

Mastering the Art of Networking

A PRACTICAL GUIDE



INTRODUCTION

Learning How to Network With Confidence

Does networking get you excited, or do you secretly dread it?

For a lot of people, networking ranks right up there with public speaking as something they'd rather avoid. The thought of walking into a room full of strangers, balancing a drink in one hand and trying to make small talk can feel awkward and intimidating. But we're here to tell you some good news: networking doesn't have to be about "performing." When you reframe your attitude, networking is simply about curiosity, generosity and human connection. If you approach it with the right mindset, not only will it feel less intimidating – you might even start to get excited about it!

First, let's discuss why networking matters and how to shift your perspective so you can stop dreading it and start enjoying it.

Why Networking Matters (Even if You Don't Like It)

If you're reading this, chances are you work in a professional field where relationships matter. Maybe you network as part of your job. Maybe you're in sales, consulting, or running your own business and your success depends on the connections you build. It's easy to think of networking as optional or even a little superficial, but in reality, it's the foundation of nearly every opportunity in both life and business. The jobs you hear about first, the clients who find their way to you, the projects, introductions, and even the invitations that open new doors — most of them start with the people you know.

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Networking is the backbone of almost every opportunity in life and business.

When you look at it that way, networking isn't something you simply turn "on" or "off" during work hours or happy hour. The world is your networking field, whether you are sitting next to a stranger at a ballpark, talking to other parents in the PTA line, or making small talk with your wife's second cousin. Networking isn't trying to schmooze or collect business cards. It's about building a web of human connections that opens doors you wouldn't even know existed otherwise.

SECTION 1

Getting Excited about Networking



One of the biggest reasons people dread networking is because they feel like they're stepping onto a stage. They worry about saying the wrong thing, looking awkward, or not coming across as impressive. But here's the secret: You're not there to perform.

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You're not there to perform.

Networking isn't an audition. Nobody is expecting you to deliver a flawless pitch or wow strangers with your accomplishments. (In fact, they're very much hoping you don't!) People simply want to meet other people, have conversations, and see where those conversations might lead.

So before you meet a roomful of strangers, you want to reframe your mind to an attitude of curiosity. That's right – you want to keep it professional, but stop trying to be “interesting” to other people. You are there to be interested in THEM.

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Be interested, not interesting.

Think of how you can be useful to them, not the other way around. You are there to find out as much as you can about other people, not rattle off a list of products and services.

Instead of treating networking like a high-stakes performance or test, think of it as an adventure. You never know who you're going to meet or what surprising connections might unfold. Maybe you'll meet someone who shares your obscure hobby. Maybe you'll learn something new about your industry that you didn't know. Shift your mindset from "I need to impress people" to "I get to meet people."



Shift from "I need to impress people" to "I get to meet people."

Networking for Introverts

For the extroverts reading this, you might be thinking, "OK, I think I got this." If you're introverted, you may be thinking "HELP." Here are **five quick tips** to help get you in the right frame of mind.

- 1 One person at a time. Just focus on who is in front of you, not the entire room.
- 2 Curiosity beats charisma. Asking questions is more powerful than dazzling with stories.
- 3 Networking ≠ selling. Conversations, not commercials. Help, don't hustle.
- 4 It's OK to take breaks. Step outside, grab a drink, and recharge. You don't have to close the event down; you just want to show up and be purposeful.
- 5 Set small goals and work up. "If I meet three new people tonight, it's a win."

Now that you're in the right mindset, let's move on!

SECTION 2

Remembering Names



“I’m so bad at remembering names!” How many times have you heard this? One minute you’re shaking hands, the next minute you’re three minutes into their life story and you’re thinking, *“Wait, what was their name again?”*

Let’s take that phrase out of your vocabulary — remembering names isn’t as hard as it seems. With the right approach, you can master it with ease.

The 7 ‘TION’S of Remembering Names

- 1 Relaxation
- 2 Repetition
- 3 Utilization
- 4 Association
- 5 Recognition
- 6 Picturization
- 7 Finalization



Listen to professional coach Dave Brown of Southwestern Consulting explain *Seven Tips for Remembering Names*.

Reframe your self-talk from *“I can’t remember people’s names,”* to *“I’m getting better at remembering names!”* Or even, *“Remembering names is easy for me!”*

But What If I Still Forget?

That being said, let's be honest, forgetting someone's name happens from time to time; even the smoothest networkers forget on occasion. Maybe you met someone an hour ago and you've talked to a dozen people since then or you bump into them again at the bar later in the night. [Here are a few quick tips.](#)



Be up front.

"Sorry, I know we met at dinner, but can you remind me of your name?" Then repeat the name and continue making it stick with the "7 Tion's." Apologize once and move on.



Recall what you know.

"I'm blanking for a second – we were talking about great food in the downtown area, you like the dog parks there – and your name is..." And simply wait for them to fill in the blank. This lets them know you remember them and weren't tuned out on the conversation, you are just having a moment.



Introduce them to someone else.

If someone else is nearby, say *"Hey, have you met Sarah?"* – then pause, and they'll usually introduce themselves by name.



Ask the host (or a mutual friend).

Remind me, who is the guy in the blue shirt we were talking with earlier?"

SECTION 3

Knowing Your Value (and Values)



It's common for people to question their own value and wonder what they truly have to offer in networking situations. Knowing the unique combination of experience, expertise, and perspective you bring can be the key to more confident networking. When you approach connections with clarity about your value, you not only feel more confident, but you also create stronger relationships.



Listen to professional coach Adam Outland explain more about *Knowing Your Value*.

Your unique value proposition should essentially answer the question: *Why would someone want to connect with me or work with me?* It's more than your job title or a list of skills you have – it's the tangible benefits you provide.

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Unique value proposition: ***Why would someone want to connect with me or work with me?***

Knowing Your Unique Value FILL IN THE BLANKS

1 Why am I the best in my craft?

2 Why should someone want to work with me?

3 What unique perspectives or combinations of skills do I bring to the table?

4 How many years of experience do I have (or how do I make up for that in other ways)?

5 What is my “superpower” that sets me apart from other brands/professionals?

6 What results have I consistently delivered that others notice or rely on?

7 What challenges do I excel at solving that others struggle with?

Knowing Your Unique Value FILL IN THE BLANKS — Cont.

8 What do clients, co-workers or peers frequently praise me for?

9 How do my personal values shape the way I work and interact with others?

10 What experiences or skills do I have that are rare or hard to replicate in my industry?

As you meet people, you also want to audit them to determine whether they would be good fit or a good connection for your services.

For example, if they make several jokes about being cheap or finding the lowest price, they may not be a great fit if you offer high-end professional video services. If they mention giving back to the community and you also enjoy giving back to the community, you just found you have a like-minded interest or similarity.

Disclaimer: This is not about being unnecessarily picky and “ruling people out.” It’s simply about listening and learning as much as you can about a person’s likes, dislikes, preferences, and business needs. If you can service everyone, *great*. If you have to be selective, you want to make sure you identify the people who are the most likely candidates for your service.

How Will You Be Helpful?

Once you know your value and values, approach networking with the mindset: *How can I help this person?* Start by understanding their needs. Ask questions. What challenges are they facing? What opportunities are they pursuing? By listening carefully, you can identify where your skills, knowledge, or connections could make a difference.

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Once you know your values, approach networking with the mindset:
How can I help this person?

SECTION 4

Creating a Headline Statement



When going to any form of networking event, large or small, it's inevitable: you're going to get asked "What do you do?" over and over again. You need a short, 20-30 second explanation of what you do – specifically the *value* you provide, *not* a 1-2 minute explanation of where you work or what your job title is. This is often called a "headline statement."

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A headline statement is a short explanation of the value you provide, not where you work or what your job title is.

For example, instead of, "I'm a marketing manager at ABC company," you might say, *"I help brands stop blending in by turning their marketing from background noise into business growth,"* or *"I turn scattered marketing efforts into clear strategies that actually move the needle."*

This phrases what you do in terms of your audience's pain point, or the problem you solve with your line of work, and allows for the follow-up question *"How do you do that?"* or *"Interesting – tell me more!"* Then you can open up more about how you provide said product or service.

