

# Networking 101

*Networking is great way to meet new people, market yourself, and build professional relationships.  
Follow these simple steps to improve the quality of your networking.*

- Decide what your **objective** is before you go to any event. Set a goal, such as meeting five new people and reconnecting with five others you already know.
- **Arrive early**. This is especially helpful if you are introverted. Showing up early allows you to mingle with a smaller group of people.
- **Smile**, shake hands, and make direct eye contact.
- Initiate **conversations** and form a good first impression. People will form an impression of you within the first five seconds of meeting you.
- Focus on asking **open ended** questions so you can learn. Avoid only telling what you know.
- Make yourself contact or **business cards** to hand out.
- **Ask** for business cards from others. Use the back of their card to take notes such as the date, meeting location, and something memorable about the person.
- **Do not monopolize** anyone's time. Keep your conversations brief.
- **Follow up** with your contacts. Contact each person by phone, e-mail, or with a handwritten note, thanking them for their time.
- Remember, networking is about building relationships.

Sources: Valerie Matta, VP Business Development, CareerShift, LLC  
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