

# Successful Networking Guide

A proven and comfortable approach  
for successfully meeting potential clients  
at business and social events



REVENUE WISE

THE SMART WAY TO GROW

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# Goals of this Guide

## The Goal of Networking

The overall goal of the networking process is to develop a mutually beneficial relationship with people who can use your services now or in the future.

Our “prime directive” drives this process:

**“How can I be of service, add value, and have a positive impact?”**

## Goals of this Guide

1. Help you understand the mindset a successful networker.
2. Learn how to add value throughout the client development process.
3. Learn the basics of generating new prospects from events.
4. Learn an easy, four-step process to meet new people.
5. Learn several ways to start conversations, engage people during the conversation and gracefully exit the conversation.

# Start With the Right Mindset

## Do You Need to Change Your Perspective?

Our perspectives greatly influence our ability to learn and successfully perform networking. This table presents common perspectives we hear from our clients.

LEVEL	CURRENT PERSPECTIVE	NEW PERSPECTIVE
<b>SYSTEM</b> Firm/office rules, norms, and structures that influence our assumptions, capabilities, and behaviors.	“We do not need to do much business development. The top rainmakers will continue to give us work.” “The firm never really emphasized the need to do biz dev.”	“The market has changed. For the success of the firm, we all need to generate new clients. I will do my part to help change the culture.”
<b>IDENTITY</b> Deep seated, identity-level beliefs.	“I come from a family of doctors and academics and we would never stoop to “working a room.”	“The most important people in the world network. There is no shame in meeting and helping new people.”
<b>ASSUMPTIONS</b> What one assumes to be true about life, the world, and oneself.	“I am a professional, not a salesperson.”  “My work should speak for itself.”  “Since I don’t like networking, why should I do it?”	“Just being at what I do is no longer enough to build a successful practice. Being good at networking is essential to my success.”  “When meeting new people, I will change my approach from what I can ‘get’ to what I can ‘give.’”
<b>CAPABILITIES</b> Techniques, skills, and strategies.	“I really don’t know the best way to network and meet new prospective clients.”	“I will invest the time to learn these skills and techniques.”
<b>BEHAVIOR</b> The actions performed, regardless of capability.	“I have never practiced networking enough to get good.”	“I will practice networking, just like my tennis game, and get better.”
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b> Where, when, and with whom you display your behaviors.	“There don’t seem to be enough good prospects at these events to make it worthwhile.”	“I will find events that have the people I want to meet.”

## Assumptions Control Your Focus

Your assumptions greatly influence:

1. Your state of mind
2. What and how you learn (capabilities)
3. Your motivation and effectiveness (behavior)

The goal is to develop assumptions that will put you in a better frame of mind and make you a more effective networker.

## Use Questions to Change Your Assumptions (in the Moment)

The questions that you ask yourself control how you feel about yourself and the event.

Asking the right questions is an excellent way to change your assumptions in the moment.

1. How can I be of service at this event?
2. How can I help this person?
3. How can I have fun and meet useful people?
4. How can I feel confident and comfortable at this event?
5. How can I get the most out of this event?
6. What might I have in common with these people?

# How to Meet the Right People

## Overview of Our Event Process

Follow these three steps to generate prospective clients from events:

### Before — Develop A Plan

1. Set your goals.
2. Pick events that contain your target clients. Understand who's attending. Determine what breakout sessions you will attend.
3. If possible, get the attendee list in advance and:
  - Determine whom you would like to meet
  - Let them know that you will be there, or
  - Schedule a time to meet
4. Develop three opening lines and topics of conversation.

### During — Make Connections

1. Get into an optimum frame of mind.
2. Direct your thinking by asking yourself helpful questions:
  - How can I help these people?
  - How can I have fun and meet the right people?
  - How can I get the most out of this event?
3. Use the four-step approach for meeting people (explained below).

### After — Follow Up

1. Follow up with everyone you met.
2. If possible and appropriate, send them something of value.
3. Generate a next step. Make the next step yours, not theirs.

# Stages of Relationship Building

Prospective clients want you to add value throughout the entire relationship development process.

## EXIT RESPONSES

I am not aware of what you do,  
OR I am not positively  
predisposed to talking with you.

I did not hear anything of value  
during our conversation. You did  
not make a good first impression.

What you sent me was not  
useful. I will not respond.

*Nurture relationship until  
need arises*  
I do not have a need you can  
help me with now.

Your offer did not meet my  
criteria. I will keep looking for  
one that does.

The work did not meet my  
expectations. I will not give you  
more work.

We have drifted apart  
and have stopped  
working together.

## STAGES OF PROCESS

AWARENESS

INITIAL MEETING

FOLLOW UP WITH  
SOMETHING OF "VALUE"

EXPLORE NEEDS

MAKE AN OFFER

START WORKING TOGETHER

STOP INVESTING IN THE  
RELATIONSHIP

CONTINUE INVESTING IN THE  
RELATIONSHIP

## POSITIVE RESPONSES

I am aware of you what you do,  
OR I am positively predisposed to  
talking with you.

I heard something of value during  
our conversation. You made a  
good first impression.

What you sent me was useful OR  
I might have need. I will respond.

I have a need you can help me  
with now.

Your offer met my criteria. I  
will accept your offer.

Your work met or exceeded my  
expectations. I will give you more  
work.

You are a trusted advisor  
and business friend. We  
will work together.

