



NETWORKING TOOLKIT

*Etiquette and
Networking Tips for
Success*



2009 Etiquette Leader

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system without permission, in writing from the author.

Table of Contents



Mastering Your Mingle Ability	4
Characteristics of a Successful Networker	7
The Art of Networking	8
“Making, Maintaining and Nurturing Relationships”	8
Networking Facts and Fiction	10
Networking Top Ten Quick Tips	12
Noteworthy Networking Mistakes	13
The Big Deal about Small Talk	14
Make the Most of Your Next Networking Opportunity	14
Conversation Chart	16
Tips for Small Talk	17
Listening	19
Top Ten Tips for Listening	20
25 Tips for Fuelling a Conversation	21
Business Card Protocol	23
Name Tag Etiquette	26
What’s In a Name?	27
Remembering Names	28
Composing a Self-Promoting Pitch	29
Tips for Composing Your Bragalogue	30
The Brag Tag	31
Delivering Your Bragalogue	32
Networking Self-Assessment	34
Networking Planner	35
Conversation Practice	36
Bragalogue Self-Assessment Questionnaire	37

Mastering Your Mingle Ability

Woody Allen says 80 percent of success is showing up, and one of the most important features in showing up at any place is the entrance you make. People watch the entrance to a room, so use this to your advantage. The following tips will help you feel more confident at your next networking or social event:

- **Visualize.** If you tend to lack confidence or feel awkward at networking events, practice a visualization exercise. Think of someone you know and admire who is an excellent networker. Think of what they do and how they do it. Every night for two weeks before the event, visualize yourself doing those things; feeling confident, smiling, meeting strangers, shaking hands, making introductions and opening conversations. When the time comes, remember your visualization and proceed with confidence.
- **Prepare a commercial about yourself.** Who you are, what you do, who you do it for and how what you do that benefits others, makes their lives easier or more interesting. Practice your commercial with a friend, colleague or family member until it feels natural and spontaneous.
- **Remember your posture.** Keep your head up, shoulders back and down and your chin level. Good posture makes you look more confident. When you act confidently, you begin to feel more confident. There is an old Hasidic saying; “He who has confidence in himself gains the confidence of others.”
- **Body Language.** Exhibit open receptive body language so that people feel that you are approachable and find it easy to come up and talk to you. This means no crossed arms, hands on hips, hands over or in front of your face, slouching posture, finger tapping or playing with your hair. Your body language sends approachability messages. Are you closing yourself off and appearing difficult to approach? Ask somebody what kind of messages you send. Get some feedback from somebody you know and trust. Be first to smile. Make eye contact and shake hands.
- **Be a chameleon; synchronize or “mirror” behavior.** When people get along well from a behavioral point of view, they start to mirror each other. We have a natural predisposition to synchronize and reciprocate behavior. It’s called *limbic synchrony*. Our behavior from birth is influenced by those around us; rhythms, knowledge and behaviors are synchronized.

When we adapt our behavior and attitude and expressions to the people we meet, they feel more comfortable with us. Synchronize your body language with others' to achieve an immediate connection.

- **Enter the room, pause and step to the right.** Step to the right out of the line of traffic. Survey the room and pause briefly to make yourself visible.
- **Walk to the middle area of the room,** not to the corner or to a wall and definitely not directly to the food or the bar. Remember they are not having this event because they thought you were hungry or thirsty. If you spend the night at the shrimp tree, it is likely the only encounter you'll have is with the shrimp.
- **Circulate.** Circulate and make yourself known to key persons and peers.
- **Introduce yourself to others stating your name,** your company and something interesting about yourself. Ask permission by saying: "Excuse me may I introduce myself?" Be first to extend your hand and introduce yourself. It makes you appear more confident even when you aren't feeling confident.
- **Approach approachable people.** Don't try to join a large group if there is no room for you in the circle. Avoid two people who appear in deep conversation. Who is most approachable? Someone who is standing alone — just like you are.
- **Join a group.** To join a group, first make sure there is physically room for you to join in the circle. Casually listen to what people are talking about to see if you can contribute to the discussion. Smile and make eye contact with someone in the group. When an opportunity presents itself and there is a pause in conversation, introduce yourself. You might make a comment first such as; "I have to agree with you there, by the way, I'm Harvey Brown with Wacky Widgets," then shake hands.
- **Eat beforehand** so you won't be too hungry.
- **Keep your right hand free.** Don't carry food or drink in your right hand because you will need it for handshaking. If you are not comfortable holding a drink and plate of food in one hand (your left), do one thing at a time. Have a drink in your hand or food, but not both. Alternatively, do what the Royals do, circulate first and then eat or drink.
- **Be aware of proxemics.** Respect people's personal space, which varies from culture to culture. Getting too close to a person can trigger their fight or flight response. Intrusions are bad for rapport especially if they are a surprise.

