



Helping Leaders, Individuals and Teams  
**Learn,  
 Communicate &  
 Connect**

**KCS** Kacik Consulting Services, LLC

## Got the Networking Blues?



**Networking  
 Is The No. 1  
 Unwritten Rule For  
 Success in Business.**

Sallie Krawcheck

**Networking is a critical factor of success in most businesses and careers.**

It's also critical at most levels within an organization. Unfortunately, so often career professionals say to me, "Just don't ask me to network; I hate networking!!"

### *Why network?*

Let's start with the why and then I'll give you some how-tips to make it easier.

Icebreakers for Networking Events



### **Conversation starter:**

**Remember to ask open-ended questions**

Whether you like it or not, the reality in our society and culture is that success is often more dependent on who you know and less on what you know. Let's face it, if you are hiring for a position, even if the qualifications of two individuals are similar, are you more likely to hire or at least interview the person who comes highly recommended by someone you know and respect or the person who is an unknown? Word of mouth and personal recommendations make the business world go 'round and round'. Personal introductions carry weight with others, even if the person being introduced isn't well known by the person making the introduction. With words of reference, the individual's stock goes up even higher.

Networking doesn't always mean face-to-face, particularly in this era of social media. Restaurant recommendations are made through apps like Trip Advisor and Yelp. Business introductions are made all the time via email and LinkedIn.

The bigger your network, the more your business has the opportunity to grow, the more career opportunities will open up to you and the more resources you will have available.

### *So how do you do it?*

Ok, you say, "I've got that part, but I still dread going to networking events!" So here are some tips to make it a whole lot smoother and easier for you.

1. **Mindset: Networking can be uncomfortable for anyone. You are not alone!** Even those who tend more toward extroversion than introversion sometimes shy away from networking, which is to your advantage at an event or opportunity because others may be just as uncomfortable as

### **and avoid yes/no questions.**

- What brought you here tonight?
- Tell me your story.
- Tell me what you really love about your work.
- Have you always lived in this area? Follow-up questions could be: What was most interesting about... What was your favorite place and why....
- How did you get into your field?
- Do you belong to any professional organizations? Which ones have been most beneficial to you and why? You might also ask what organizations they recommend joining and why.
- Are there other networking events that you recommend?
- What skills are most helpful to you in your position?
- What are some of the challenges you face in your work?
- What's on your professional reading list that you'd recommend and what was helpful about it?
- How can I be helpful to you?

you and looking for someone to talk with just so they don't have to stand alone in the middle of the room with a drink in one hand looking like a lonely wallflower. (See, you thought you were the only one who worries about that!)

## 2. **Goals: Start with two simple goals:**

- Focus on having two or three great conversations as opposed to seeing how many people you can meet or how many business cards you can collect.
- Focus on being helpful to the other person, which may be completely unrelated to your business. Don't go with the sole intent of selling yourself or your business. Just meet people, have genuine person-to-person conversations and be real.

## 3. **Take interest: Be genuinely interested in the other person before talking about yourself.**

Every person has interesting aspects to them if you get past trite small talk.

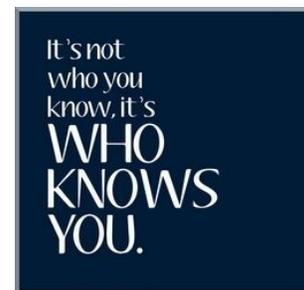
- How can you develop interest in them?
- How can you help them?
- How can you be a resource to them?

## 4. **Finding someone to talk with: To select a person you want to approach, start by looking for another person currently standing alone.**

Another good place to look is at the drink table or bar. Find someone who has just picked up their drink, because they are just about to look for someone to talk with too. If you know someone at the event, ask them who they see who might be good for you to meet and ask them to introduce you.

## 5. **Groups of three or more: When everyone seems to be engaged in conversation, look to join a group of three or more people.**

Walk up and stand at the fray and someone will notice you. They'll move aside to make room for you and invite you into the conversation – works every time. Steer away from pairs. They may be



## **Internal Networking**

***Networking within your organization is every bit as important as outside your organization.***

You are better positioned to be part of projects, career-growing assignments and promotions the more people know you and can speak well of you.

Get to know people from other departments from whom you can learn and broaden your understanding of the whole organization which also helps you further your career in a variety of ways.

in the middle of a good conversation and you could end up feeling awkward interrupting, or worse, feeling completely ignored as they continue talking with each other.

6. **First impressions: Make a good first impression. Remember only 7% of your message is the actual words you speak.** 38% is your tone of voice and 55% is your body language and the context.