# The Four Steps to Meeting People

## The EEEEasy Approach

An EASY way to remember the four steps: The EEEEasy Approach

1. **ENTER** — Start the conversation
2. **ENGAGE** — Get to know the person
3. **EXCHANGE** — Exchange numbers
4. **EXIT** — End the conversation

## The Easy Approach Explained

**Remember the Prime Directive:** “How can I be of service, add value, and have a positive impact?”

### **ENTER (the Conversation)**

Your goal in this stage is to simply start the conversation.

- **Be Intentional.** Get in the right frame of mind. Ask yourself useful questions.
- **Be Proactive.** Stick your hand out first. “Hi, my name is David...”
- **Behave Like a Host.** Switch from behaving as a “guest” to being a “host.” Hosts are proactive and have something to give; guests are reactive and are waiting to receive.
- **Match the person’s “energy.”** If they are up, dial up your energy. If they are more subdued, dial down your energy.
- Use one of the conversation starters (see below).

- Safe Ways to Start:
  - Start with someone you know or who looks like they would be easy to talk with.
  - The event speakers are a good place to start.
  - Food lines and bars make good initial meeting places.
  - Find another lone ranger.

## ENGAGE (the Person)

Your goals during this stage are to get to know this person, show that you are interested and convey that it would be valuable to know you.

- **Be of Service.** Look for ways to help. Find something to send them after the event (free session, useful material, in-house training).
- **Be Present.** Make eye contact. Notice things about the person. Leave your iPhone in your pocket.
- **Be Curious.** Really listen. Everyone likes to be listened to. Ask follow up questions. “Tell me more about that.” “Can you explain that to me?” Use the reporter’s questions: who, what, where, when, why, and how.

## EXCHANGE (Numbers)

Your goals during this stage are to exchange cards and get permission to contact the person.

- **Make a Request.** If it makes sense, at the appropriate time, ask to exchange cards or to talk to them again.
- This is much easier if you have found something to give to them.

## **EXIT (the Conversation)**

Your goal during this stage is to elegantly end the conversation.

- Conversations have a natural arc. Pay attention to when the arc is ending and end it elegantly.
- It is okay to end a conversation and move on to someone else.
- Use one of the exit lines (see below).

## **Effective Principles For Meeting People**

These four principles underpin the EEEEasy approach to meeting people.

### **BE INTENTIONAL**

- Have fewer, but deeper conversations.
- Remember, your overall goal is to meet people that you can form a relationship with that is mutually beneficial. This is the first step in this process.

### **BE OF SERVICE**

- Switch from behaving as a “guest” to being a “host.” Hosts are proactive and have something to give, guests are reactive and are waiting to receive.
- Adopt the stance: How can I help?
- Always ask yourself: What does this person need that I can provide?

### **BE PROACTIVE**

- Introduce yourself first.
- Smile. Make appropriate eye contact.

### **BE CURIOUS**

- Everyone wants to talk to a good listener.
- Get to know the person.
- Focus on them. It really is all about them.

# What to Say at Each Stage

## Enter Stage: Conversation Starters & Continuers

Here are some sample questions that you can use to start and continue conversations. Adapt them to your personality and the situation at hand.

### All Purpose

- Hi, my name is David, what's yours?

### Event/Organization-focused

- How long have you belonged to this organization?
- What brought you to this event?
- How does this event compare to the last one?
- What did you like most about the speaker's talk?

### Work-Focused

- Tell me about what you do.
- What do you like most about what you do?
- What was your biggest accomplishment this last year?

### Kid-Focused

- Do you have kids? How many? What ages?
- What are they into?
- What are you most proud of?

### Ask for Help

- I'm new to this organization and/or event; any suggestions for how I can get the most out of it?
- This is my first time in this city; do you have any suggestions for good places to eat?

## **Friendship-Oriented**

- Hi, have you been to the exhibits yet? I'm heading over there now and would love some company.
- I'm going to grab a drink. Can I get one for you?

## **Compliment**

- Find something to compliment the person about.
- Women often compliment other women about their physical appearance (hair, clothes, shoes, purse).

## **Hobby/Fun-Focused**

- What do you do for fun?
- Do you have any hobbies?

## **Sports-Focused**

- Are you a fan of the local football, basketball, baseball team?
- What did you think of that game the other the day?

## Exchange Stage: Make A Request

At some point in the conversation, it will be appropriate to ask this person for his or her card.

Here are some suggestions:

- I've really enjoyed our conversation and would like to talk again--what do you say we exchange cards?
- Do you think it makes sense for us to talk further about this sometime?
- Let's exchange cards. Hand them yours.

## Exit Stage: How to Gracefully End the Conversation

Conversations have a natural arc. Pay attention to when the arc is ending and end it elegantly.

Here are some suggestions:

- I really enjoyed our conversation. I need to get going, as the next breakout session begins shortly. I hope to see you later in the conference or at another event soon.
- I have to head out right now, but I really enjoyed learning about your work. I will give you a call next week.
- It's been great getting to know you, but I see someone that I need to speak to. I hope that you have a great evening.

## Entering Groups of People Already Talking

### Wait Until You Get A "Sign"

- Start by standing just outside of the group, obviously wanting to engage with them but not invading them. You will know within 10-30 seconds if they are interested in inviting you into the group.
- Hi, my name is David.

### Ask to Join

- Hi, do you mind if I join you?

# Revenue Wise Information

## David Adams



David Adams is a seasoned coach, author and speaker. He brings over 20 years of experience to his role of helping attorneys and firm leaders improve their business development and leadership skills. David is expert in helping lawyers, working individually and in practice groups, develop the necessary attitudes, behaviors and capabilities to succeed. He is committed to helping attorneys achieve that ideal combination of professional success and personal fulfillment.

## Revenue Wise

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