

SMART NETWORKING TIPS



ITOL
INSTITUTE OF TRAINING &
OCCUPATIONAL LEARNING

SMART NETWORKING TIPS TO INCREASE YOUR BUSINESS

How to get the most out of this booklet:

Most non-fiction books are purchased based upon their title and what they promise to deliver, unfortunately most are not read, let alone acted upon.

This booklet has been produced to provide you with ideas which can be read and applied quickly and effectively. The tips will help you improve your networking now and for evermore.

You should judge this booklet on the results that you achieve by working with it. We hope your copy will be well read and grow as you add your own personal tips.

The booklet includes simple and practical tips. Some of these tips will be more (and some less) relevant to you depending upon your personal situation and style. However, we can guarantee that you will find some useful ideas to win more clients at no cost.

Here is the approach:

1. Read through the full list quickly to get a general feel for the tips, (this will take you around 60 Minutes)
2. Read through the list a second time marking those which you think will have the greatest impact on your networking performance with a small cross next to the number of the tip (this will take you around 60 minutes to complete).
3. Read through this reduced list and circle the number of the ones you are going to implement straight away. Don't delay, start acting TODAY.
4. Make a note in your diary - at the end of each month review how your actions have impacted on performance. Review the rest of your 'crossed' list and plan how you will implement them.
5. Read through the 'uncrossed list' to see if you could apply any of these ideas now. Each time you read the list you will remember

and learn more, eventually you start to apply the ideas without thinking about them (allow 45 minutes).

6. As you work through the list try to develop your own lists of 'habits'.

These should be split into:

- a) Daily
- b) Weekly
- c) Monthly

This tip book has been compiled from the experience and knowledge of successful consultants; however, no list of tips will ever be complete. Try and develop your own and acquire tips from as many other sources as you can and keep adding them to the list. Aim to add at least one new tip or idea to your list each month. Keep learning.

Smart Tips

1. Focus on attitude and belief first. The most effective networkers do it naturally all the time! They have the right attitude - they believe in the benefits of networking and apply the principles of networking without thinking.
2. Understand that networking is about building mutual TRUST.
3. Whilst networking is about trust it will not progress without TRANSACTIONS. Networking participants need to feel they are getting some direct benefit out of the relationship to keep it alive. Try to introduce transactions or benefits to your contacts.
4. Think of your own experience, under what circumstances has networking worked for you and when has it failed? Why did it work or fail? What could YOU have done better to make it work better? Networking is your personal responsibility - if it does not work never blame others.
5. Understand what networking is all about and what it is not about. Often people mistake networking as an opportunity to sell. Networking is an opportunity to create opportunity in the future. The people you meet today may be the ones who introduce you to your biggest client in three years' time. There are few 'one hit' wonders. In retrospect the 'quick results' do not normally give a long-term benefit. To network effectively takes time, effort, and patience.

6. 'Don't try to sell on the first date!' – in fact don't try to SELL at all. 'Over Selling' will stall your networking, generally people dislike being sold to, they would rather 'buy' under their own choice. When you are networking you are asking people to buy you under their choice. Make the choice easy for them, but do not start bombarding them with a list of how great you are. Let them see that you are trustworthy and worth networking with.
7. Take a long-term view of networking, think in years not weeks! You could easily invest effort today to reap a reward in two years' time. If you are employed, it is worth remembering that the network you are investing in today can be maintained and exploited for future employment. Do not throw away your networking effort when you move on, even if you move into a different industry or location.
8. Be systematic and methodical about your effort, incorporate regular programmed activity and set yourself long term goals.
9. Build ABC lists and a Full Circle.
 - a) Draft a list of your top 100 contacts you already know for potential referral (any contact is a potential referrer), this is your A (Activity) List
 - b) Build a list of 50 plus contacts you would like to acquire over the year - B (Build) List - (think about the people who could introduce you to potential customers rather than your potential customers)
 - c) List out your other contacts on a C (Clearing) List.
 - d) Build an overlapping 'Full Circle' - see tip below:

Over time you will be able to move names from the B-list to your A list and move weaker contacts on your A list to your C list. You should be maintaining the A list at around 100 names but keep in touch with the C list). This approach will encourage you to be more systematic about building up your contact base.

