

Effective Networking

"More business decisions occur over lunch and dinner than at any other time, yet no MBA courses are given on the subject."

- Peter Drucker

Networking skills are absolutely vital to your personal and professional development, helping you to gain new ideas, provide work or future business, increase your power and influence, and provide new perspectives.

Become Visible: You need to let others know you exist and what you do by becoming highly visible. Be seen and get known, look for interesting events to go to; clubs, associations, meetings, seminars, conferences, presentations etc.

Build Your Image: Maintain your self-esteem and build your confidence. Consider how you dress, speak and maintain your body language; aim to present a professional, positive image - refer to some of the other cards in this series.

Be Positive: By having an open 'can do' attitude and having the belief in giving and sharing as well as offering assistance your reputation will soon grow.



Broaden Perspectives: It's not just about going to specific networking events, where due to the 'set up' you may feel awkward. Consider other events and groups that you are associated with which are networking opportunities; think schools, colleges, work, social life, family, neighbours, advisors or the church.

Be Personable: Project an image of warmth, approachability, understanding, knowledge, empathy, and an ability to engage with anyone, above all be genuine. Tact, reassurance and the building of trust are also the hallmarks and vital components of relationship building. Be relaxed and stay interesting.

Be Interested in Them: Take an interest in everyone you meet, remember their name, listen acutely and actively to them to understand their needs and how you could assist each other; give your undivided attention even if it is only for five minutes - refer to the 'Active Listening' card in this set.

Business Cards: Create a 'personal business card' with your name, address, phone number, personal e-mail address and website if you have one. Collect other's business cards or record their contact details. Keep a written list or database of everyone you know and meet, and what they do and any next steps, promised actions.

Be Linked-In: This professional, free networking site has quickly risen to be the premier reference point for professionals in business, join up and start networking virtually www.linkedin.com