

## Nine Steps to Effective Networking

### 1. Plan ahead and develop your 30-second elevator speech.

- a. State your name and what company you represent.
- b. Ask a question with which people can relate.
- c. Tell them what you can do about the situation.

### 2. Be selective about the people and purposes for networking.

- a. If you know people, get to the movers and shakers.
- b. If you don't know anyone, try and meet as many people as possible. Walk up to them and introduce yourself. Instead of saying that you are in the catering business, say something like: "I help plan perfect parties with perfect food."

### 3. Keep eye contact; make others feel they are the only person in the room.

- a. When talking to someone, don't look around the room for who else is there.
- b. While you are with that individual, it is all about him or her.

### 4. Build relationships with others.

- a. Build friendships with others. Who knows what kind of contacts that individual has and can influence?
- b. Networking is NOT about sitting only with your friends, eating lunch, listening to the speaker and then leaving.

### 5. Ask open-ended questions – any question that can't be answered by yes or no.

- a. Ask them about themselves, what they do and about their business.
- b. Don't say anything about yourself until you are asked.

### 6. When asked, tell them about yourself.

- a. Give them some information about the services you offer and results achieved.
- b. Tell them why you love what you do in a way that is interesting and engaging.
- c. Tell them a story about a client that you have helped.

### 7. Search for the double-win, the all-important referral.

- a. Always focus on how you can help the other person succeed.
- b. Ask: "If I meet someone who needs your services, may I refer you to them? May I have one of your cards?"
- c. Also ask: "If you meet any people who need this kind of service, I'd be happy to help them. Here's my card."

### 8. Offer your business card and make sure you get theirs.

- a. Make yourself a note regarding what you promised you would do for them.
- b. Then follow-up on your promise.

### 9. Use the business cards to send a personal note.

- a. Through email or with personal note cards, send a message.
- b. In the message, indicate what you plan to do and what you expect of them.
- c. Keep in touch and continue building on the relationship after the event.

