

Is Your Networking Not Working?

According to the dictionary, networking is defined as “the action or process of interacting with others to exchange information and develop professional or social contacts”.

Although networking can be a fun and easy way to enrich your life and enhance your career, it can also be damaging if not done right. So, here are a few key *Do's* and *Don'ts* to keep in mind when you're networking.

DO:

- DO attend the right events – Make sure the decision makers who can buy what you sell will be there.
- DO prepare for the events – Get a list of attendees and review their LinkedIn profiles and company websites, practice your elevator pitch, and bring plenty of business cards.
- DO follow networking etiquette – Smile when you introduce yourself, make eye contact, deliver a firm handshake, and be authentic.
- DO listen more than you talk – Be interested not interesting.
- DO find a way to add value – Offer to make a connection, recommend a book, leave them with a positive impression of you.
- DO follow-up – This is where most people fail. What's the sense of going to all this trouble if you don't follow up afterwards?

DON'T:

- DON'T start a conversation with a business card – Invest some time and make a connection before offering your business card.
- DON'T network like it's speed dating – This is a marathon, not a sprint.
- DON'T be a passive listener – Pay attention when others are speaking, make eye contact, nod your head, encourage them to continue speaking.
- DON'T self-promote – It's not about you, it's about them.
- DON'T hang out with your friends and colleagues – You're networking to meet new people.
- DON'T break the obvious rules – DON'T spend time on your phone and DON'T get drunk.

Networking can be time-consuming, awkward, and incredibly draining, but experts agree that the most connected people are often the most successful.

So, why not do it the right way?

About Jim Ries



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Offit Kurman is a dynamic full-service law firm. As trusted legal advisors, they help clients to maximize and protect their business value and individual wealth. They strive to maintain clients' trust in every interaction, furthering their objectives and helping them to achieve their goals in an efficient manner.

As Director of Business Development, Jim Ries works to increase Offit Kurman's visibility, reach and value in the business community. In support of this, and in tandem with the firm's marketing team, he develops and manages outreach programs designed to educate business owners and entrepreneurs at every stage of their business and personal lives, as well as provide resources to families who wish to protect and pass on their wealth.

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