Headline Statements



Pharmaceutical Sales

“My role is connecting healthcare providers with the latest solutions that make patient care easier and more effective.”

Insurance Agent

“I help families make sure unexpected events don’t become financial disasters.”

Interior Decorator

“I turn houses into homes by creating spaces that reflect who people are and how they want to live.”

Graphic Designer

“I help brands look as good as they really are.”



Listen to professional coach Gena Parker of Southwestern Consulting explain more about crafting a good headline statement.

SECTION 5

Quality Over Quantity



When most people hear the word “networking,” they think of crowded conference halls and handing out business cards like candy at Halloween. While building a large network certainly has its advantages, quality nearly always trumps *quantity*.

What we mean is, a few well-nurtured, meaningful connections can open more doors than dozens of shallow introductions. Real opportunities come from people who know you well enough to trust you, recommend you, or collaborate with you - not just names in a contact card.

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When you focus on quality rather than quantity, networking stops feeling like a numbers game and starts becoming an authentic way of growing relationships.

Networking doesn’t always mean meeting 50 new people in a week. Sometimes it means taking the time to deepen relationships with five people you already know. One way to focus on quality networking is to intentionally create shared experiences that bring like-minded people together.



Invite people of common interests (realtors, financial professionals, etc.)



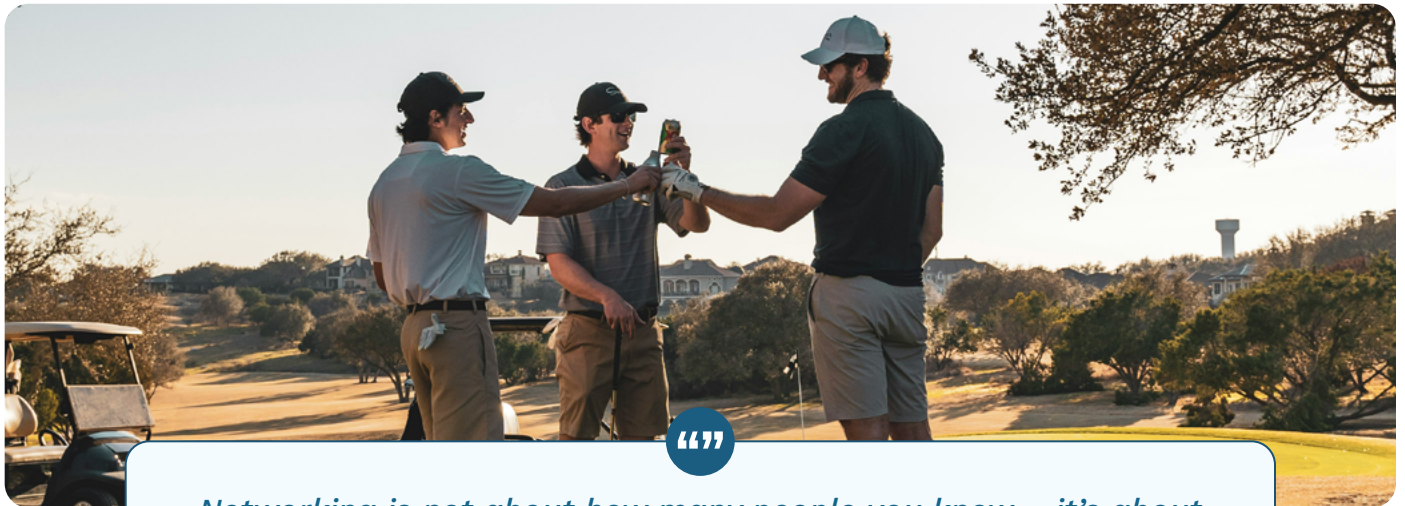
Consider themes: What activities fit the season?



Consider hobbies or shared interests (ex. sporting event, trivia night, etc.)

