

Networking do's and don'ts

Networking do's

Before the event, focus on getting up to speed on the individuals and their industry or group. Find out who is going and come up with some conversation starters.

Speak your name clearly (first and last).

Maintain good posture and eye contact and smile when introducing yourself. Use a firm handshake.

Make personal connections about hobbies, interests, etc.

Approach people who you don't know and engage (especially those who are by themselves). Be the one who initiates.

Be ready with your elevator pitch / value proposition. Short, crisp, authentic and conversational answers to questions like, "What do you do?" should roll off your tongue easily and should be memorable.

Seek out good opportunities for networking, both planned and spontaneous.

Networking don'ts

Go to a networking event without any preparation

Mumble or just introduce yourself by first name or nickname only.

Make eye contact with just one person in a group or continue looking all over the place for the next group to jump to.

Use jargon, slang or venture into inappropriate topics, gossip, or similar.

Be a wallflower and wait people to come to you.

Ramble or give a condensed version of your resume.

Forget about networking since you're busy. Strengthen your professionalism by polishing your online social identity.