

Meet Greet and Prosper

Welcome.

We have worked hard to provide you with many opportunities to meet new people and make valuable connections at this meeting. As part of that, here are some tips (which for some may serve as just a reminder) to help you maximise your networking opportunities.

- Decide that you are going to meet new people – not just spend time ‘clumping’ with people you already know.
- Scan the delegate list to identify people you would like to meet. Find them and introduce yourself. Or get someone you know to make the introductions for you.
- Make a point of volunteering to introduce people to help others. Make sure you get everyone’s names right!
- Bite the bullet – go up to strangers (even though our mothers tell us not to!) As author Susan Jeffers says “Feel the Fear and Do it Any Way”.
- Stay until you have met and connected with a pre-determined number of people. Start with just one or two – as your confidence (and success grows) build it up to five or six.
- Think more about what help you are looking for. So when you’re asked – you know!
- Think about the needs of your best contacts – how could you help them achieve their needs through any new people you meet.
- If you can, get to talk to the speakers before they speak. Most speakers value any insights they can get from audience members ahead of time. It’s also nice for them to see ‘friendly faces’ when they are presenting.
- Stand up. Sitting down at a networking event doesn’t work.
- Give your name first. It helps put people at ease. Then ask for their name.
- Listen more carefully to others’ names. Repeat the name until it is lodged in your brain. If you didn’t quite catch their name ask for it to be repeated, rather than ‘letting it go’.
- Imagine a close friend will join you and stand there waiting to be introduced. This will force you to pay more attention!
- Starting a conversation can be daunting for some people. Talk about common interests – what they want from the meeting, how long they’ve worked for their company, what they like about their role, what else they would like to do, are there any speakers they are particularly keen to hear, what they think of anyone they’ve already heard?
- Focus on finding ways to be of value to others – initially, forget what’s in it for you. Do this by offering opportunities to others – information, referrals and recommendations with little or even no desire for ‘a return favour’. Offers with strings attached are not offers.
- In order to help others, you need to know what they want. To find out, ask lots of non-threatening questions about them, share stuff about you too so its not seen an inquisition.
- Don’t spray your business cards around like a tomcat! When you meet someone interesting – COLLECT their business card.
- Don’t dismiss support or junior staff such as secretaries, assistants, waiters and waitresses, security guards and those who deliver the internal mail because they can all be HUGE allies, or your biggest enemies. Spouses also have FAR more power and influence than some imagine. Nurture them. Get to know them as people. Look after their interests and they will recognise and reward you by providing access to their decision-making ‘superiors’.
- Think of relevant questions to ask the speaker after their presentations. Then take the opportunity to do so if invited.
- When you meet new people, find out enough about them to have a valid reason to follow up with a call, SMS message, or email. Perhaps you can send them some appropriate information that you promised.
- Enjoy yourself.