

Networking Tips That Help You Make a Lasting Impression

Making a Good First Impression Can Last a Business Lifetime

Not only is networking an important function for a successful career and find job satisfaction, it's also necessary when job searching. But networking can be very intimidating especially if you aren't particularly outgoing. Here are tips to help you make a lasting impression.

1. **Right place, right time.** If you're trying to meet professionals, meet them where they are. Attend industry meetings, join professional groups, and seek alumni events through your college or university.
2. **Quality over quantity.** It's more important to make one great connection than a bunch of superficial ones. Networking is all about relationship building, so spend the time to make meaningful connections.
3. **Focus on your contact.** Pay close attention to the person you're talking with and focus on their topics, not yours. Start a discussion by asking open-ended (not "yes"/"no") questions. People will remember you if you've shown an authentic interest.
4. **Make eye contact.** People judge you within the first few seconds of meeting you. Searching the room is a blatant display of disinterest. Even if you're nervous. Making eye contact demonstrates a genuine attentiveness.
5. **Define what you do.** Be prepared to describe your vocation do briefly, but eloquently. What makes you interesting or different from others doing the same thing? "I solve problems" is more informative than "I'm an attorney."
6. **Go tech free.** Put the phone away. Staring at your phone will make you look unapproachable. Your goal is to meet people and talk to them face-to face. Move to the side of the room or step outside to sporadically use your phone.
7. **Step out of your comfort zone.** The more you network, the easier it gets. Practice with colleagues, clients, and vendors. Smile, be yourself, and enjoy meeting new people. When you do, you'll feel more comfortable. **t**