10. Build a 'Full Circle' of contacts covering all the trades and professions that your contacts may be looking for; this should be around 100 contacts. This might include a wide range of trades and professions, for example therapists, decorators, domestic cleaners and financial advisors for their personal lives and printers, bankers, lawyers, and consultants for their business life. This list will help you become the

useful resource that can help solve a problem. Ideally your 'Full Circle' will include you in their 'Full Circle'. You could build your list of trades and professions by skimming through the headings in yellow pages and the trade directories of the professions and industries that you work with. Ask your existing contacts to recommend names for each heading. Make your own contact with potential 'Full Circle' members, add them to your Full Circle when you are satisfied, they measure up. Your Full Circle will overlap with your ABC lists.

11. Monitor the type of contacts who are producing most of your referrals or introductions, can you clone them? Can you look for more in your B and C lists? What can you offer back to this type of contact to maintain your relationship?
12. Invest in a single database for contact management. Keep it up to date. Code description so you can find people quickly. You could also code contacts as either A B or C list. There are 'Contact Management' products which you can buy - however a simple database may suffice, 'Microsoft Outlook / Outlook Express' can be used to manage your contacts.
13. If you are happy with the technology, invest in a 'pocket organiser' or PDA (palmtop computer) to keep all your full contact database to hand - only maintain one database and keep it fully synchronised with data on your PC or Mac.
14. Recognise networking can be low on cost but high on personal effort. You can sub - contract all sorts of things in your business but you cannot sub - contract your networking. Networking is about PERSONAL relationships and trust. Networking is YOUR responsibility. If you are finding it difficult to motivate yourself to network, you should join a highly structured networking group.
15. Remember the value of a contact is proportional to the effort put in to obtaining it. Easy contacts may come and go easily. Don't go for volume of contact go for quality. Your ability to value the quality of contacts will depend on how well you have defined your networking objectives.
16. Recognise that networking and 'word of mouth' generally beats 'interruption marketing' especially for professional service companies. Interruption marketing includes - cold calling, direct mail and advertising. Interruption marketing disrupts your contact: with 'word of mouth' they seek you out or are put in touch with you by

your network. Interruption marketing may still have a role in your marketing mix.

17. Constantly seek to build mutual trust / confidence. Give your contact good reason to trust you. Always thank them. Always remember their interest.
18. Think of what destroys mutual trust and avoid these situations and circumstances.
19. State your agreements with others clearly, misunderstandings of arrangements between individuals can quickly deteriorate into a position of lost trust. In some situations, consider a formal contract.
20. Feed your network. Your network would love to receive referrals from you. When looking for opportunities for them, look for quality not quantity. It is not always possible to give referrals to your network, could you help them in another way? Perhaps you could provide them with useful information.
21. Remember 'you will reap what you sow' - so sow good seeds. Not every seed will turn into a productive crop so you must give far more than you hope to get. Every seed must be fed and watered to stand any chance of producing fruit.
22. Reward your network members for their efforts on your behalf. Reward could be formal / financial. You could however be more creative. Whatever you do give them something that is of value to THEM. For example - A free place on a training programme you are running will cost you nothing, what will it be worth to your network contact? List out what you can give away at little cost to yourself, list out who this would be valuable to.
23. Build your network in size AND depth. The 'natural' size of personal contacts one could maintain may have once been around 150, perhaps it still is. The Internet means we can stay in touch with thousands, but how many can we truly know, help, and think of? Ask yourself, how can I strengthen my relationship with the key members of my network? How can I make my network more robust? (See tips below)
24. Make your network more cohesive and long lasting - introduce them to one another. You could

