



the connector

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OUR 10 BEST CONFERENCE NETWORKING TIPS

These tips we shared with you are also great tips to use whenever you are networking and connecting at work, in the community and in social situations. If you host events in the community, train your staff on the skills of *Positive Networking*®. And, if you'd like more short and snappy tips, please sign up for our [free weekly Positive Networking® Tips](#).

TIP #1 GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO CONNECT

When you go to a meeting, a training session, a conference or an event in the community sit with people you don't know. And, talk to people you don't know. Remember all the cool connections that people made when they went over and started a conversation with a perfect stranger during our presentation? All connections have value, and when you meet someone new you are now one handshake away from everyone in their network.

TIP #2 RESCUE WALLFLOWERS

From this day forward always rescue wallflowers. Don't let people stand alone in any networking situation. Train your staff to rescue wallflowers.

TIP #3 ALWAYS OPEN THE CIRCLE

Many of you admitted that you also have had this experience—walking up to a group of people and hoping to join in, but they just ignore you. We call it “The 28-Second Hover”. After standing there waiting for someone to acknowledge you, you walk away muttering under your breath, “No wonder I hate networking”. And, why 28 seconds? That's all the rejection anyone can stand! But YOU will do things differently. Going forward, whenever anyone tries to join your circle, you'll smile and acknowledge them, and as soon as you can, you'll say, “Please join us!” It's simply the right thing to do.

TIP #4 BAD MATH BUT VERY GOOD NETWORKING

If you are in a networking situation at a table (and you have come with a tag teammate) avoid sitting right beside one and other. Put two people between you. That way you each meet two people. $1 + 1 = 4$.

TIP #5 THE 10/5 RULE

If you see a person walking towards you use the 10/5 Rule: at 10 feet smile, at 5 feet say something! Did you practice this at the conference? Are you practicing it at work?

TIP #6 BE A POSITIVE NETWORKER

The reason most people don't like networking is because they think networking is transactional. Instead, networking is about "discovering what you can do for someone else." It's what we define as *Positive Networking*[®] and it's the key to building long-term, high-trust relationships. The bonus is it takes the pressure off because you don't feel you have 'to sell yourself'. *Positive Networking*[®] also creates a natural curiosity so conversation is easier. You ask questions to learn about the other person. Here are three simple things you can do as a *Positive Networker*. 1. Get to know people, find their passions. 2. Email some useful information—highlight the relevant parts so they can do a quick review. 3. Be a connector.

TIP #7 EXCHANGE BUSINESS CARDS

Business cards are not dead. They are the most efficient way to share contact information. Now that you are back from the conference put business cards in all your jackets, your briefcase, your vehicle. You'll always have them.

TIP #8 MASTER SMALL TALK

The secret no one tells us is that *small talk is awkward*, but it's your upfront investment. If you don't say something to that person then there is a 100% guarantee—nothing will happen! The best idea is to ask questions that are in context. "Have you been to this organization's events before?" "What did you think of the last speaker?" "How do you know the host?"

TIP #9 KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Focus on the person with whom you are speaking. Use a person's name in conversation. Reinforce or encourage them — *good idea! interesting! you make a good point...* Ask good questions. (What's a good question? When you **care** about the answer). Don't give up too soon when you ask questions. Remember everyone has a story!

TIP #10 YOUR CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

See Slide on the right. Have you started your follow up?

REALLY HELPFUL LINKS!

Our article on [Top 10 Networking Challenges Solved!](#)

[5 Great Tips for Networking Solo](#) Everyone needs this

Susan Cain [TED Talk](#) on introverts: really worthwhile video

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Tip #10 Three Takeaways

- Who are the 3 most interesting people you met?
- What are the 3 best practices that you'll apply?
- What 3 ideas will you share with others?

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