

## 10 Social Networking Tips

1. **Keep in mind that networking is about being genuine** and authentic, building trust and relationships, and seeing how you can help others.
2. **Clarify your goals in participating in networking meetings** so that you will pick groups that will help you get what you are looking for.
3. **Be able to articulate what you are looking for and how others may help you.** Too often people in conversations ask, "How may I help you?" and no immediate answer comes to mind.
4. **Be ready to engage.** When you arrive at a meeting, event, party or anywhere in which many conversations will take place, prepare yourself. Be "ready to engage" with conversation topics, questions and stories in the back of your mind ready to go as soon as you meet someone.
5. **No Fear** *They won't say hello back to me. They won't be interested in me. I will make a fool of myself.* This is the number one reason people don't start conversations. However, practice will make this fear fade away. The more often you start conversations, the better you will become at it. So, be the first to introduce yourself or say hello. When you take an *active* instead of a *passive* role, your skills will develop and there will be less of a chance for rejection. Also understand the gains vs. losses. For example, what's so bad about a rejection from someone you don't even know?
6. **Ask open-ended questions in networking conversations.** This means questions that ask who, what, where, when, and how as opposed to those that can be answered with a simple yes or no. This form of questioning opens up the discussion and shows listeners that you are interested in them.
7. **Search Common Point of Interest.** It's an essential element to every conversation and interaction. Your duty, as you meet new people, or even as you talk with those you already know, is to discover the CPI as soon as possible. It connects people to you. It allows them to feel more comfortable talking to you. And it increases your approachability inasmuch as people will be magnetized to you due to the commonality you share.  
Ask questions that begin with "What's your favorite..." "Tell me the best..." or "When was the last time..."  
The CPI is almost guaranteed to be discovered.
8. **Pitch In.** Don't forget to prepare your elevator pitch. You'll need it to introduce yourself to people at a networking event. An elevator pitch is brief -- brief enough to share during an elevator ride. In your pitch, give a three-minute summary of who you are, your experience and abilities. Practice your pitch before the networking event so that it'll sound natural. Be confident, but not pushy. Remember, a networking event isn't a formal interview. And don't forget to smile.
9. **Call those you met who may benefit from what you do and vice versa.** Express that you enjoyed meeting them, and ask if you could get together and share ideas.
10. **Create your page on LinkedIn.com** and ensure your Facebook page is "readable" by HR professionals, as they may well check-it

## THE WISDOM OF DALE CARNEGIE IN FOUR BULLET POINTS

Dale Carnegie literally wrote *the* book on networking in 1936. ***How to Win Friends and Influence People*** demystified the process of making friends out of strangers and inspired legions of business coaches to carry on Carnegie's message.

### **Smile:**

This is such a simple, basic rule, yet people just don't think about it. They're so focused on needing to network at a conference that they don't realize they're walking around with a scowl on their face. Scowling, serious, expressions are forbidding. People are more likely to warm up to someone who says good morning with a broad smile than they are to someone with a dour countenance.

### **Ask a question:**

Joining a group engaged in conversation can be awkward. The best way to do so is to pose a question to the group after getting the gist of the conversation. You build your credibility by asking a question, and for a shy person, that's a much easier way to engage than by barging in with an opinion.

### **Listen:**

One of the most profound points Carnegie made in *How to Win Friends* was that people love to talk about themselves. If you can get people to discuss their experiences and opinions—and listen with sincere interest—you can have a great conversation with someone without having to say much at all.

### **Say the person's name:**

People like to hear their own name, pointing to another one of Carnegie's basic principles—that a person's name is the sweetest sound to that person. So when you meet someone, use his name in conversation. Doing so makes the other person feel more comfortable, like you really know him and he knows you.