- **Don't forget to Smile, smile, smile.** It is a powerful communication tool and one of your most valuable assets. It is warm and welcoming and brings an immediate connection.
- **Brush up on current events,** today's news stories, movies and sporting events so you can discuss topics other than business and engage in small talk. Avoid controversial topics such as politics and religion.

Characteristics of a Successful Networker

The successful networker requires:

- A professional, respectful, courteous and confident demeanor that includes a positive attitude.
- Sincerity, approachability and a willingness to engage and connect with others.
- Awareness of how his/her actions affect others.
- Emotional awareness and genuine interest and appreciation of the needs, interests and motivations of others.
- Behavioural observation skills.
- Understanding of limbic synchrony; the ability to synchronize actions, body language and voice with others to connect and establish rapport.
- The ability to adjust language and behaviour to correspond with the emotional level of the relationship and situation.
- Sensitivity to cultural diversity and gender relations and understanding of how language, proxemics and behaviour vary in different cultures.
- Situational awareness and the ability to judge the context of situations and act appropriately.
- Congruency in body language, attitude, language and behaviour.
- Emotional self-awareness and empathy in order to connect authentically with others.
- An honest and direct agenda.

The Art of Networking

“Making, Maintaining and Nurturing Relationships”

- Work the room. Don't spend the night with people you already know. Limit your time at the cocktail bar.
- Do your homework and come to an event prepared. Establish your objectives before you go. Know who is going to attend the event and decide whom you might like to meet. Be prepared to engage in small talk by brushing up on current events.
- Develop an interesting “commercial” about yourself — one that arouses curiosity holds interest and focuses on how your services or product can benefit others. An insurance salesman doesn't have to say, “I'm an insurance salesman.” He can say “I help people protect their family's future.”
- Spend some quality time with no more than two or three individuals. Quality not quantity is the key to networking success. Get to know them better so you can begin to build a relationship based on trust and rapport.
- Encourage others to talk about themselves and their business. Focus on what they do or what they make, rather than on what you do or what you sell. Think of it as planting and growing a relationship, rather than hunting for business.
- Ask open-ended questions beginning with who, what, where, when and how. How did you become involved with this organization? What brings you here? What are some of the challenges do you face in your business? What makes you unique in your business? How do you set yourself apart from others? What keeps you up at night?
- Look for opportunities to help other people with their business success. The more you help them, the more it will cycle back to you.
- Give more than you hope to gain. Successful people are seen as sources for advice and information. Focus on what you can do for others. Share some of your contacts or resources with no strings attached. It may not come back to you immediately, but at some point down the road, it could.
- Actively listen by focusing on those you meet. Don't glance over their shoulder, talk on your cell phone, send text messages or use your blackberry. This is rude and destroys your credibility. If they mention something about their interests, family or even their pet, ask about it. “What's your daughter's name? How old is she? What college does she go to?” Record the information so the

next time you see that person you can ask, “How is your daughter doing at college?” “Has Rover had her puppies yet?” The same rule applies to hobbies, interests, vacation spots and other personal information they share.

- Ask for their business card without offering yours. This is a very complimentary signal.
- Create a list of your top ten clients and make an effort to keep in touch with them at least once a quarter, depending on the style and the nature of the business. Include hot prospects or people you have done business with in the past.
- If you notice articles a contact might be interested in, send it to them with a hand written note attached. Call them to say you are sending the article and referring to the personal information you recorded ask: “How was your trip to Vancouver?” “How is your daughter doing at college?” “How did Rover do at his obedience class?” This interest surprises and delights people. If they golf, invite them to make up a foursome.
- If your contact has won an award or received a promotion, send them a congratulatory note. Don’t include your business card. Including your business card devalues the gesture.
- Every time someone sends you some useful information, quickly follow up with a hand written thank you note. Do not include your business card with the note because this destroys the sincerity of your thank you.
- Volunteering is a powerful networking opportunity. When people work together for a good cause, it levels the playing field and develops a tremendous sense of closeness. You have the opportunity to demonstrate your business skills and align yourself with people that may be at a higher professional level than you are. Be sure you believe in the cause and treat your commitment as a job. By demonstrating your commitment and integrity, you make many powerful liaisons as you climb the ladder.
- Keep track of details. By making note of the personal information you have learned, you can go back to the details, follow up and build on those relationships. Add the information to your database immediately, before you forget.

Networking Facts and Fiction

Fiction:

I am talented and smart, so if I work really hard, I will be able to get a great job or promotion.

Fact:

Only fifteen percent of your success is related to your technical skills and knowledge. Eight-five percent of your success is related to your people skills. Landing great clients and jobs boils down to two things — who you know and what others know about you, in other words, what kind of reputation you have earned.

