

Is Your Networking Approach Missing These Three “Must Haves?”

Networking is a hot topic. It's common to hear that the majority of jobs are won through some form of networking. So, if you plan on getting another job in your lifetime then learning about networking is a wise choice!

If you are wondering where in the world to start learning how to network or if you are apprehensive to network because it's new for you or you have had a negative networking experience from the past, this article is for you. Here are three must-haves that are easy and powerful ways to quickly get started networking AND quickly reap the benefits of your valuable contacts!

Must Have Number One: Focus on Them

When you are talking with someone you are meeting for the FIRST time, you must keep your focus on them. In other words, this is not the time to introduce what you need but rather to ask them a few questions about them. Interestingly, you will make a far greater impression on someone when you keep the focus on them versus on yourself!

If you are one of those professionals who really get stage fright before a networking opportunity such as a mixer, then a great tip for you is to write down 5 questions you feel comfortable asking. This will boost your confidence and help you avoid that feeling of being tongue tied.

Must Have Number Two: Reciprocity

Networking is more about what you can do for someone else than what they can do for you. In other words, if you put the focus on helping others, not only does it take pressure off you but it creates a positive exchange between you and your network.

Whether you are sending a key decision maker of a company you want to work for a positive article about their company, passing on a valuable bit of mentoring to a junior executive or referring one of your top vendors to another company – the more you get in the habit of helping others in these small ways the more you network will extend their help to you exponentially.

Must Have Number Three: Don't Play the End Result

Maybe you are wondering with all this gifting you are doing just when you are going to get to network?! That's understandable. The answer is you definitely will have multiple opportunities to network in order to take action towards your goals.

When you approach your network for information it's important to be polite, gracious and clear about what you want. But don't play the end result. Meaning when you follow up with a key decision maker after sending in your resume, when you connect with an executive to ask for a short mentoring meeting or when you query your friends about who they might know in your industry of interest, it's critical that your only expectation at that moment is the opportunity to pose the question.

Your success rides more on how many people you network with and how you ask someone for something than the actual response you get. Some contacts will be able to help you and some won't. Knowing this, you can relax and keep your expectations in check. The person on the receiving end will certainly pick up on this intuitively and respond in kind.

These three networking techniques are used by many of the top networkers around. They are easy to use and will provide you an abundance of positive results!

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