

## Quick Guide: Networking for Success - Meeting and Greeting

Following the "Networking for Success: Preparation" Quick Guide in May 2008, we will now look at meeting and greeting at networking events. We are often told that we have just 10 seconds to make a first impression and 90 seconds to make a lasting one, so let's get a move on!

1. **Think positively and believe this will be a successful event.** You've done all your homework and know who you'd like to meet.
2. **Display positive visual behaviour.** People will see this first, so walk tall into the room with a purpose: a straight back, shoulders back and head held high. Look as though you are comfortable being at the event and smile as you meet people.
3. **Identify someone from your Hot List** who you would like as a client.
4. Then **simply walk over to them**, extend your hand with a smile, look them in the eye, and give a firm handshake as you introduce yourself.
5. **Introduce yourself confidently and concisely.** Use your surname as well as first name to give yourself authority and credibility. Say something of interest to create a more positive first impression. Remember you have only 10 seconds. For example: **Hi, I'm Mickey Mouse from Disney Legal and help companies resolve disputes before they get to court.**
6. **Be interested in them** as well as being interesting. Ask what they do, to explain more about their company, or why they're at the event etc. Don't interrogate them but weave your questions into the conversation.
7. **Show you are actively listening** by nodding and giving verbal encouragement. Be involved by asking more questions about them and their business. Be ready to contribute to the conversation.
8. At this stage, **check your body language** – it's easy to relax too much after an hour or so. Stand straight, don't be tempted to slouch, fold your arms or put your hands in your pockets. Be particularly aware of your visual behaviour when not actually engaged in conversation with potential clients.
9. Once you've had some 'social chit chat' and built rapport, **move smoothly into business conversation.** Link a business question to something they've said. For example: **You've mentioned juggling home and work commitments, how do you manage your team when they're all based remotely?**
10. **Good luck!** meeting and greeting new clients. Remember, you deserve to enjoy the event with all the preparation and planning that you've done.

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