Fiction:

Networking takes too much energy and time for most busy people.

Fact:

When you master the art of networking, it becomes a way of life. The key to networking success is how to build it into every social engagement. When you are good at it, it actually increases your energy because it makes it more fun to be in social settings.

Fiction:

Networking is not worth my time to follow up on every opportunity that presents itself. Most of them won't pan out anyway.

Fact:

You have to follow up every interesting lead that generates new contacts and unexpected business. Maybe the lead will not bring results immediately or come directly from that person, but it could come from someone they know. Don't underestimate the value of any connection you make.

Fiction:

You have to join a professional networking association to achieve results.

Fact:

Professional networking associations are just one small avenue for networking. Basically, you can network everywhere.

Fiction:

If I do nice things and help others, they will return the favour and send business opportunities my way.

Fact:

You have to give more than you hope to gain. Don't assume that if you helped someone, it will come back to you. Don't do nice things because you hope to get something back. If you give expecting something in return, others pick up on your hidden agenda and it reduces your professional credibility.

Fiction:

People will take advantage of me if I'm trying to help them.

Fact:

This is the exception not the rule. It is up to you to retain your integrity and manage your time. Never turn down a chance to mentor or help someone; every relationship can lead to an opportunity.

Fiction:

Networking is just schmoozing people and it seems insincere.

Fact:

If you approach networking as a schmoozer who is indiscriminately passing out cards, it is insincere. If you are sincere in trying to support others and their business goals and develop meaningful relationships, people will recognize this and you will garner their trust and respect.

Networking Top Ten Quick Tips

- Be prepared; dress appropriately and bring business cards or a resume if you are looking for work or volunteer positions.
- You have to give to get. Networking is a two way street.
- Sincerity is key. Be honest about your intentions and accomplishments.
- Always be courteous and respectful. You never know who you're talking to. Remember the 4 E's rule: treat Every person, in Every circumstance with Exactly the same respect and consideration, Every time.
- Be able to speak intelligently and confidently about your own skills and accomplishments. Prepare a commercial or marketing statement in advance.
- Have a clear set of goals and choose to spend your time and energy accordingly.
- Learn to ask the right questions of others and genuinely listen when they talk to you. Record the details.
- Become knowledgeable about your field, your peers, your city or your country. Share that knowledge whenever possible.
- Follow through when you say you'll do something.
- Be appreciative, record details in your data base and follow up consistently, and show gratitude when people help you.

Noteworthy Networking Mistakes

- Passing out your business cards like a poker dealer.
- Namedropping or exaggerating about your skills, experiences or accomplishments.
- Being too friendly. Being overly familiar, cozy or flirty can backfire. Try to maintain a professional distance.
- Talking incessantly about yourself at the expense of showing interest in others.
- Inappropriate attire, language or grammar.
- Rudeness. For example, talking down to a service person, showing up late or failing to follow through in a timely fashion.
- Failing to act when you make a contact and not following up.

The Big Deal about Small Talk

Make the Most of Your Next Networking Opportunity

People do business with those they know and trust. This is why it is important to develop relationships in the business arena. Small talk is an important part of establishing rapport and is the beginning of the development and nourishment of a bond. Every business meeting should begin with small talk; the thread of connection that humanizes our business discussions and encourages the foundation of a relationship. By improving your conversation skills, you enhance your leadership skills, boost your confidence in social situations and develop new friendships.

75 percent of people surveyed admitted they are fearful when attending parties or events where there are a lot of people they did not know. Why are they afraid? Because they don't know how to approach strangers and make small talk; they say they just don't know what to say.

As children, we may have been told to be seen and not heard, don't talk to strangers, or silence is golden. Forget what your mother told you. Rather than being fearful, you have to engage others in conversation so that they can become clients, associates, or even friends.

Be aware that shyness is often misinterpreted as snobbishness or pretentiousness. This could seriously hurt your chances of developing a relationship or doing business. Take the step and introduce yourself; "Hi, my name is Janet Friendly. I am pleased to meet you."

Often people go to a networking event and spend their time looking for someone they already know. This really defeats the purpose. If you wanted to spend time with someone you already know, you should just call them up for a date. Will Rogers, the great American humorist, said "Go out on a limb, that's where the fruit is."

When you enter a room, take a moment to look around and spot key people. The important points to remember are: make eye contact, smile, find an approachable person, extend your hand, give your name, and use theirs. Using a person's name at least three times in your conversation will help you remember it.

Get a conversation started by making a statement followed by a question. The idea is to get the other person talking. Use open ended questions, those that will require more than a yes or no answer. Open ended questions begin with Who? What? When? Where? How? and Why? The best kind of statement would be one that links you to something you already have in common with the other person, such as the event you are attending, the venue, or even the weather outside.

Don't forget: equally important to being a good conversationalist is being a good listener — an active listener. You don't just listen with your ears. You have to exhibit the appropriate body language. Listen with your eyes, lean in slightly with your body, keep your stance open, nod your head and encourage the other person verbally.

Before attending your next event, fill in the conversation chart on page 16 with topics. You'll be totally prepared to engage in small talk.

To become a better conversationalist, we need to employ two primary objectives:

1. **Take the risk.** Take the risk to start a conversation with a stranger. We cannot wait for others to approach us.
Even if we are shy, it is up to us to make the first move. If you stand beside the shrimp tray waiting for someone to approach you, likely the only encounter you will have will be with the shrimp. If you are fearful, just remind yourself there are more dire consequences in life than being rejected at a networking event by someone you don't know and who doesn't know you.
2. **Assume the burden.** It is up to every one of us to assume the burden of conversation. It is our responsibility to come up with topics of conversation, introduce ourselves to others, remember people's names and introduce them to others, relieve awkward moments and fill those silences. Assume the burden of other people's comfort. When others are comfortable with us, they will feel good about doing business and socializing with us. When you don't assume the burden, you are showing that you are self-centered; you allowed your own comfort to take precedence over every other person's.

Conversation Chart

Before attending a networking event, prepare yourself by completing the chart with conversation topics.

Weather	Family	Trivia	Work
Joke	Odds and Ends	Personal	Word of the Day
Local/Current Events	National Current Events	USA Current Events	International Current Events
Business Happenings	Movies	Sports News	Television

Tips for Small Talk

Project a positive attitude. Be first to smile, it's one of those reciprocal things. When you smile, they smile back. Extend your hand give your name and tag line. When you are first, you appear more confident even if you are not. Remember the old Hasidic saying: "He who has confidence in himself gains the confidence of others." Exhibit host behaviour. Host behaviour puts every one at ease and creates an atmosphere of warmth and appreciation.

Use ice breakers. Ice breakers are a good way to start a conversation. But don't just make a statement: "This is a nice party," or "What a nice day," or "That was a great movie," or "What a beautiful garden." It is an indirect invitation to chat. Instead, make a statement followed by a question. "This is a nice party, how do you know _____ (the host)?" or "What a nice day, is it going to be this warm all week?" "That was a great movie; have you read the reviews on it?" Or, "Your garden is beautiful, what's your secret?"

Use open-ended questions. Open ended questions are those questions beginning with who, what, when, how, and why...questions that require more than a yes or no answer. "Who is your role model?" "What brings you here?" "When do you plan to go on holidays this year?" "How do you two know each other?" "What is your favorite season?" "Why do you like this restaurant?" "Tell me about your favorite..." "Describe for me...."

Dig Deeper. Show a genuine interest in what the other has to say. "How was your vacation? What did you do? Tell me more." Actively participate in the conversation by asking questions.

Be sensitive. When you meet new people, be careful how you word questions so you don't make the other person feel uncomfortable. Say, "Tell me about your family" instead of "Are you married?" or "Do you have kids?" Instead of "What do you do?" say "Tell me about your business or work." Whatever you talk about has to be appropriate for the occasion and the depth of rapport and intimacy.

Use free information. Free information is all around you. It could be your location, a lapel button, a trophy in an office, a diploma, team logo, or art on the wall. "This hotel is very quaint, how old is it?" "What a lovely picture, tell me about it." "I see you like golf, tell me about this trophy." "I noticed you went to Cal Tech. How long did you live there?"

Compliment and encourage. Find something nice to say about the other person. Telling someone what you admire about them makes an immediate connection and makes the other person feel good about both of you. It can be about their appearance, their possessions or behaviour. Be sure it is genuine.

Appropriate Topics. F.O.R.M. is an acronym which stands for Family, Occupation, Recreation and Miscellaneous. Whatever you talk about, it has to be appropriate to the occasion and the depth of rapport and intimacy — this is where social intelligence comes in.

Inappropriate Topics. These include personal health issues, descriptive birth stories, controversial subjects that can lead to arguments, religion, politics, gossip, the price of something and the misfortunes of others, just to name a few.

Listening

Scientific data has shown that we listen at approximately 300 words per minute and speak at 150 to 200 words per minute. We have the capacity to take in a lot more information than one person can speak at any given time. So what happens? We may put the extra listening time to use. We let our mind wander, we start making plans for dinner in our head and before you know it, our mind has wandered so much, we have missed what the person is saying to us, perhaps something important. Good listening has four parts: the visual, the vocal, the verbal and the mental.

Visual cues, which offer the easiest form of feedback, let the speaker know you are paying attention. Facial expressions, head nods, eye contact and positive body language are clear ways of expressing interest in your conversation partner's words.

To send **positive messages**, lean forward, maintain eye contact, open up your arms and your body, relax your body posture, face your partner, nod and smile.

Avoid these: pointing, covering your mouth, fondling body parts, fiddling with jewelry, tapping or clicking a pen, twisting hair, jiggling or swinging your leg, crossing your arms across your chest, putting hands on hips or glancing away from the person who is speaking.

However, all the visual, vocal and verbal cues in the world are useless if you haven't employed mental listening skills and stayed focused on the conversation. A good conversation partner retains what's been said. If you are too bored to stay with the conversation, exit gracefully instead of embarrassing your conversation partner by demonstrating your boredom. As a conversation partner, it is your job to listen. It isn't optional; it is a required courtesy.

Top Ten Tips for Listening

1. Learn to want to listen; you must have the desire, interest, concentration and self- discipline.
2. To be a good listener, give verbal and visual cues that you are listening.
3. Anticipate excellence. We get good information more often when we expect it.
4. Become a "whole body" listener. Listen with your ears, your eyes, and your heart.
5. If possible, take notes; they aid retention.
6. Repeat now, report later. Plan to tell someone what you heard (providing it is not confidential of course) and you will remember it better.
7. Build rapport by pacing the speaker. Approximate the speaker's gestures, facial expressions, and voice patterns to create comfortable communication.
8. Control internal and external distractions.
9. Generously give the gift of listening.
10. Be present. Avoid the tendency to daydream and drift from conversations.

25 Tips for Fuelling a Conversation

1. Prepare ahead of time for each social or business function. Practice your skills every day.
2. Be first to say hello and introduce yourself.
3. Take a risk and start the conversation ball rolling.
4. Focus on remembering people names. Ask someone's name if you've forgotten it.
5. Say your name when you meet someone you know in case they have forgotten your name.
6. Be prepared to answer simple questions like "What's new?"
7. Show interest in others by asking questions and digging deeper. "Did you have a good weekend?" "Yes." "What did you do?"... "Tell me about that." ... "What was that like for you?"
8. Tell others about positive things happening in your life; don't wait for them to draw you out.
9. Go out of your way to meet new people and engage in conversation.
10. Be enthusiastic when speaking with others and show interest in them and their ideas.
11. Be able to tell others in a few short sentences what you do, who you do it for and how what you do benefits others, makes their lives easier or more fun. Make it interesting and challenging.
12. Be aware of your body language and be approachable to others.
13. Smile, make eye contact and find approachable people to talk to.
14. Seek common interests, goals and experiences with the people you meet.
15. Be up-to-date on current events and be able to discuss a variety of topics that affect our lives.
16. Use a person's name when you start a conversation, during the conversation, and when you say goodbye.
17. Ask open ended questions beginning with who, what, where, where, why and how?
18. If you make a statement, follow it with a question. "The weather is seems dry for September. What do you think? Do we need more rain?"
19. Listen with your whole body and listen for free information.
20. Compliment others authentically.
21. Use "I" when speaking about your own opinions and feelings rather than "you."

22. When speaking in a group, include everyone by directing questions and making eye contact.
23. Be ready to issue invitations to follow up in order to build the relationship.
24. Keep in touch with people you have met.
25. Ask about things you were told in previous conversations. “How is your daughter doing at college?”

Business Card Protocol

- Your business card represents you. It should be in good shape, current, and clean; never soiled or tattered.
- Have two cards ready to distribute when you visit an office. Give one to the receptionist when you identify yourself to her. Give the second to the person you are meeting.
- During an office visit, if the host does not offer a card, as the guest, you can request one before leaving. If cards are in a holder, ask first before taking one.
- Carry cards to a social event in case the opportunity to network presents itself, but don't turn a garden party into a sales presentation. In a group or party situation, card exchange should be private.
- Don't hand out your card during a meal; wait until it's over.
- Don't give out cards during a private dinner party unless asked to do so. It blurs the business/social boundaries of the situation.
- Be selective in distributing your cards. It is not professional to pass out your business cards as if you were a dealer at a poker game. You want your card to be respected and valued, which it can't be if it is randomly distributed. An appropriate card exchange most often occurs between two individuals at a time.
- Use your card to represent you by enclosing it when forwarding materials. However, it is not appropriate to enclose a business card in correspondence that has personal or emotional content, such as a note of condolence.
- The protocol of exchanging business cards follows that of the handshake. Usually the senior or higher-ranking person starts the process. Wait for the senior executive to ask for your card first. It is impolite to ask for the card of someone higher in rank than you are. Think twice before approaching the Chief Executive Officer of your client's corporation and asking for his or her card. Wait to be introduced. It shows respect for both your client and the CEO.
- Make sure your cards are readily available in a pocket or brief case. A card case is a good investment; it keeps your cards neat and adds to your professional demeanor. To avoid fumbling in pockets or purses always keep cards in the same place. A good location is the inside pocket of your suit or jacket.
- Present your card so the print faces the recipient.

Ice Breakers for Business Functions

- What will be the coming trends in your business?
- How did you get interested in_____? (Profession, business, industry, project, etc.)
- What are some of the challenges of your profession?
- What separates your company from the competition?
- What do you enjoy most about your business/profession?
- What advice would you give someone starting out in business?
- What significant changes have you witnessed since you started in your field?
- How has technology and the internet impacted your business/profession as a whole?
- What ways have you found to be most effective in promoting your business?
- How did you come up with this idea?
- Tell me what keeps you up at night?
- What got you involved in this organization?
- How has your year been?
- What's been going on at work since I last saw you?
- Bring me up to date on....

Conversation Tips

- Smile, make eye contact, use open body language.
- Be first to say hello, your name and introduce yourself.
- Find approachable people and start the conversation.
- Prepare your 60 second "elevator" speech.
- Seek common interests with people; be enthusiastic.
- Be able to speak on a variety of topics.
- Listen for free information.
- Make an effort to remember people's names.
- Ask a person's name if you have forgotten it.
- Use open ended questions Who? How? What? Why? When? Where?

Ice Breakers for Social Functions

- What brings you here?
- Where did you two meet? How do you all know each other?
- I think Toronto is a great city. What do you think?
- What is a typical day like for you?
- Did anyone catch that special on TV last night?
- I just finished reading_____. Has anyone read it yet?
- Tell me about your family.
- Did you catch the _____ game last night?
- Did you have a vacation this year? What did you enjoy about it?
- What is your favourite vacation/restaurant/movie/book? Why?
- What would you do if you won a million dollars?
- What is your favourite thing to do on a rainy day?
- What are some of your family traditions you enjoy?
- What is the best surprise you've ever received?
- Tell me about your New Year's resolutions.

Savvy Closing Lines

- **Express a need:** "Susan, it has been great meeting you and speaking to you about _____. Now I need to go and see the exhibits, talk to the speaker, meet some other potential clients, meet some of the new members, etc."
- **Make a referral:** "Thank you Don for the delightful conversation. Do you know anyone here who can help me with _____?"
- **Issue an invitation:** "Lucy, I hope we can do business together soon. May I call you next week to discuss your requirements?"
- **Join me:** "I've enjoyed meeting you Scott. Let's circulate. I'd like to introduce you to my associate."
- **Show appreciation:** Thank you Bob for including me in your conversation. It is difficult being new and you made it much easier. Thanks."

Name Tag Etiquette

- Wear a pin-on or clip-on name tag on your right shoulder. Don't make someone to search for it all over your body. Your right shoulder is in the sight line of someone shaking your hand.
- Don't wear your name tag **outside** the convention hall. Slip it in inside your pocket or purse while you go to and from meetings.
- If your name tag is not preprinted and you have to write it yourself, don't write "Mr.," "Mrs.," or "Ms." in front of your name. You can add your professional title such as "Dr." if you wish, depending on how much you wish to advertise your credentials.
- At business events, it is appropriate to add your job title under your name. Unless the event includes only fellow employees, also add your company name.
- A spouse's name tag should include the company member's name placed in brackets on the second line: "Donna Jones" followed by "(James Jones)." If a female spouse has retained her own name, the tag should read "Nancy Black" with "(Mrs. Greg Parker)" below.

What's In a Name?

- What is the most important word in the English language? A person's name. Everyone likes to hear their name spoken and it is respectful to use someone's name and pronounce it correctly.
- Don't give anyone a nick name or shorten their name unless it is what they are normally called. That means don't decide to call Nicholas "Nick" or Elizabeth "Beth" or "Liz" unless they ask you to. Unless you have a close relationship, don't refer to anyone as "Honey" or "Sweetie."
- If you are uncertain about the pronunciation of someone's name, ask them to repeat it. Say something like "I'm sorry. I didn't quite catch your name." This shows respect and consideration. If it is especially troublesome or difficult, this may be an appropriate time to request their business card.
- If someone mispronounces your name, gently correct them in a light-hearted way. Say "That's an interesting pronunciation, but my name is "Fox," as in the animal."
- Conventional etiquette says you shouldn't use a person's first name until he asks you to do so. However, depending on the situation, this can make you appear pretentious or stuffy. If the person immediately calls you by your first name, then follow their lead. If the person is a senior executive, a public figure or elderly, stick with the honorific – Mr., Mrs., Ms. at least in the beginning.

Remembering Names

- Since remembering people's names is difficult for many people, when you see someone you have met previously but may not know well, give them the gift of your name. Say "Hello, Louise Fox, nice to see you." It will immediately put them at ease, especially if they weren't sure of your name!
- Stop telling yourself you don't remember names and start telling yourself, "I'm good at remembering names." This statement, repeated often enough, can counteract any negative message about not remembering names.
- When someone tells you their name, make eye contact and focus as they say it. Good eye contact makes us a better listener. Don't think about what you are having for dinner later, or what you are going to say next; focus on their name. Visualize how it looks written down. Then, repeat it at least three times in conversation. "Well it's a pleasure to meet you Bob, I have heard a lot about your adventures, Bob. What brings you here, Bob?"

Composing a Self-Promoting Pitch

“Don’t toot your own horn!”, “Don’t be a show off!”, “No one likes a braggart!”, “If you do a good job and work hard you will get ahead.” Many of us heard these words when we were growing up. We were discouraged from talking about how well we’d done or our accomplishments for fear of been thought of as an arrogant self-promoter. So all you hard working humble people out there — let me ask you this question, “Has being humble, doing a good job and keeping quiet about it got you ahead?” Maybe you haven’t done badly, but probably not as well as you could have. You need a bragalogue!

What’s a bragalogue?

Your bragalogue is your very own tag line, full of interesting, humorous highlights of your past and present life that make people want to say “tell me more.”

Tips for Composing Your Bragalogue

- Start by consciously thinking about your past and present life and those accomplishments that have substance and weight from which you can compose memorable and meaningful stories and messages about yourself.
- Answer the self-assessment in detail and be explicit about those details and highlights of the past and present.
- Combine both personal and professional information in order to develop the foundation for the bragalogue. Encompass the best details of you and what other people should know about you.
- Punctuate with colorful and interesting details and humor, and include things you are passionate about. People will remember the colorful details about you. Get creative in telling your story.
- Include details about obstacles you've encountered and overcome. People enjoy hearing about it and it makes an amazing connection.
- Write your bragalogue in story or conversational format.
- Because there is always a disconnect between what we think of ourselves and what others think of us, try seeking input from friends, family or colleagues when answering the questionnaire. The more feedback you get, the easier it is to identify strengths and gain insight from them for your bragalogue.
- Avoid boring, dry descriptions in chronological order reminiscent of a resume, table of contents or lists of facts. That's called a *snoralogue* and nobody wants to listen to it.
- To be more entertaining, keep your bragalogue current by updating it on a regular basis and tying it in to current events, statistics, quotations or other tidbits.
- Deliver your bragalogue in an interesting, compelling, conversational style that shows your authentic self. Acting professional doesn't mean you have to be stiff, unapproachable, formal and boring. Reinforce those qualities that work well for you in your personal life; friendliness, warmth, humor, energy, justified pride, sincerity, interest and enthusiasm. Bring your authentic best self to every interaction both personal and professional.
- If you're an introvert, get over it. Being an introvert won't get you noticed and acting shy is just a bad habit. Reach beyond yourself and interact with those around you. It's the way of the world and the only way you'll get ahead unless you are a Wayne Gretzky or Bill Gates.
- Answer the twelve questions in the Self Assessment Questionnaire on page 38.

The Brag Tag

A bragtag is a 30-second snippet of information about you, expressed in a brief quotable manner. They function as memory insurance so that people will remember something compelling about you. They can be dropped into conversation as single gems or woven together to create a longer bragalogue.

Some examples of a bragtag:

QUESTION: “What do you do for a living?
“I’m a biochemist for a pharmaceutical company.” (**BORING**)

BETTER: “Hi, I’m Harvey, I’m a biochemist. I’m the kid who got a chemistry set for Christmas at age six and never stopped playing with it. Now I do research for one of the world’s largest pharmaceutical companies.”

I’m an insurance salesman. (**BORING**)

BETTER: “I help people protect their families’ future and you can find me in the corner office at ABC insurance with a phone glued to my ear just about any day of the week.”

Remember:

- Be interesting, colourful and showcase your competence.
- Begin with a hook that makes your listeners want to know more.
- Describe succinctly and convincingly how your career has developed and how your experience has culminated to make you an expert at what you do today.
- Use a story format and a conversational tone.

Delivering Your Bragalogue

Great self-promoters are prepared to brag anytime anywhere with anyone, but it is also important to focus on a few key people who can make a difference in your career or your life and make it a point to get in front of them. Ask yourself “Who can assist me in meeting my goals?” Think of the process as farming, planting seeds and watching the relationship grow. Remember the saying, “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know.” When it comes to building successful relationships, it’s what others know about you.