- a) Provide an event where they can meet and share idea.
 - b) Host an Internet based moderated forum or Email discussion group.
 - c) Organise a teleconference for a network meeting by telephone. This will involve renting a 'bridge' to host the conference, ideally you should get an experienced tele class facilitator to manage the meeting (you may have one in your network already.)
25. Strengthen your groups. If you organise a networking group or association, however loose, provide them with a mechanism to help them identify one another and promote the group, for example some organisations provide a lapel badge.
26. Consider 'Masterminding' to strengthen your networking group further. If you have a small group that trust each other, you might consider going 'Beyond Networking' to introduce 'Masterminding'. In a masterminding group, members share their problems, and the group develops solutions. A masterminding group is unlikely to work with more than twelve people and works best with an independent facilitator. Masterminding requires 'absolute mutual trust'.
27. Make it easier for your network to introduce you to others or refer your work. Make sure they have up to date contact details and be available - a telephone answering service is much better than an answer phone. You could produce a card specifically for them to carry on your behalf if you do you must be prepared to carry and distribute their cards too.
28. Check your messages (Email and voicemail) regularly - perhaps at the end of the morning and the end of the day. Respond to your messages - try to return all contacts within the day - including Email. Your networking contact does not necessarily understand how busy you are and will be disappointed by a delayed response. The longer you leave it to reply the greater the chance that you will not.
29. When managing your Email response avoid pointless 'auto responder' Emails. If you feel you must use an auto responder, make sure it carries useful information - perhaps a mobile phone number and a good time to call. (Note - an auto responder sends a reply to the contact automatically). If you are a way from your office for more than a couple of days have your Emails diverted to someone who can review them and a send out a meaningful

response.

30. Invest in your business card - make sure it includes a clear message of what you do, preferably expressing it in terms of the benefits that you bring. Remember your card has two sides, the reverse does not have to be left completely blank (remember many contacts like to write notes on business cards - so leave some blank space)
31. Make your business card different and interesting. Most business cards are the same - most cards are destined for the bin - why not make yours different so that people look at it twice and maybe pass it on to others? Your card could:
 - a) include your picture
 - b) give yourself an intriguing job title
 - c) include memorable quotes or facts
 - d) fold out like a booklet.
 - e) include a quiz or puzzle.
 - f) have an unusual texture
 - g) have an unusual shape. One innovation is the CD business card - a business card which is also a mini-CD-ROM which includes a computer presentation. Ask yourself how likely is it that your contact will bother to load it on their computer? What impact does it have the moment you give them the card?

Whatever you do to make your cards more interesting, remember your contact may be filing your card so it cannot deviate too much from standard dimensions.

32. Encourage and enable your network to 'spread the word about you', - consider providing them with business cards that they will want to pass on. Provide them with useful Emails and PDF files that they can forward on your behalf, which also serve their interests. For example, an accountant might produce a tax saving tip book or tip sheet for their contacts and clients, this could be tailored to promote both parties.
33. Build your reputation within the group in which you are networking. Deliver quality on time, be reliable and never promise what you cannot deliver, try to promise less and deliver more.
34. Use the Internet at the beginning of each month to search out and help plan networking activity in your geographic or business area. Generic terms to search on are:

- Business Network - groups, events
 - Word of mouth marketing
 - Chamber of commerce
 - Business Breakfast clubs
 - Referral exchange
36. Present the best image you can all the time. You are always on show and may be meeting new contacts who may form a lasting impression based on a single encounter. You may meet potentially influential contacts in any situation, not just at formal networking events.
 37. Be confident about your own abilities. Confidence grows with experience - if you are intimidated by networking events, try practicing. Start with a group you feel confident with and gradually move on to more challenging groups. Try to enjoy the experience.
 38. Make your contacts feel confident and good about themselves. If they feel good when they are around you, they will tend to feel good about you and enjoy being around you.
 39. Give your contacts time and genuinely care about them.
 40. Give advice when asked. Do not give your advice or opinion without being asked - you will be viewed as critical. Don't preach or try to make converts - like you, your contacts are entitled to their own opinions.
 41. Be seen as a useful resource by your contacts, use your 'Full Circle' (see tip 10)
 42. Keep a log of useful information and sources of information - perhaps press cuttings. You could engage a press cutting service, often companies use these to find references to themselves. You could ask them to find references to topics of interest to your network or customers.
 43. Carry the cards of your 'Inner Circle', your most trusted networking contacts - so you can pass them on to others. Encourage your 'Inner Circle' to carry your cards.
 44. Take notes on the spot. When you receive a contacts business card write some notes on the back of it - where you met, plus a few key facts. This information should be recorded on your contact management system.

