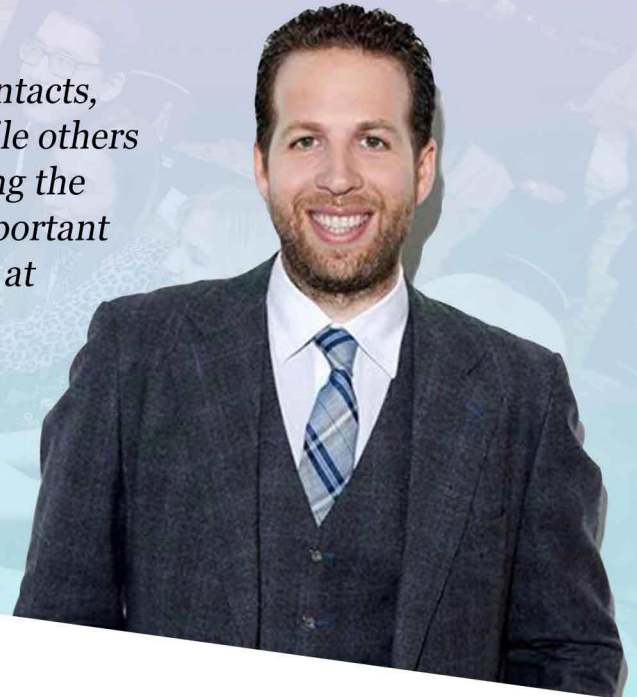


How to effortlessly make connections at events?

COMMUNICATE WISELY!

Why do some people get lots of helpful contacts, advice and interesting offers at events while others leave empty-handed? It's all about knowing the laws of networking. Here are the most important ones that will help you be in the spotlight at any event and get the most out of it:



01 Connect offbeat

Many people prefer straightforward introductions: "Hello, what is your name? Let's exchange our business cards!" It's a bad way to start communicating. It displays you as a quantity-driven, not a quality-driven person. Better leave the stereotypes behind.

For example, at a business conference you can approach the person you are interested in and say: "I really like the question that you asked the speaker. I never even looked at the problem from this angle. Thank you! I'm Gil, networking mastery coach, pleased to meet you."

During the lunch break you can use the following move: "Better try that shrimp salad, it's really delicious. Do you happen to know the recipe? I have just returned from Singapore and brought a recipe of the best salad in the world. By the way, I'm Gil, networking mastery coach."

Write down your examples of an offbeat introduction:

1,

2,

3,



Better take cue from the situation. Sometimes you need to do a person a small favor – hold the door or pick up a dropped pencil – to start interaction. It also looks great when the first thing you say to a person is a compliment. Tell them you like their tie, cardholder or glass rim, but please be sincere in what you say.

By the way, people always like sincerity. Sometimes a strong partnership or friendship starts with the words: "Oh, I hate this networking stuff. May I just stand beside you?"

A great way to start a conversation is to ask an open question. That means a question that doesn't require a simple "yes" or "no" as an answer. For example, instead of "Do you like the event?" you can ask: "How do you like this event?"

In the beginning of your question use such words as "what", "why", "what for", "which" etc. For example, when you ask "What are your priorities right now?" or "What kind of business are you in?", you open the dialog and let the person tell more about him or herself.

Write down your examples of open questions:

1,

2,

3,

More enthusiasm



Have a 30-second self-presentation ready. You will definitely be asked about your job and fields of expertise at the event. Practice your speech at home, you may even ask your family for constructive feedback. The main rule of a good self-presentation: be enthusiastic about it! The point is not to show off your achievements but to show that you like what you do.

For example, if you are a life coach, don't limit yourself to "I am in personal growth training business". Better say that you improve the quality of people's lives, help them reach their goals and make them happy. People full of energy and enthusiasm are always pleasant to communicate with.

Write down your self-presentation:

Phones away

Non-verbal communication is also very important for establishing contact. For example, if you look sideways and not at the person you are currently talking to, it is not hard to guess that you are bored and your thoughts are somewhere far away. It is entirely unacceptable to check email on your smartphone or answer text messages while you are in the middle of a conversation.

If you have come to a networking event, leave your telephone behind. It's a shame to see people that keep holding it while communicating. That means that any phone call will become their top priority and make them forget about the person they are currently talking to. In that case it is hard to believe that you are truly interested in the person in front of you.



04 “I am listening!”

Perhaps the most important and the most difficult networking rule is to listen to your conversation partners and show sincere interest in their words. Don't get carried away by your personal stories, ask questions, nod, smile and keep eye contact.

Of course, you are not immune to excessive use of your attention. Seeing a sympathetic listener in you, your conversation partner can start telling you long stories about his or her life or obtrusively selling you their business consulting services. In that case you should know how to end the conversation. Your objective is not to spend a whole hour with one person but to meet at least 10-15 people.

Learn how to control conversations and end them in timely manner. Exchanging your business cards is a perfect moment to leave. You may follow it with: “It was a pleasure talking to you. Let's keep contact. I hope I can be of value to you in the future”.



05 Help people

The main networking principle says: “Don't expect services from others, be of service to them”. At any event introduce people to each other, ask them: “How can I help you?” Being interested in people and being useful for them automatically makes you a people magnet.



10 Tips to Boost Your Efficiency at a Networking Event

01
Arrive early but not too early. This tip is particularly useful for introverts. You will feel more comfortable if you arrive at the event before it becomes crowded. Besides, chances are that people arriving later will want to make the first step towards you. So, you won't have to initiate a conversation yourself.

02
Talk to the people you don't know. Approach groups of 3+ people, chat with loners but don't be rude – never interrupt a private chat.

03
Don't spend too much time with one person. You are here to make contacts, not a contact. Don't stay with one person for the whole night. End conversations before you or the other person gets tired of it.

04
Practice small talk. Use an introductory phrase, then share emotions – tell about something that has touched you recently. Out of words? Look around and say something about the event.

05
Do not sell! Think strategic partnerships and always think “How can I help you?” Win-win situation, remember?

06
Always watch your image. Before shaking somebody's hand make sure yours is clean and dry. Watch what you eat and keep some mints with you. And for God's sake, don't get drunk! Drink lots of water if you can't avoid alcohol.

07
Contacting people means you need to get their contacts and give them yours. So, business cards are a must. Have them close but don't give them to people until you are asked for them. Ask for the other person's business card before offering yours. Make sure not to mix “in” and “out” cards, use different pockets.

08
Always have a pen with you. You never know when you may need to write down a brilliant thought or hand out your dentist's phone number.

09
Be a bridge: not only interact with people yourself but introduce them to each other. It really does wonders with your reputation!

10
Treat people like the Crown's jewels: they are your main asset!

Remember that your main trump card in communication is sincerity and naturalness. Smile and enjoy new encounters. And you will surely fill your life only with good communication partners that you will establish great relationship with.

*Gil Petersil,
Your Networking Mastery Coach*



Want more useful tips on networking?

Follow me on social media:

