

## Top Ten Keys to Corporate Networking

Networking is not just for business owners and sales people to sell their services or for people in the job market to find a new job. Networking is a way of creating a pool of resources to rely on and contribute to for mutual growth and success. Yes - it does have application in the workplace. By becoming a resource to others, you will create opportunities for them and for you.

- 1. Choose to 'live' networking versus 'do' networking.**  
Be a positive and resourceful contributor to everyone with whom you come in contact. People will in turn be more willing to assist you in your pursuits.
- 2. Attend all company-sponsored activities such as a Christmas party or company picnic.**  
You're invited, you have something in common with everyone there, and these events are social - perfect environments to meet new people and expand your horizons.
- 3. Volunteer to lead or organize activities during the annual United Way campaign.**  
Corporations give of their time, money and their most valuable resource, you. Why not take advantage of this annual event to become more visible in the company and the community at the same time. You will have access to some of the strongest networkers around, the not-for-profit community.
- 4. Be an advocate for local charity or community programs that your company supports.**  
Part of networking is maintaining your network with regular contact and follow-up. Becoming involved with an on-going volunteer group like Junior Achievement provides an easy system to stay in touch.
- 5. Sit with someone that you don't know at company meetings, in the lunchroom or during other situations where there are coworkers that you don't know.**  
In other words, network everywhere you go. Take the initiative to introduce yourself to people that you don't know. Smile, be friendly, and be interested versus interesting.
- 6. Take full advantage of all company sponsored training.**  
Most training classes are made up of people from many departments. Also, many classes utilize group exercises to enhance learning. Take your learning experience and that of your classmates to another level by interacting with as many different people as possible during the class and breaks. Ask classmates to team up with you after the class to put what you have learned into practice.
- 7. Participate in one of the company sponsored activities group such as sports teams or social clubs.**  
Many companies have the opportunity to participate in a local volleyball, softball, basketball league, etc. Participate if possible. Better still, take a leadership role and organize your own team!
- 8. Start or join a special interest group (SIG) specifically for members of your company who share a common interest such as a Toastmasters group or a software users group.**  
These groups not only offer the opportunity to network on an ongoing basis, they also provide you a forum to expand your professional skills for future career growth. Likewise you have the opportunity to contribute your knowledge to others and be recognized for your expertise.
- 9. Volunteer for cross-functional projects or task forces such as re-engineering projects, new product development, or company relocations.**  
Projects afford a great opportunity to meet people and learn what's unique to their functional area. It's also a chance to put your knowledge of human nature and communication styles into use to create win-win solutions.
- 10. Conduct informational interviews with managers and leaders of other areas.**  
Learn more about the functions, responsibilities, career opportunities, skill requirements, etc. of other departments in the company. Having awareness of how other departments interact can be a rare commodity and a great help to you, coworkers, and customers.

This Top 10 List was created by **Lori Link**, Certified Behavioral Coach and consultant, and **Larry Bryan**, sales consultant and trainer. If you have any ideas or would like to comment, send your e-mail to Lori at [Link@resource-link.com](mailto:Link@resource-link.com) or Larry at [lbryan@airmail.net](mailto:lbryan@airmail.net). Copyright 1998, Lori Link and Larry Bryan. May be reproduced or transmitted in its entirety only, including this copyright line and attributions.