities.
8. Bring a resume or CV, but only offer to help the contact know more about you—not so it looks like you're soliciting a job.
9. Dress professionally, and in accordance with industry standards.
10. Send a thank you note to the networking contact after the meeting.
11. When you land a new position, close the loop and let your networking contacts know where you are and what you'll be doing.

Remember! Always send a thank you note to the networking contact after the meeting.

Questions to Uncover Hidden Job Opportunities

1. What trends are you seeing, in terms of hot opportunities or slowing sectors?
2. What opportunities and challenges do you see facing this market in the future?
3. What kinds of companies hire people with my type of professional background? How do you see the differences in opportunities at these various companies?
4. What are three key things to do to be successful in this field?
5. What advice do you have for someone looking to transition into the field?
6. What do you like and dislike about working in this sector?
7. (If the person is doing the type of job you would be doing) Could you describe a typical day? What kinds of projects/activities are you regularly involved in?
8. What do you like and dislike about your job?
9. How is decision-making handled among the senior management team—driven by specific parties or collaboratively?
10. How would you describe the company's organizational culture? Is this common for the industry?
11. Do you know anyone else with whom I could talk about this sector?

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