Start by inviting people with common interests. Maybe you and several contacts share a love of business books – consider forming a small book club. Or if fitness or golf is a mutual interest, organize a Saturday morning hike or Sunday afternoon tee time. Consider a ladies night at a pottery class or guys hang at a baseball game. These informal, interest-based gatherings not only strengthen relationships but gives people a chance to connect outside the pressure of formal business settings or happy hours.

It can also help to think about seasonal themes when planning networking activities. In the summer, you might host a casual barbeque or invite colleagues to a local outdoor concert. Consider a Tuesday taco night or spring social at a local park. When networking is tied to the rhythm of the year, it feels natural rather than forced.



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Networking is not about how many people you know – it's about how well you know the right people.

SECTION 6

Networking Preparation



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ANTHONY MERKEL
SWC SALES AND LEADERSHIP COACH

Listen to professional coach Anthony Merkel of Southwestern Consulting discuss how a little networking preparation goes a long way.

We just talked about how networking isn't just a numbers game, but a strategy game. And the difference between walking into a room and leaving with a handful of business cards that end up in a drawer versus walking out with 3-4 solid connections that turn into opportunities often comes down to *preparation*.

Don't show up and wing it! A little preparation before you step into a networking environment can radically improve your effectiveness. Rather than hoping to "bump into the right people," you're entering the room with a plan and a sense of purpose.

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*The difference between leaving with a handful of business cards that end up in a drawer versus walking out with 3-4 solid connections often comes down to **preparation**.*



Find out who the organizers or key people are at the event.

Consider asking them who to strategically connect with.

Introduce yourself digitally beforehand.

Ask for a quick pre-introduction.

Identify the Key Players

Every group has its “regulars,” or organizers, who form the core of the group. It may be the person who runs the event or the veteran attendees who have been showing up for years. Identifying who those people are is your first step in networking preparation.

Before attending, do some research. If it’s a recurring networking industry event, check the website for an organizing committee or speaker list. If it’s a networking group, scan their LinkedIn page to see who is most active. Once you know who the key players are, make it a point to seek them out – not only to connect with them personally, but to *build around them*. They are often the ones who can introduce you to others, give you context about the group, and point you toward opportunities that may not be obvious at first glance.



Ask the Right Questions

Once you've identified these people, one of the best ways to orient yourself quickly is by asking a few strategic questions.



- What is the overall goal of the group?
- Who are other key members of that group?
- Who should I connect with?

What is the overall goal of the group?

Knowing whether a group exists for socializing, professional development, lead generation, or industry learning shapes how you show up in conversations. A social group, for instance, will have different norms than one focused on skill-building.

Who are the other key members of the group?

Finding out who the “anchors” are will help you focus your energy where it's most likely to yield value.

Who should I connect with?

This simple question can save you hours of trial and error. Asking an organizer or member helps target your efforts toward the people most relevant to your goals.

Walking into a room with no idea who is there or who you want to talk to is a recipe for wasted time.



Get a Pre-Event Introduction

Don't wait until the event starts to look for all these strangers in a crowd. In today's connected world, introductions can and should begin before you ever shake a hand. A simple message on LinkedIn or other social platforms can help you make a quick connection before the event.

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“Hi [Name], Sherry said you were attending [event] or are a regular at [event]. I'm really looking forward to it as well. I'd love to get your thoughts beforehand on how to make the most of it.”

This does two things: it makes you familiar to them before the event and sets up a warmer conversation in person. Instead of walking up to a total stranger, you're now continuing a dialogue that has already begun.

Even posting on your own social feed can help.

This increases your visibility, prompts interactions and signals to others that you're approachable.

To really accelerate things (as mentioned), get a warm introduction from someone already involved in the group. This could be as simple as asking the organizers for a quick introduction via email with some of the people they recommend, or asking a mutual connection to send a quick LinkedIn message: *“Hi [Name], meet [your name]. He's also attending [event], and I think you'd have a lot in common. Just wanted to introduce you both here so you can connect!”*

Now when you show up, you're no longer navigating the room alone. You're on a mission to find your new networking friends. And because you've been “vouched for” by someone they trust, you begin with credibility that might otherwise take weeks or months to establish.