- o Stand in an open stance
- o Make eye contact
- o Use a firm handshake
- o Smile
- o Speak with confidence with a loud enough volume to be heard (just not by the whole room)

7. **Hands free networking: Keep one hand free.**

Have a drink or food, but be sure to keep one hand free. Maybe you can find a place to set one or the other so you don't wither or starve. Figure it out. You need to freely shake hands and exchange business cards.

8. **Biz Cards: Keep your business cards in a pocket.** Take that into consideration when choosing your outfit for the event. Another option is a purse or bag with an easily accessible outside pocket. Two pockets are even better so you can have your cards in one pocket and put cards you receive in the other so you don't get them mixed up when you go to hand someone your card. Also, wherever you go, always carry a couple business cards. You never know where you'll meet someone with whom you'll want to exchange information. I network everywhere I go and I'm always exchanging information with folks.

9. **Name tags: When you go to put on your nametag, place it on the right side of your body, not the left which is what most right-handed people tend to do.** Why? Because we shake hands with our right

It's always helpful to have go-to people you know in other departments who can be a valuable resource when you're working on projects or need information.

Connections from other departments can make introductions for you to folks in even more departments. Keep expanding your network!

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**Your network is the people who want to help you, and you want to help them, and that's really powerful.**

*Reid Hoffman*




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**Networking**  
is more about  
"farming" than it is  
about "hunting".  
It's about cultivating  
relationships.

Dr. Ivan Misner, BNI

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hand. When another person takes your hand, their eye will naturally follow up your right arm to your name tag if you've placed it on your right side. Many people remember names more easily if they have heard it and seen it.

10. **Your elevator pitch: Go prepared with your well-rehearsed 30-90 second elevator pitch.**

Err on the side of 30 seconds.

- Who are you?
- What do you do? (see the next bullet!)
- What are the great outcomes for people who hire you?

A good elevator pitch describes the outcome your clients experience much more than it describes the service you provide or what you do. You may also describe your ideal client. A colleague once explained that to me very clearly. He said, "If I meet someone and tell them my ideal client is an Irish red-headed male between the ages of 25-29 who lives in the Minneapolis area, when the person I'm talking with meets such an individual, my description will have been so clear that they will immediately think of me, thus making it much more likely they will take the next step to introduce us.

11. **Solidify the connection:**

- Exchange cards
- Note on their card any resources to send them or special notes to remember them
- Connect with them within just a few days on LinkedIn with a personal message about where you met and invite them to be part of your network, rather than just clicking the connect button.
- Follow up with an email including resources/connections you offered to provide.
- The best way I have found to organize biz cards is to make a photocopy of all the cards from the event, then scan them into



## **Using LinkedIn**

**1<sup>st</sup> level connections** – reach out to them for information, resources and to share opportunities you can provide through your work that might be of help or interest to them.

**2<sup>nd</sup> level** – look through the connections of your connections to see who you would like to add to your network. If you already know them, it's easy to make the connection. If you don't, then ask your 1<sup>st</sup> level connection to make an introduction for you.

**Do you have connections with whom you've done business who have changed companies?**

Contact them to see how you can be helpful to them in their new organization.

**Do you need information about something?** Sometimes google isn't enough and you need to know more specifics. Who is in your network who could be a resource to you?

To keep your name fresh

a biz card file on my computer. It takes too much time to enter them all into my contacts, but when I'm trying to locate the contact info for someone I met, I usually remember where I met them, so I categorize my computer file by the event and the date and then it's pretty easy to find someone when I want to connect.

- o There are apps available that allow you to scan the biz card using your phone and then the app enters the data directly into your contacts. They don't all work perfectly, but you can try out different ones.

### Would you like some help with your Elevator Pitch?

Do you need help with your Elevator Pitch? They are often tricky to write, but usually much easier for a coach to help you narrow down, pin down and describe what you are struggling with. It was true for me! I struggled and struggled and in a very short period of time, my coach was able to grab hold of the essence of what I was trying to communicate and help me synthesize it!

Reach out to me for a complimentary 30-minute call to explore how I can help you with your elevator pitch or help you further your career and get to the next level or the position that you really want.

Employ some of these tips and meet new folks, make some new friends and watch the world open up to you in unexpected ways!

***Let your networking finesse shine,***



in the minds of your network partners, write, repost or comment on articles and you'll be in their feed.

If you want to go fast,  
go alone.  
If you want to go far,  
go with others.

*African Proverb*

If you want to go  
**somewhere,**  
it is best to find  
**someone**  
**who has already**  
**been there.**

Robert Kiyosaki

*Networking*  
is not collecting  
contacts.  
*Networking* is  
about  
planting relations.

People do not  
buy goods and  
services.  
They buy  
relations,  
stories and  
magic.

Seth Godin



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### September

The Dangerous Waters of Intent vs. Impact

### October

Dynamic Presentations - Conquer the Podium

### November

Power Wash Negative Self-Talk

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