45. Swap cards. Give everyone you meet a business card. Giving a card is a good way to get one back - these cards can then go on to your contact list. Ask your contact if you can Email them your e-newsletter, if you have one, so that you can maintain your contact. Update your contact database with their details as soon as you can, this will reduce the chance of forgetting to add the details or mislaying the card. Updating your records straight away will also mean it will not build up into a burdensome task.
46. Avoid needless controversy with your contacts - no religion or politics! Make no comments on taste and style.
47. Be precise and relevant - avoid needless detail in your discussions. Your time and your contacts time are valuable.
48. Keep in contact & communication, examples are e-newsletters, paper newsletters and Internet forums. There are a growing range of communication options. Ask yourself, 'What works for me and my contacts?'
49. Be known for reliability, honesty, and integrity above everything else.
50. Give genuine 'hot' referrals - the hotter the better. For example, do not say to contact 'A client of mine is looking for your service, here's their number', ask your client if your network contact can telephone them. You do not want to give your contact a name or lead, you should be aiming to give them a result!
51. Be remembered - do something so good its memorable. Can you 'delight' your networking contacts? Being original and innovative will also make you more memorable.
52. Remember your network - you could maintain a business card book full of their cards or some other listing mechanism - look through them periodically to remind yourself of the network you must feed.
53. Network with the enemy. You can network with your competitors - they understand best what you do and could refer you work. People who are outside your market may find it difficult to understand your business and what would be a good lead for you.
54. Network with your suppliers - ask them for referrals and useful contacts. Have you ever asked a supplier to refer your

business? Why not ask them who their other customers are? Their customers could be customers for you or strategic alliance partners. You might consider choosing your suppliers based upon who they can potentially introduce you to. For example, you may be looking for an accountant, your personal requirements may be straight forward, yet by choosing an accountant specifically because they work extensively with your target market may mean that your accountant can become a source of referrals.

- 55.** Network with customers. Go beyond providing a good service, refer work to your customers or help them beyond what they expect - do not satisfy them - delight them. A satisfied customer may be one with low expectations! How would your customer feel if you started to refer work to them? Perhaps they will be even more likely to start referring you.
- 56.** Remind and encourage customers to refer you on to others. When you complete a piece of work for ANY customer ask them directly for a referral and a testimonial. No customer is too small to refer you on. You can even ask unsuccessful prospects for referrals and contacts. Make it easy for them by being specific about the type of contacts you are seeking. People generally like to be helpful even when they are not buying from you.
- 57.** Maintain relationships with customers, even when they switch to other suppliers or move on to other jobs and organisations. Building new relationships can be costly - so hang on to the ones that you have. Make sure that you build relationships with several people in a client's organisation so that when your client moves on you do not lose contact with the organisation.
- 58.** Gain the respect of your peers. Peer groups are important for spreading a reputation - you may not win business from them directly, but they can influence those who will be your customers.
- 59.** Be the MASTER rather than an expert. For example - a consultant could be an expert in reducing a company's utility bills along with thousands of others. They could also be seen as the MASTER of saving a specific utility cost in a specific industry. It is easier to refer the MASTER than an expert, and The MASTER can be seen as the only choice worth considering for some specific projects. Being more focused will make networking and marketing effort more effective. This approach might seem to be limiting, but the Master remains the expert for other opportunities.