- Don’t overwhelm yourself by trying **to connect** with too many people all at once. Choose three or five key people and get to know them. Do some research on each of them and find out about their backgrounds; their successes, where they’ve lived, what their causes are, their hobbies, whether they have a family and so on. These details will give you a great starting point for starting up a conversation and building a personal relationship.
- Remember to achieve some **balance** between looking the part of a successful person (style) and substance. You don’t want to give the impression that you are all “flash” which comes across as not genuine. Good bragging is invisible, works its way seamlessly and is loaded with legitimate pride and enthusiasm.
- Act like **your best self** even when you don’t feel like it or are under the weather. Rise to the occasion and act like you would if you were delighted to be there and felt 120 percent. Recite to yourself “I am happy to be here,” “I can’t wait to tell you about me,” “You’re not going to believe this,” “I have terrific news.” After repeating these statements genuine delight and enthusiasm follow.
- Avoid whining about **personal problems** or other crisis. People like to be around others who are happy and upbeat. Whiners become irritating — even to their forgiving friends and business acquaintances.
- Effective braggers don’t recite a list of **accomplishments or agendize**, they **conversationalize**. Regardless of whether they are facing one or one thousand, they always seem as if they are having an intimate conversation with every person in the room.
- Take the **emotional temperature** of your listeners and customize your message accordingly. Ask yourself: “Who is my audience,” “What are their goals, needs, and objectives? What are their issues and what is their emotional temperature?”

- The way we **talk, listen and respond** to others will influence how they respond to us. We all want to feel acknowledged; when we feel that someone is in tune with our emotions and intentions, we respect him and feel more open to what he has to say. Talk and listen with your whole body, your eyes, ears, your head and your heart.
- Don't be afraid to **approach the higher** ups. Be secure and confident and get in front of the people you need to impress. Very often, higher ups find themselves seated alone at corporate events because everyone is afraid to approach them. The very fact they are at the event is an invitation for you to engage them.
- For the rest of your career, when you are in a meeting, look around the room. Size permitting, make it a point to introduce yourself to every person in the room. When you do it, imagine you are introducing a very good friend, rather than yourself. It makes your bragging much easier, trust me. Say what you do with a smile and a lot of enthusiasm and then let your bragalogue begin.
- Remember your **voice mail** could be your first shot at making a memorable impression. Take the time to script what you are going to say, consider the points you want to make and work them into a personalized and pithy thirty-second bragtag. Speak slowly and enunciate clearly. Smile as you speak so your voice comes across with energy and warmth.

Networking Self-Assessment

Please answer “yes” or “no” to the following questions:

1. I go to at least two functions a month where I can meet professionals in my industry or who are potential decision makers.
 Yes No
2. If someone asks me “What’s new?”, instead of saying “Not much,” I tell them about something interesting that is happening in my life.
 Yes No
3. At networking events, meetings and social gatherings, I introduce myself to other people I don’t know and come away knowing the names and information about at least three new people.
 Yes No
4. In the past year, I have participated in and/or joined at least one club or organization in order to develop new business contacts or meet new people.
 Yes No
5. I don’t wait until someone is interested in me or friendly toward me before I am friendly toward him or her.
 Yes No
6. I prepare myself before attending networking or social events by being up-to-date on current events, sports, news, movies and other interesting topics.
 Yes No
7. I am aware of the need to take turns in conversations so that I can learn about others and help them get to know me better.
 Yes No
8. In the past year, I have used my contacts to help at least two people find a new job, a service they required, connect with potential customers or clients and have provided information for other networking opportunities.
 Yes No
9. I believe small talk is important, and in business situations I like to frame the beginning and end of the meeting with small talk.
 Yes No
10. At business and social functions, I do not search out and spend time with people I already know and feel comfortable with.
 Yes No

Networking Planner

Before a networking event find out:

- Who will be there?
- What will happen at the event?
- When will it happen and what is the significance of the date or time?
- Where is it taking place and what do you know about the location or facilities that will facilitate conversation?
- Why is the event being held?
- What will make it a success for you?
- Who do you want to meet and how can you accomplish it?

Who?
What?
When?
Where?
Why?
What are my goals?
Whom do I want to meet?

Conversation Practice

1. Select a photo from a magazine.
2. Note the details in the photo.
3. Note the person's appearance.
4. Note the person's body language.
5. Check the photo for free information.
6. Note any situational details.

Write two "ice-breakers" you could use.

Write two open-ended questions you might ask.

Write two statements followed by questions.

Write two compliments.

Write two general topics that would be appropriate.

Bragalogue Self-Assessment Questionnaire

What would you and others say were six of your best personality traits?

What are the six most interesting things you have done in your business or personal life?

What do you do for a living and how did you get into that line of work?

What do you love about your current profession/job?

What skills and talents are best showcased by your job and the projects you are working on?

What are the accomplishments you are most proud of?

What new skills have you learned in the past year?

What difficulties or mistakes have you overcome along the way and turned into a positive learning experience?

What education and training have you taken and how have you gained from it?

What professional associations do you belong to and in what capacity?

What activities hobbies or interests do you have outside of work?

In what ways does what you do make a difference in people's lives?
Easier or more fun?
