



Explore



Engage



Experience



Embark



Elevate

Networking Etiquette

GO WITH A PURPOSE AND PLAN AHEAD

Understand why you are going and what you hope to accomplish. Prepare your “30-Second Commercial” to use when introducing yourself.

DRESS APPROPRIATELY

Make sure you understand what the expected attire is for an event. When in doubt, err on the side of “Business Professional”. Remember, your name tag goes on your right, near your shoulder.

EAT BEFORE YOU GO

Although most networking events do include food, this is not why you are attending. Loading your plate with food is not appropriate and sends the wrong signal.

If you are eating and/or drinking, keep your right hand free for shaking hands.

WATCH YOUR NON-VERBALS

Approach others with a firm handshake and a smile and maintain eye contact while conversing with them. It is rude to look around the room. Stay within arm’s length of someone you just met. Watch for signals that it is time to make a polite exit. You don’t want to monopolize anyone’s time.

BRING BUSINESS CARDS, BUT DO NOT FORCE THEM ON PEOPLE

If you’re having a productive conversation with a new connection, it may be appropriate to exchange business cards. Make sure you have your business cards handy, and make sure they are in pristine condition.

STAY POSITIVE AND AVOID INAPPROPRIATE TOPICS OF CONVERSATION

Be complementary, but sincere when conversing with others. Do not criticize the event in any way. Avoid discussing personal issues, health problems, and controversial topics such as religion or politics. Do not gossip.

BE A GOOD CONVERSATIONALIST

This means you should be engaging. Listen more than you speak and do not spend the entire time talking about yourself. Avoid asking questions with “yes” or “no” answers. For example: “How are you enjoying this conference?” rather than “Are you enjoying this conference?” Leave the high-pressure sales pitch at home.

FOLLOW UP AFTER THE MEETING

Within a day or two of making a new contact, remember to send a nice, polite thank-you note or email. Connect on LinkedIn with a personalized message. Remember that networking is all about building relationships!