

Networking

The Ten Golden Rules

1 Networking is about planting, not hunting.

Networking is about building relationships. That takes time and patience and persistence. This means that it's not okay to ask for a job. Ever. Period.

2 Be of service. Add value.

What can you do for them? Send an article? Introduce them to someone? Adding value to them distinguishes you. And it changes your mindset from taking (scarcity) to giving (abundance) which is much more attractive.

3 Be professional

Scrub your Facebook profile. If you're using your home phone as your primary contact, take your kid's voice off your outgoing message. Setup a professional email address; save "sexychick@hotmail.com" for your friends.

4 Go native

Look like the job you want. Dress like people who have those positions. If they have business cards, get business cards. If they live in a world of fast email turnaround, check yours more often.

5 Be prepared

Networking can happen anywhere: Trader Joe's parking lot; your kids' school; in the vegetable aisle. Have a pen. Have a business card. And be ready to build the relationship. Don't hunt; farm.



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Networking

The Ten Golden Rules - continued

6 Craft your elevator speeches

Short, crisp, conversational answers to questions like “what do you do” or “what are you looking for” should roll off your tongue easily. Crafting these and making them sound natural takes practice, practice, practice.

7 Be positive

Don't complain. About anything. You're building a relationship, not purging your demons.

8 Share the air time

Ask about the other person. Be curious. Express interest. When an exchange is over, ask yourself how much you talked. 50%? That's okay. 85%? That's probably not okay. This relates directly to #2 above.

9 Follow up consistently

If the other person made an effort to serve you, send a thank you note. If you sense there's a relationship you want to pursue, do it with discipline. How will you track people? How will you track your previous contacts?

10 Dig your well before you're thirsty

By the time you need a relationship, it's too late to build one. Cultivation takes time. Don't put this work off until another day. Networking is its own job. Like any kind of investing, it takes attention and effort. And it pays!



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