60. Become an industry leader, expert or catalyst. Contact others in your profession / industry and organise some activities or events. Less onerous might be to start up an Email discussion group or bulletin board. This will increase your profile amongst your peers and competitors. Remember even competitors can refer work to you.
61. Make the best of your time by focusing on the networking opportunities that are likely to contribute the most to your networking objectives.
62. Be natural and be true - only join and participate in networking groups that share your personal values and that you believe in. To attend groups that you are not sympathetic to is disingenuous, you will be found out eventually. Everyone is a potential networker, and every networker has their natural networking ground. Find out what works for you and what you are comfortable with. Be truthful, be yourself - do not 'act' to fit in. Identify your preferred networking style and use it.
63. Recognise apparent 'Serendipity', the coincidence that you had not planned makes every situation a potential networking opportunity, so always maintain your good 'networking values'.
64. Understand that there is no true 'Serendipity', you make your own chance. Never attribute your and anyone else's success to a 'lucky break' - when you win any work you deserve it because you have worked for it.
65. Dress to impress - wherever you go, networking can happen anywhere. Throw away worn out and inappropriate clothes - then you won't be tempted to wear them.
66. Develop strategic networking alliances - identify who wants to meet the people that you want to meet - could you swap contacts, introduce one another, or develop some collaborative activity to increase your contact base.
67. Start to network 'virtually' but remember to 'Get real' - personal contact is stronger, pick up the phone and meet face to face. Set yourself some targets for expanding your virtual network and face to face meetings.
68. Virtual networking may be through Internet forums newsgroups and lists. Newsgroups are not for the faint hearted, however rude

the dialogue may get, never FLAME, or insult, and always read messages carefully. The tone of messages can easily be misread, so be careful about messages you write and how you interpret messages you receive.

69. Never 'spam' a forum, newsgroup, or list. Join the list and take a few weeks to understand the people who participate in it before you post your first message. Post messages that help them rather than help you (spamming a list may include sending the same message to several groups and posting material which was seen as blatant advertising).
70. Develop a range of powerful messages and presentations to introduce yourself. Don't rely on making something up on the spot - plan it and practice it - even your shortest introduction. When you practice, create a clear image in the mind of your contact and imagine their response and understanding. Consider a business consultant introducing herself as an expert in 'Process Mapping'. How many of her contacts would understand this term and who would be a good introduction for the consultant?
71. Remember you may have as little as '6 seconds to inspire' - use words that spell out benefit -for example - increase, reduce etc... Aim to develop a clear message you can deliver in a single breath.
72. Develop longer 'elevator' or 'lift speeches' (that last as long as a lift journey) - practice them, keep improving them. Ask for feedback on your introductions.
73. When people ask what you DO - or when you introduce yourself, do not say WHAT you are, say what you DO and for whom. Try and spell out the benefit your customers receive.
74. Remember most people you meet will not be or could never be your customers - make it easy for them to identify a good contact for you by highlighting your perfect contact. For example - an accountant might introduce themselves 'I am an accountant' or 'I reduce IT contractors' tax', there may not be an IT contractor in ear shot, but there could be someone who knows one. Most IT contractors would like to pay less tax.
75. Be specific about the contacts you wish to meet in your introductions (as above). You may believe this limits your market, but it makes it much easier for your contact to identify a lead for you. For example: which of the following consultants would you be able to refer on to a useful contact.

Consultant A - 'I am a training consultant'

Consultant B - 'I help people manage their time better'

Consultant C - 'I enable busy people to find more time'

Consultant D - 'I enable busy doctors and dentists to find more time'

Most of us know a doctor or a dentist - could they be short of time? A poor introduction would be 'I work with anyone who.' perhaps there may be more potential customers in the general population, but will a contact be motivated to think of them?

