



7 Tips for Increasing Your Network of Business Contacts

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Having an extensive business network will enhance your career and your position at your company. Knowing who to call for unexpected issues comes in handy. Expanding your network need not be difficult. The fastest way to increase your network is to connect with someone else's network. This may be in the form of a networking group or event or a social networking website. No matter what venue you use, be sure to look at your network in a way that is mutually beneficial to both you and your contact. Doing so will help you build relationships with people and you will have a strong group of networking contacts – rather than a huge group of acquaintances.

We have put together a list of tips to help you increase your business network while at a networking event or group meeting.

The 7 Tips for Increasing Your Network of Business Contacts Are:

1. **Meet New People** - This may seem obvious, but we tend to gravitate towards people that we already know. Instead of doing this, step out of your comfort zone and go meet some new people. An easy way to meet someone new is to thank the host of the event. Who knows, she or he may even introduce you to someone you did not previously know.
2. **Focus on Meeting People Rather Than Selling** - Use a networking event or group as a way to meet people and build relationships rather than trying to sell to them. If you try to sell to them too early you may miss out on building a relationship. Conversely, if you focus on building a relationship, the chances of selling to them increase tremendously.
3. **Remember the Names of People You Meet** - People take notice when someone remembers their name, so use every trick in the book to try to remember as many names as you can. Using a person's name during a conversation will not only help you remember their name but will also give that person a positive impression of you. People like to hear their own name and feel important when you take the time to remember it and use it while you are talking to them.
4. **Listen More Often Than You Speak** - Rather than talking your new contact's ear off, give them a chance to share. Asking people questions about themselves will give you valuable knowledge and make them feel important. This will allow you to build a good rapport with this person.

5. **Demonstrate Your Networking Skills** - You can improve your networking skills by introducing each new person you meet to at least one other person (hint: this will also help cement their name in your memory). This is a win-win situation for everyone.
6. **Make People Feel Welcome** - Even if you are nervous, make a point to make people feel welcome. An especially good way to do this is to introduce yourself to people who are standing alone. They will appreciate the attention and you will have made a new networking contact!
7. **Remember That People Forget** - People will often forget who you are within 48 hours of meeting you. So be sure to follow up with them before 48 hours is up to remind them of your conversation.

Summary: Networking is an invaluable skill for a businessperson to learn and use. Social networks are quickly becoming an important part of the business world. You can have a mutually beneficial network of people by following these easy tips.

If you want to find out more about how the Dale Carnegie's® Competency Based Development Solutions can make your business more effective, or need more information on this subject, please send us an e-mail at the address above.