



**Be Prepared** have your **networking tools** with you at all times, including an ample supply of business cards, any collateral material (flyers, brochures, etc), and your marketing message (often referred to as your elevator speech).

**Arrive early** so that you can relax and focus on learning about the other people in the room. **Preparation** goes a long way in making you appear to be someone that other people will want to get to know. People do business with people they like and you will be judged by others, like it or not, based on their first impression of you.

**Have a plan** know, before going in, what the outcome is that you want for yourself or for the people you meet at each event. Do you want to meet 3 people and focus on getting to know them really well? Are you looking for an introduction to a certain type of client? Are you looking for information or connections that will get you that information? When you have **a plan**, it is easier to stay **focused** and **achieve** your expected **outcome**.

**Be a giver and/or a Connector** When you focus on "giving" and being helpful to others, the "getting" will come later and it will come in unexpected ways. People generally do business with people that they **respect, trust, and like**. Act like a host at every event you attend by connecting people. This can be a simple act of introducing 2 people to each other or as elaborate as giving a testimonial about 1 person and their services to the entire group. All of these acts allow you to focus on the "other" and grows your social capital in the room.

**Leave your troubles behind** Put on a happy face at the door and remind yourself that it is "**show time**". This is your time to sparkle and shine. People will look forward to seeing you and meeting you if you are **energetic, positive, and outgoing** but not OTT. Again, people enjoy doing business with people that they like.

**Listen with focus** when someone is speaking with you; give that person your entire focus. **Listen**. Really hear what the person is saying. Keep your eyes and ears focused and keep your self talk and thoughts focused too.

**Be genuine** everyone knows when someone is "schmoozing". Again, it comes back to building trust, to building "brand YOU". There is a huge difference between being **interested** and in trying to be interesting.

**Do teach/don't sell** the immediate sale of a product/service is not the goal. Networking is about **building relationships** with people who will be happy to tell others about who you are and what you do. Word of mouth advertising/PR is the most cost effective and powerful advertising/PR.

**Follow up** after the event; send an email to each person that you had direct contact with. Mention something from your discussion in the email (it helps if you jot notes on the back of each person's business card that you collect). If there is a referral that you can supply to someone you've just met, include that in the follow up note.

**Showing up** and **following up** are the two most important parts of networking. Showing up, in most cases, is the easy part. The follow up is, sadly, the most neglected part of networking. Since so many people fail to follow up, you can really **stand out** by just doing this simple act of reaching out to remind someone of who you are and what you do and that you are interested in exploring a **relationship**.

**Follow up some more!** Depending on where you look, marketing statistics state that it takes 7 to 12 impressions for a consumer to make a buying decision. It is more likely to take 15 - 20 impressions before you make the **connections** that you are looking to build! Meeting face to face is the 1st impression. An email, a phone call, a lunch date ... don't stop after 1 or 2 impressions. **Keep going!!**