

Ten Networking Tips from Wildfire

Networking – your career-saving skill.



Why should you network? Do you want to: Get noticed; get favours faster; be visible when new jobs come up; get help more easily when needing a new job; and learn a lot from others? Yes? Then read on...

Have you ever noticed how you work harder than someone else but they get ahead faster? How do they get promoted (or win the business, if you're selling something) from right under your nose? Maybe they're less smart than you and maybe they get on with others less than you do so how did they get ahead of you? Maybe they're not working harder but simply networking smarter?

So, how do you network?

- 1. Ask for advice from those you want to get to know better** – everyone has some advice to give about something.
- 2. Voice interesting opinions** – spark discussion and good conversation and then you can sit back, listen, observe and not have to feel you have to do all the talking.
- 3. Listen actively to what others are passionate about** – learn and note more about them. We respect people who listen to us.
- 4. Introduce people that can help each other** - every single day if you can. Then you will create a mountain of goodwill and be known as someone worth knowing.
- 5. Notice the people you get on with easiest** – you don't need to get on with everyone nor will you want to stay in touch with every person you meet. Like attracts like.



6. **Attend events** – but not every one! Networking is about finding common ground and frequency/staying in touch, so attend events you are interested in be they social or formal/businesslike. An event with another purpose (a speaker, a hobby, a subject to learn) makes for easier conversation with strangers.
7. **Don't attend events** – you don't have to. Find a forum for you. Some stay in touch by email and phone, some through meeting to share a pastime or activity, some through online/social networking. Expand your network by asking for introductions through existing contacts.

8. **Give to gain** – a well-known networking saying is “Givers Gain” that those who give gain. You won't automatically gain from those to whom you gave but you'll build a generous reputation. A “gift” could be an interesting press article, a useful contact's phone number, a job lead or a piece of advice. Don't feel responsible – it's up to the receiver to use the gift as your role is only in the giving.



9. **Ask for what you want** – experienced networkers may say “how can I help you” so be prepared to know how they might. If you're vague, it will be harder for them to spot an opportunity for you.
10. **Stay in touch** – get organised and stay in regular touch with the people you like, you consider valuable and who share your values in the way they respect others. A “hi, how are you” is enough to keep you in the forefront of someone's mind for when an opportunity for you arises.

Try networking both internally (inside your job/business) and externally (in your industry.). Networking helps you to reach the 70% of jobs that are unadvertised. When you need to get noticed, it doubles your efforts when others promote you too. When you need a favour, it's easier to draw on that “bank” of goodwill that's ready to be reciprocated. Ask yourself not “shall I network?” but “why not network?”

For further ideas to whet your appetite and solve workplace problems,

email info@wildfireATwork.co.uk or call 0845 430 9101

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