

3 Ways to Get More Business From Your Next Networking Event

Use these advanced networking tips to make the most of your networking time.



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The following excerpt is from [Ivan Misner, Ph.D.](#) and [Brian Hilliard's](#) book [Networking Like a Pro](#).

Let's take a look at some specific steps you can take toward improving your [networking](#) tactics and getting more business from your very next event.

1. Limit the number of contacts per event

The most important thing is the quality of the contacts you get, which means the type of contact, the relevance to your business and interests, how good a connection you're making, and the individual involved. At a typical event, five to 10 contacts might be all you can handle. This may not seem like a lot of contacts, but it's really more than enough when you're talking to the right people. If you attend two events per week, that's eight (or more) events a month, or 40 to 80 new contacts every 30 days. Continue to do that over the next couple of months -- while following up with the people that you've met -- and you'll soon have more than enough high-quality contacts to keep you busy.

2. Spend five to 10 minutes talking and listening to each person

Just because you're not handing out your business card to 1,001 people doesn't mean you should spend 20 minutes talking to just one individual. Invest a few minutes in getting to know each person. Make sure to ask for their business card. Then follow up with them after the event; this is where the heavy lifting takes place. Remember, all we're doing now is setting the stage for future business.

Many people ask us how to end a conversation. Don't overthink this. It's pretty easy to end a conversation in a friendly and polite way. Here are two things that we do:

1. Based on something the person you're talking to says, think of someone in the room that might be interested in talking to them. Let them know about the person in the room, walk them over and make an introduction. Then say that you'll leave them to get to know one another. It's a great way to end a conversation and, at the same time, be a connector.

2. If there's no one to introduce the person to, then thank them for the conversation, let them know that you hope your paths cross again and ask for a card. Conversation over.

On the second approach, it's important to be genuine. If you hope to never meet that person again, don't remark, "I hope our paths cross again." Instead, say something polite and professional and ask for their card. Asking for a card and offering thanks has almost always worked for us. Again, don't overthink this and don't apologize for ending the conversation. Whatever you do -- don't say you have someone else to meet. That puts people off.

3. Write notes on the backs of people's cards

Not only will writing notes help you remember what the other person said at an event, but it will also slow you down a bit so you won't be running around trying to meet the next person. On the front of the card you can write the date and name of the event where you met the person; on the back, a few quick notes about the conversation or anything else of note. When you contact the person later, this will give you something to refer to.

To reiterate two key ideas when it comes to meeting new people:

- You're not interested in selling anything to the person you're just meeting; you want to find some way you can help them. You understand, of course, that what goes around comes around, usually in the form of referrals for your business.
- You want to create a visible identity with everyone you meet. A visible identity is the answer to this question: "How can I differentiate myself, in the mind of this other person, from the other five people they've already met?"

Keeping those two ideas in mind will give you a leg up when meeting new contacts. Using this simple "Givers Gain" approach, you'll see an uptick in the amount of new business and referrals you get while networking.