And remember, don't “close” at a networking event! You are there to make new connections and continue the conversation further, *not* give a sales pitch or ask for their business on the spot.

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Don't “close” at a networking event! You're there to make connections not give a sales pitch.

SECTION 7

Working a Room



OK, now let's get down to working a room! As mentioned, as much as possible, you're going to do pre-approach first and have an idea who you want to talk to. This doesn't mean you ignore everyone else, only that you have clear priorities on where to start.



ANTHONY MERKEL
SWC SALES AND LEADERSHIP COACH

Listen to Anthony discuss how to work a room with a few key tips.

SWC

Let Others Open the Door For You

Walking up to people who already know each other chatting in circles can feel daunting, even for the most extroverted networker. That's why warm introductions are gold! During the event, don't hesitate to leverage the people you already know. If you're chatting with someone who is well-connected, you might say *"You know a lot of people here – who do you think I should meet tonight?"* This also gives you immediate credibility with the person you are trying to approach. They have already met (and presumably trust) the person introducing the two of you.

Manage Your Time and Don't Get Stuck

One of the most common mistakes in networking is spending too much time with one person. You might hit it off, or the conversation might be comfortable and you're tired, but if you're at an event designed for networking, you want to keep moving. In certain cases, *you* might be the one being held captive by an enthusiastic networker who has gone down a long-winded path about a favorite topic. It's OK to interrupt someone gracefully and politely. *"Hey [Name], I want to hear this, but can we circle back to what we were talking about earlier?"* when someone has gone on a tangent for way too long.

In cases where you need to leave the conversation entirely and keep circulating, it's helpful to have a few exit strategies ready.

Polite Exit Strategies



The Handoff

"Hand" them off or introduce them to another person



Undeniable Excuse

"Please excuse me, I need to take a call, grab a coffee, use the bathroom," etc.



Gentle Exit

"This has been great, I love it! There's some more people I need to speak with but let's follow-up!" [walking away]

Networking events are about flow. Spending 10 minutes with someone is great, but 30-45 minutes often means you've missed the chance to connect with others, depending on the size of the event.

The Business Card Pocket Technique

Business cards may seem old-fashioned in the digital age, but they're still widely used. One classic trick is the "right pocket, left pocket" method. "Right" is *right*...put people who are good fits for what you do that you want to follow up with in your right pocket, and those who are nice to know, but not immediate opportunities in your left. This ensures you don't get home at the end of the night with a wad of 20 cards, and you can't remember who said what.



Left Pocket

Nice to meet you



Right Pocket

Right for follow-up

In today's digital world, you can take it a step further — after the event, pull out those "right pocket" cards and connect with people on LinkedIn within 24 hours.

Remember, hanging out with your friends is not networking! It's OK to touch base with them: "Who do you know that I should meet?" but keep moving! Otherwise you'll waste 30 minutes talking to people you already know, about topics you already know.



For more professional tips, watch this additional video from Anthony.

SECTION 8


How to Show Up and Shine



Sometimes networking can feel little like speed dating. You have a limited amount of time to feel the other person out, get to know them and decide if it's worth continuing a relationship or conversation. It can seem intimidating! But it doesn't have to be.

Networking isn't about being the most charismatic or charming person in the room. By practicing a few intentional habits, you can make others feel comfortable and seen.

**Navigating
Networking Events**



SEEMA BHATT
Professional Sales & Leadership Coach

Listen to professional coach Seema Bhatt of Southwestern Consulting explain how to show up at networking events and crush it.

Look for Open Groups to Join

Ideally you have a list of people or idea of whom you might want to approach. But sometimes you find yourself at informal networking events like a wedding, party, happy hour, or other event where you don't know where to start.