76. Refine your message to include it on your Emails as a 'signature line'.
77. Reflect on your contacts – Is there someone who you could ask for a referral. For example - "Other than yourself who do you know who is a successful property lawyer"
78. Listen more, talk less. Listen for what your contact does, who they work with, who they would like to meet. Don't interrupt.
79. Ask open questions to encourage and enable your contacts to talk more.
80. Ask 'How can I help you?' or 'Who would be your perfect contact or client?' - often, perhaps with every new contact you have.
81. Listen for their needs and priorities. How can you help them? - Who do you know who would be a good contact or customer for them?
82. Listen for their customers, construct in your mind a map of their network. Think of all the other potential contacts they have for example suppliers and colleagues.
83. Go where the customers and influential contacts are:
 - Professional Institute meetings
 - Courses & Conferences
 - Exhibitions

You may find the more expensive and exclusive the better.

84. Mix with successful people and successful networkers.
85. Play the host. When you go to an event act like a host - you will be more outgoing and naturally start to introduce people.

86. Give a talk to your network / networking group –this gives you a higher profile and gives you more time to put your message across. For many people public speaking is difficult - start by talking in front of people you trust and know well. Practice your talk. Keep your talk interesting and relevant. People often find stories interesting - if you include stories keep them real - don't use secondhand experiences. Keep remembering the rules of good networking messages / introductions.
87. Make your talks and introductions fun, interesting and memorable - you could include a relevant rhyme, saying, 'strap line' or use a prop. If you have a 'strap line' use it several times so the audience, remember you for it. Making your talk more memorable - Example - If your service saves clients' money you could throw a handful of 'Monopoly' money up in the air as you get to your 'punch line' to illustrate the money they are throwing away by not using your services.
88. Once you have developed your talk and speaking skills, seek out other networking opportunities to deliver them. If you are comfortable speaking, you could set yourself a target - for example 'Each month I will speak to at least one group'. Potential groups to speak to include Chambers of Commerce, Professional groups, trade associations and networking groups. Review your experience and define which groups and events are the best speaking opportunities. Ask your network to find the opportunities for you, be as specific as you can.
89. Network with editors and get published. Being published is a good way to increase your profile and become recognised as an expert. When you are an expert people will seek you out to network with you. To get published you must develop good relationships with editors and commissioning editors and have something worthwhile to say. News and magazine editors are often interested in genuine news and controversy that their readers will be interested in. A good start with magazines is to write for the letters page, it is one of the pages that is most frequently read. Before you submit a piece to a paper, or a magazine become familiar with their content and style. When you write, write for a specific publication, do not dash off a piece and broadcast it to potential publishers in hope. Most people fail to be published because they believe they never will be - give it a go and learn from your own mistakes. Also consider self- publishing.
90. Network through trade publications. Review trade publications to

find contacts and opportunities for yourself and network. Set yourself a target to find one story to send on to one of your networks and one new contact from the pages of each edition of your industries trade publication. Review the new appointments page and the jobs pages, these give you an idea of moves and developments within the industry.

91. Self-Publish a tip book. Develop a small 'tip booklet' that you can give to contacts. Try to develop something which provides them with useful information that they will retain and perhaps recommend to others. You could produce an 'e-tip book' which you could offer to Email to them, this will save you printing costs. E-tip books can also be more easily tailored for specific markets or narrow topics, e.g., an accountant who specialises in working with entertainers might produce a tip book, '100 tax tips for Cruise Ship Entertainers' The narrower and more specific the topic, the more likely it will be read. Many people are anxious about giving away their knowledge - remember networking relies on giving first. The Cruise Ship Entertainer who received the tip book will probably still need an accountant after he had read it. He will tell others about it and may pass it on - this is the power of 'Word of Mouth Marketing'. You may be daunted by the idea of writing '100 tips on XYZ'. Start by writing tip sheets - e.g., '5 Ideas to save time' and writing one tip a day. As you start your ideas will multiply and within a month you will have your tip book written. When you write your tips try to start each one with an ACTIVE verb and avoid negative phrases, such as 'Do not', 'never' and 'avoid'.
92. An alternative to producing a tip book might be an audio (spoken word) product on CD or tape, there is a higher set up cost, but the marginal copying costs are very low. Audio products also have a higher perceived value.
93. Develop e-newsletter content with partners. You could develop your e-newsletter content for your newsletters collaboratively with a 'strategic alliance partner', for example if you publish an e-newsletter for solicitors practice managers you could team up with others who produce newsletters for similar groups, perhaps accountancy practice managers or barristers' clerks. Your content will then get distributed further. Do not swap contact lists, never give your Email lists to anybody else. Your Email list and the right to use it is a very valuable assets, you should also be protecting your contacts privacy.

