

# Tips for Better Professional Networking

This information brought to you by the University of North Texas & the UNT Professional Leadership Program



1. Remember networking is a give and take relationship, however, you should always give before you receive. You should be as willing to help someone as they are to help you.
2. Tell your personal & professional network you are looking for employment & ask them for 3-5 contacts that could assist you in your career search. If you aren't notifying your network of your unemployment, you are missing invaluable opportunities.
3. Follow up! Too many people forget to follow-up with new contacts. This is an important, often overlooked step. People are not going to do the work for you. In addition, keep your current network up-to-date on your job search.
4. Form a relationship with someone before you ask for something you need. Networking is about relationships, not business card pushing. People are more likely to help you and refer you to their network if they know you and trust you.
5. Networking is an art ... practice makes perfect. Attend any and all professional networking and development events. You never know where your next opportunity will be. Refer to sources like the Dallas Business Journal for a list of professional events.
6. Always be on "your game." At all times you are representing your brand and should act/dress appropriately. You should also have your ears open for any and all possibilities.
7. Don't forget the classics ... dress professionally, have a firm handshake and make a good first impression.
8. If you are currently unemployed, have personal business cards made with your updated information. This is cheap and easy to do via KinkosFedEx or at home. Be sure the cards have a clean, professional appearance and opt to include your specialties or professional objectives on the back side of the card. Do not hand out cards from your previous job.
9. Use virtual network sites such as LinkedIn.com, but don't totally rely on the ease of the virtual world.
10. Know yourself. You must be able to know your goals and articulate what you're looking for.