One of the easiest ways to feel less awkward at an event is to scan the room for people who look approachable. These are the folks with open body language, not buried in their phones or closed off in a tight circle. Walking up to someone who is already "open" increases your chances of being welcomed warmly. If this feels tricky at first, practice identifying open groups when you are *not* at a networking event – routine events like work, church, or school events – so you will be able to more readily spot the body language signs in networking situations.

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Scan the room for people who look “open” or aren’t in closed off groups.

Smile and Give a Genuine Compliment

It sounds obvious, but a genuine smile is one of the most powerful networking tools you have. People naturally gravitate and welcome those who look friendly and positive, especially in an environment where everyone is trying to make connections. Smiling also helps you by lowering stress, calming your nerves, and subconsciously telling your body to relax.

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A genuine smile is one of the most powerful networking tools you have.

The second part of a great first impression is a genuine compliment. Sincere compliments are one of the best icebreakers. Work with what you have, something simple like, “I love your bag,” or “Great hat, man! Are you a Cardinals fan?” You can also try compliments like:

- *“I really enjoyed your question during the Q&A – it made me think about things differently.”*
- *“You looked so composed and natural onstage during the panel.”*
- *“I admire how clearly you just explained that!”*

Know Your Go-To Questions

One of the biggest networking fears is running out of things to say. That's why it helps to arrive with a mental list of interesting, open-ended questions.

If you can, stay away from: "What do you do?" or "Where do you work?" Unless you are the first person they have interacted with, they've likely already answered this 5-6 times.

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*Stay away from questions like **“What do you do?”** or **“Where do you work?”***



Instead, try questions like:

- *“How did you hear about this event?”*
- *“How did you get into your line of work?”*
- *“What do you enjoy most about your job?”*
- *“What skill has helped you the most in your career?”*
- *“What’s one fun thing you’re looking forward to this month?”*

For more ideas, see our sample list of networking questions.

Sample Networking Questions

Use this list of sample networking questions to get you started, and feel free to add your own.

- 1 How did you hear about this event?
- 2 What types of networking events do you usually go to?
- 3 How did you get into your line of work?
- 4 What project are you most excited about right now?
- 5 What do you enjoy most about your job?
- 6 What's the best career advice you've had?
- 7 What skill has helped you the most in your career?
- 8 If someone wanted to break into your field, what advice would you give them?
- 9 Do you use AI at all with your job? I'm always looking for new tools that make things easier.
- 10 What's your favorite part of your workday?
- 11 What's the most interesting place your job has taken you?
- 12 How has your job changed the most over the past few years?
- 13 What book/podcast are you reading/listening to right now?
- 14 What's one fun thing you've got going on this month?
- 15 Who do you follow on social media (LinkedIn, X, etc.) to stay on top of industry news?
- 16 Do you prefer working remotely, in office, or a mix of both?
- 17 What goal do you have this year?
- 18 If you weren't in this field, what would you be doing instead?
- 19 What trend are you most excited about in your industry right now?
- 20 Did you always know you wanted to work in [blank]?
- 21 How do you usually spend your time outside of work?
- 22 Do you have a favorite productivity hack or go-to morning routine?
- 23 Who's been the biggest influence on your career so far?
- 24 What's your favorite way to unwind after a busy week?
- 25 Do you like to travel or travel often for work?
- 26 Do you come to this side of town (area) often? I've been looking for new restaurants to try.
- 27 Do you have any guilty pleasure TV shows at the moment? I've been looking for something new to start!
- 28 My [dog Astros] is probably going crazy right now while I'm away. Do you have any pets?
- 29 What's your favorite part of events like this?
- 30 Are there other groups or organizations you'd recommend?

Tip: Don't use too many questions! Remember, this isn't an interrogation. You're just trying to find common ground and many of these lead to other natural questions and prompts. Find a few that you feel most comfortable or natural using.

SECTION 9

Following Up



Networking events are just the starting point. The real magic happens afterward when you follow up and build on those connections.

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*If you're going through all the trouble to network, **don't blow it by not following up!***

Timing is key...you want to follow up promptly, before the interaction fades in the mind of your new acquaintance. Remember, they likely met dozens of people just like you did. Plan to follow up within 24-48 hours of the event.