94. Say thanks more often - no one ever got tired of being thanked, but they may get tired of not being thanked. Send 'Thank You' cards and Emails.
95. Carry a badge, wear it with pride. Your badge can help people identify you and can carry your message.
96. Wear your old school tie or something interesting e.g., a tie/lapel badge (note always be genuine - only wear school ties of schools you attended!).
97. Follow up all new contacts - keep in touch with old ones. Develop a system to help you do it, do not rely on memory alone.
98. Do someone a favour every day - in time the favours will be returned, often by a someone different.
99. Invite your contacts to complementary networking events
100. Give more than you expect to get. For every warm contact you hope to gain you might need to give 5 - 10 warm leads to others.
101. Know what is expected of you - let your contact know what you hope to get from them - be precise.
102. Ask for help. If you ask for help you are demonstrating trust rather than weakness.
103. Answer questions. There are many Internet forums where people ask questions, there may be one that is specific to your industry or area.
104. Leave on good terms, never FLAME on the Internet or in the real world - even when you have been flamed. Being negative or rude may give you a temporary feeling of satisfaction, but in the long run it may do your reputation harm (to FLAME is to give abuse on the Internet).
105. Get a list of people attending the event in advance. If you cannot, try to get a list after the event. Prepare before the event, follow up after the event.
107. Try to bring something that will be useful to others with you - even if it is just the business card or telephone number of a good

supplier or a good source of information. Review the likely attendees, think about what would be useful to them.

- 108.** Sit with strangers. Resist using networking events to meet your friends or colleagues - you can meet them at other times - your networking time is valuable. Do go to an event with friends and colleagues - but split up!
- 109.** Follow up the event by sending contacts something useful and relevant to the event.
- 110.** Be positive about the world and prospects - this makes people feel good about being around you. Tell them something good about themselves - they will feel good about themselves and you.
- 111.** Be a visible volunteer who is known for getting things done.
- 112.** Ignore your networking nerves and make the first move. Many people are anxious about meeting new contacts, this is because there is an underlying fear of rejection. If you go to a networking event you should expect people to be interested in you. Remember they are probably as nervous as you and want to be introduced to new contacts, they will usually welcome your approach. You have nothing to lose and plenty to gain, networking anxiety is temporary, the returns from making that approach might last you a lifetime.
- 113.** Be approachable, encourage others to talk to you. Remember what makes people unapproachable for you - being unfriendly. being aloof, sticking to cliques. Ask yourself 'How do I appear?', get some feedback from your friends and colleagues.
- 114.** Move on - don't 'get stuck' - If you find it difficult you could try introducing them to someone else in the room or ask them to introduce you to someone else. Gently remind them of your objective to network with others as well and encourage them that they may benefit from speaking with others as well. Never be rude, but do not be paralysed by 'over politeness'
- 115.** Don't stay with your friends and associates - see above for techniques for 'moving on'.
- 116.** Look for 'lonely people' and make them feel at home. The lonely person may appear 'boring' but may still have a good network or be a potential customer.

