

# 7 Tips for Powerful Networking

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Did you know that 70% of jobs are found and filled through networking? While most people are aware that networking is helpful, they are not 100% comfortable on what to do to connect, communicate, and create success with others. In fact, in a recent survey, 8 out of 10 people could not explain how networking works. Networking works when there is a constant flow of useful information. The following seven tips will help you do powerful networking.

**1. Establish your Professional Power Network.** Include Maintainers and Propellers in your professional network. Maintainers are those who help you get your job done competently and effectively. Three types of maintainers are:

- a. **Cornerstones** who form the core of your current network and help you day-to-day.
- b. **Experts** who you respect as professional contacts, seek their advice on how to do your current job, and would recommend to others.
- c. **Tangential Helpers** who are in related fields and help you get your job done.

Propellers push you into new areas, promoting your professional growth and development. Five types of propellers are:

- a. **Role Models** who have achieved what you aspire to do.
- b. **Mentors** who guide your career, provide opportunities, and teach you.
- c. **Hubs** who refer you to additional sources of information and people.
- d. **Challengers** cause you to look at your own direction by forcing you to face some important questions about your professional purpose and skill development.
- e. **Guides** who advise and encourage you to try new opportunities by offering you clarity and comfort in your professional journey.

Learn from those in your professional network by asking them such questions as:

- If you could give only one piece of advice to someone who wanted to do what you do, what would it be?
- If you had your career to do over again, what would you do differently?

**2. Set Up Your Own Board of Advisors.** Your Board should consist of three individuals. They may be your spouse, significant other, parent, childhood friend, mentor, coach, or anyone else who knows you and cares about your growth and success. One person on your Board should be one who can provide clarity to your ideas. Another person should be one who can make you feel comfortable with your choices and growth. If you only have clarity and comfort, you may not move beyond your comfort zone, so add a third person to give you challenge. By offering clarity, comfort, and challenge, a Board of Advisors, also known as a Circle of Influence, provides balanced energy for your logical and emotional thoughts.

**3. Identify Your Symbols of Success.** A part of creating your own reality is to select your symbols of success. You may want a bonus, a new job title, or a new office. Others have

identified their symbols of success as more money, a job promotion, a new car, a vacation, a beach house, and other signs of achievement. Money, positional power, and tangible assets are typical symbols of success. Instead of saying “I’ll wait and see,” know what you want. If you don’t know what you want, network to discover what you might want.

**4. Identify Your Symbols of Significance.** Symbols of significance are different than symbols of success because they challenge you to identify what fulfills you. While symbols of success are things that you get from others, symbols of significance are what you become as a result of your contribution. Money and power may not ensure your personal contentment or fulfillment. The type of people you interact with, the environment you work and live in, and the way you are recognized by others may be significant to you. Map out what you want to contribute, what is significant to you, and what you want to experience as a professional. For example, one manager wanted to be recognized as one of the best negotiators in his profession. No amount of money or power could satisfy this priceless feeling of knowing he was the best negotiator. By knowing your symbols of significance, you will be able to develop a more purposeful professional network to help you explore and meet your goals.

**5. Create Your Own Networking Action Plan.** Along with writing down your dates as timelines for certain actions, you should plan ways to implement new habits such as consistently sending thank you notes, sharing helpful information with those in your professional network, reintroducing yourself to people, calling people to stay in touch or reconnect, introducing people you know to each other, and inviting those within your professional network to events that might interest or benefit them. By developing specific details to your networking action plan, you will help yourself move out of your traditional comfort zone and use new tools to network with others.

**6. Track Your Success.** Most individuals use their calendars to schedule meetings that other people have requested. Starting today, schedule an hour a week to write your weekly report and reflect on your goals and overall professional direction. During this meeting with yourself, identify two specific networking activities that you are currently doing to support your continued growth and professional development. As part of your weekly report, identify two things that you would like to do over the next month that would make your professional purpose be more of your everyday life. Keep a journal of your weekly progress so you can refer to it when you need to be reminded of the reality that you want to create for yourself as a professional.

**7. Mentor Others.** Whether you are a mentor or mentee, practice your mentoring skills. Your mentoring relationship can be highly structured or informal. It can be for the short term or long-term. Most individuals find the informal, long-term mentoring relationship to be the most rewarding since it is based on caring for the other person’s professional growth and development. In some cases this relationship lasts for many years. Some successful professionals have one informal, long-term mentoring relationship where the mentor is available to explore options with them, discuss problems, listen, provide helpful feedback, offer a different viewpoint, provide suggestions, and share purposeful knowledge. This type of informal, long term mentoring relationship is often based on warm, mutual respect. The mentor’s resources of talents and time commitment are substantial and can shape the mentee’s professional direction.

By using the seven networking tools described in this document, you will have more clarity and self-confidence as you move beyond your comfort zone, build relationships with other professionals, and collaborate with them to create more opportunities both for yourself and them.