Here's a sample of what this might look like:

Same day (if possible): Connect on LinkedIn with a brief, personalized note.

Within 24-48 hours: Send a follow-up message or email that references your conversation and offers any next steps, like more information or coffee, **if** a detailed conversation was had, and that would be comfortable. If not, see “within the week” below to warm them up first. Use good judgment as to whether an “ask” is appropriate within the first 24-48 hours, or if the contact needs a little more nurturing. But you do want to reach out and make contact after the event, so they don't forget you.

Within the week: Like, comment, or share something from their page that week. Also consider sharing something of value with them like an article, introduction, or industry insight.

Finding the Right Message

With any follow-up messages, keep it brief and positive:



Personalization: Reference something specific from your conversation.

““”
| *“Hey Juan! It was great to meet you. We don’t often get many
| Philly fans in Denver.”*



Gratitude: Thank them for their time or insight.

““”
| *Thanks for sharing the tip on using [AI tool] for productivity,
| introducing me to Alyssa, etc.”*



Next step: Suggest a way to keep the connection alive.

““”
| *“I’d love to continue the conversation, perhaps over coffee or a quick
| phone call.”*

““”
| *“I saw this new article on LinkedIn and thought of what you said about
| real estate prices.”*

““”
| *“There’s a group of us financial planners getting together after work on Thursday
| for drinks and I can introduce you to some more people if you’re interested.”*

Keep the ask *light* – a 20-minute call feels more manageable and specific than an open-ended request, “Can we get together sometime?” If someone doesn’t respond to your first message, wait a week and send a gentle nudge. Something like: *“Hi [Name], just wanted to follow up on my note from last week. No rush at all – I’d love to continue our conversation when it’s convenient for you.”*

Not every connection will pan out, and that’s OK! Focus your time and energy on those who are responsive.

SECTION 10

Networking Tips for Introverts



If you're still a little hesitant about networking, remember: at its core networking is simply about building meaningful connections. And that's something introverts are naturally good at when they approach networking in a way that plays to their strengths!

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*Networking is simply about building meaningful connections.
And that's something introverts are naturally good at.*

Here are a few extra strategies to help you feel more confident.

Bring a Buddy

Networking doesn't have to be a solo mission! Bringing a friend can make the experience less intimidating with one important caveat: ***Don't cling to your buddy all night.***

Instead, make a plan. Resist the urge to go around together all night. Practice your individual networking skills and circle back to check in. Your buddy is there. They're not going anywhere. Branch out and use the opportunity to meet more people by introducing each other to people you just met. Used well, a networking buddy can double your exposure while giving you confidence. It also provides accountability for showing up and forcing yourself to network.

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*Networking doesn't
have to be a solo
mission. Show up
together, then split
up to meet people.*

Start at Familiar Events

Nothing makes you feel more out of your element than being in a foreign environment where you don't know the people or the venue/subject matter. Practice your networking skills in places where you are familiar with the event and know the lay of the land. This might be a favorite restaurant or a sporting complex you've been to over and over. It might be an alumni event where you know the stumping grounds well, and at least you know everyone in the room is a graduate of your alma mater. Once you get comfortable in familiar environments where your brain isn't having to work as hard, you'll gradually begin to feel more confident in more complex networking places.