- 118.** Stand by the tea and coffee - this is the place where most people go first or when they don't know what to do themselves.
- 119.** Do not worry about remembering names. Most people do not expect you to remember their names straight away and will not be offended. You should be concentrating on listening to what they do and who their contacts and customers are. Ask them for their business card - it will have their name on it!
- 120.** Introduce people to one another. Concentrate on giving them useful introductions, you could set yourself a target - 'I will introduce a contact to someone else every week or even every day'.
- 121.** Meet and interact with your network regularly. This could be every week or every month - so long as it is programmed.
- 122.** Maximise your time. Networking takes time, many networking groups try to minimise the impact of this time by organising breakfast meetings. Could you network via a tele-forum? Could you network in otherwise 'dead' time - travel time, commuting time, lunch time? Could you make more of networking time by eliminating the distractions that stop you interacting when you are at a networking event for example turn off your mobile phone and leave 'personal administration' until later or do it before hand.
- 123.** Always try to make your networking fun for yourself and your contacts. Fun events are much easier to find time for. Try to think of some fun activities which can be introduced into networking events which still form part of the networking activity. Try to introduce some variety into networking events to keep them interesting. Even if you are not an event organiser you may still be able to influence it. To make an event more fun you could:
- Ask each member of a group to say who the top three contacts are they would like to meet, including one 'dream' contact - with a brief explanation of the 'dream' contact, suggest that they add a bit of humour.
 - Introduce a 'quirky' but relevant guest speaker.
- 124.** Keep on the lookout for new networking opportunities and events, tell your own network of opportunities and events which may be of interest to them. All networking events and groups are potentially complementary.

125. Set targets for developing networking opportunities – e.g., each month I will try out one networking group.
126. Evaluate all the groups and events - don't jump to conclusions too soon.
127. Don't just 'attend' events, 'participate' in them to develop new and existing relationships.
128. Keeping in touch with old contacts - set targets. For example, 'Every day I will call one old contact.' Encourage your old contacts to get in touch with you. Give your old contacts a reason to contact you. Try to be systematic to ensure that you are not letting vital relationships wither, for example, you could log when you last had a conversation with your contacts on your contact management system and review all your contacts you have not spoken to in the last three months.
129. Send personalised Christmas cards / New Year cards etc... Try to include a personal message that demonstrates thought and effort on your behalf. Send 'Thank You Cards'. Sending cards has become automatic and often insincere, so make your cards a bit different and memorable, you could also include a small but relevant novelty or gift. You could include a product with a low marginal cost but high perceived value - for example a tip book or an audio CD or tape you have produced.
130. Send useful information - e.g., an accountant might send out tax updates. Try to make the information specific and relevant to the individual if possible. Try to make it a regular activity. Each month work through your own ABC lists and Full Circle - think about what is useful to them which you can give them at little or no cost.
131. Develop new contacts - set a target. For example, if your target contacts were Partners in two / three partner accountancy practices in London 'Each week I will contact three accountancy firms to develop my network of contacts.' 'Each month I will identify another firm which has links with accountancy practices in London and with which I can build a 'strategic alliance' with'
132. Look for and develop common ground with everyone you meet. We all have something in common. Sharing common ground, experience or acquaintances helps build empathy, empathy helps build trust, trust builds effective networks.
133. Link up with contacts outside of your normal network. If you

stick to your normal network, it will become stale and new networking introductions will dry up.

134. Be careful who you introduce your valuable contacts to. Build mutual trust first.
135. Understand six degrees of separation. We are all six relationship or less away from everybody else - so respect everybody.
136. Understand and apply 'Super Connectivity' - the 'six degrees of separation' works because a few people are 'Super Connected'. They are the nodes that link lots of people. Try to identify these people and link up with them as directly as possible. If you become 'Super Connected' people will be seeking you out as a networking contact.
137. Measure performance and take stock of your networking time and events - which are working, and which are not. Be careful not to be limited by your desire for quick results.
Ask yourself if your networking 'feels' right, does it feel like it is contributing to your business development. In the long term networking, which you do not like is not likely to be as productive as networking which you like.
138. Do not underestimate the power of 'Weak Links' or distant connections. Research has shown that most jobs which are found through networking come through 'Weak Links', this is because our 'Weak Links' have a different set of contacts to our own. Our 'Strong Links' often have many contacts that we know already. Start your networking today - don't procrastinate, take responsibility and be proactive. If you cannot find a networking event which matches your requirements you could organise your own!
139. **REMEMBER IT'S NOT WHO YOU KNOW - BUT THOSE WHO KNOW WHO YOU KNOW!**
140. ***CARRY ON YOUR OWN LIST FROM HERE!***