

**Thanks for ordering this complimentary report with my 7 Indispensable Tips for Networking! Since starting my sales career back in 1987, I've learned that the secret to building business with people you enjoy is to network with those same people. Sounds like common sense, correct? And yet so many professionals look forward to networking with the same gusto as they approach a root canal at the dentist's office. Networking should NOT be painful, but pleasurable. Here are seven ways to make it so. Actually, 8 ways. Math was never a strong suit for me!**

1. Join groups you have a natural affiliation with. If you love horses, find groups of people who share your passion. I'm a 40-something bald white male, and yet I'm a member and volunteer for Women in Cable Telecommunications (see [www.wict.org](http://www.wict.org) for information). I joined because the group shares my passion for seeing professional women move forward in the workplace.
2. When you network, act like you want to be there. Ever dread showing up at a cocktail party or business social hour? Me too! If I'm dreading the occasion, then I don't go. You can find reasons to make these events fun however. Take a friend, and make it your goal to introduce him to five new people that night.
3. It's easy to be a wallflower at an event. Find a spot in a dark corner and check your watch every 2 minutes to ensure that you spend at least 15 minutes there before you can leave. NO!!!! Get involved. Volunteer to work the registration table for an hour, hang up coats, help with set-up, tear-down, anything!
4. When you ask for a business card, always offer yours. My standard line is "I'd love one of your cards. Can we trade?" In 20 years of networking, no-one has ever refused my offer. That said, business cards represent hard work, professional certifications, titles and work. Treat them with respect. Spend a moment looking at the card, and make a remark about it. "Great logo!" "What's a 'nautical engineer' do for fun?" "I see you're an attorney, what's the worst 'attorney joke' you've ever heard?"

5. Collect enough business cards so you can follow-up effectively, no more than that. Networking is not about amassing a stockpile of little pieces of cardboard.
6. Offer a door prize at an event. More often than not, you get to talk to everyone. You'll also talk with passion about what you're giving away, since the prize should be a reflection of what you're most passionate about.
7. Just do it! I didn't coin that phrase, but it applies as well to networking as it does to athletic gear. If you don't know how to start, ask the business people you admire most how they network. They may say "Oh, I never do that!" Fine, then ask how they built their business when they were starting out. Ask them what their keys to success are. Those are GREAT questions to use in a networking environment.
8. Be curious. We spend far too much of our lives in the known, moving from one day to the next in the familiar landscape of our offices, commutes, and homes. You don't have to be fantastically outgoing to network effectively. You do have to have a genuine curiosity about the world around you.

**Speaker, author and visionary Tony Robbins talks about the value of surrounding yourself with people who "raise your game", and I believe that concept is invaluable. Working out the same muscles every day gets you to a physical plateau quickly. You actually fool your body (and mind) into thinking you're in wonderful shape, when really you're not moving forward at all. Look at networking as mental exercise. When you meet new people, you're working your mind in new ways - each relationship offers unlimited possibility and a chance to learn about yourself and others.**

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