Set Small Goals

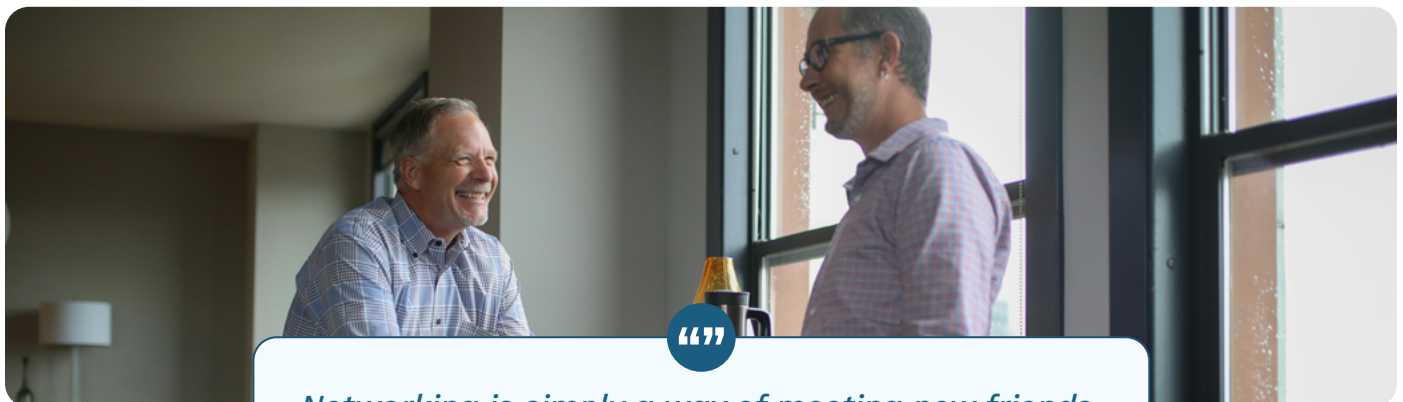
When going to an event, give yourself a goal: "I'm going to speak to at least 10 different people," or "My goal is to find 2-3 genuine connections." Start small and go from there. You don't have to conquer the room or pass out 20 business cards in one try.

If networking for hours seems too intimidating, try giving yourself a shorter goal: permission to leave after a certain amount of time. Resist the urge to show up for 20 minutes and leave! At least half the networking time is a good benchmark if you need to start small and the entire event block is overwhelming. You just want to get the reps in. You may surprise yourself and find that it's not so bad, and once there you can go longer than you thought!

Make a Monthly Commitment

If you're introverted, networking likely isn't just going to show up on your calendar. There will always be an excuse to not go, leave early, cancel plans, etc. **Set a goal and hold yourself to it!** Maybe it's one to two networking events a month that you deliberately pencil in to hone your skills.

If you find it hard to get out of the house, remember networking is simply a way of meeting new friends. This has the dual goal of sharpening your skillset and growing your social sphere at the same time.



“”

Networking is simply a way of meeting new friends.

BONUS SECTION

Networking Affirmations



Networking can feel especially intense for those who consider themselves introverts or don't thrive in high-energy social settings. Practice networking affirmations to turn off negative thoughts and put yourself in a positive state of mind.

Networking affirmations train the brain to focus on strengths rather than insecurities. The key is framing them around something positive or the end goal – not saying things that aren't true. Instead of "I'm great at networking!" Or "I can really work a room!" think: "*With each event, I get better,*" or "*People are open to meeting me.*" Repeat your affirmations right before a networking event.

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Networking affirmations turn off negative thoughts and put you in a more confident state of mind.

Below are some sample networking affirmations. Feel free to borrow from the list below until you create your own!

Sample Affirmations

- *“People can’t wait to meet me.”*
- *“I’m a great conversationalist when I get going.”*
- *“I don’t need to meet everyone – just the right people for me.”*
- *“People are open to meeting me and hearing my story.”*
- *“Smiling makes me approachable and helps me connect.”*
- *“I radiate confidence with every interaction!”*
- *“Listening deeply is one of my superpowers.”*
- *“I don’t need the perfect words; I just need to be present.”*
- *“Every conversation is a chance to learn something new!”*
- *“I can start small, one conversation at a time.”*
- *“I have unique experiences and insights to share.”*
- *“Each new person I meet expands my possibilities.”*
- *“Networking is not about selling myself; it’s about new relationships.”*
- *“With each event, I’m getting better!”*
- *“Others want to connect with me as much as I want to connect with them!”*
- *“I leave each event feeling proud of myself for showing up.”*

Conclusion



Like anything else, practice makes perfect! Pick a handful of the tips in this guide to practice and start with those. When you've mastered those, work up to more!

“”

With a little practice, you'll be on your way to being a networking ninja in no time!

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37

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