

The following is a summary blog post from a networking contact and his information is below. Additional information as a paraphrase is offered from a newspaper article. Both offer good insights which may be of use to you.

## THE 20 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE NETWORKERS

1. **Be Memorable** – Grabbing the positive attention of people at networking events is critical. And the way you do that is to have a great story. A great elevator pitch that includes something compelling. It will be different for all of us. Some are personal stories of triumph. Others are tales of work successes. But you need a story to engage people. Period.

*A paraphrase from a Star Tribune Article 3-1-2010.* To really be memorable and establish a connection you should offer a great story in two parts which is the Narrative and the Exposition. The Narrative is the telling and describing of your story. While the Exposition is explaining what you do for a living. Provide a simple description of why people need certain services or products which will provide visual context then explain how your role is a key part of the solution. The so called “Elevator Pitch” should not be more than 30 seconds or less summary delivered naturally and effortlessly. If an interest develops have a more detailed “pitch” ready to go – again a natural delivery will go a long way to make a memorable impression.

2. **Be Patient** – You will meet all sorts while networking. Many of whom will not do it right. They will make mistakes. The “new”, the “impatient” and the “needy” will find their way to you. And your reaction to them is critical. Instead of looking for an out, look for the opportunity to educate. You will be thanked and remembered for that . . .
3. **Be Consistent** – Don’t crawl under a rock and don’t expect that showing up at a quarterly event will properly freshen your network relationships. You need to pick a few key organizations or events and go consistently. This way you become a part of the fabric. And you start to build friendships that will now extend beyond your visits. Set a goal for yourself that gets you in one general and one industry or function specific group event per month.
4. **Be Relevant** – You are relevant if people attending events see you as having value. To them. Right now. How do you do that? First, keep up friendships and each time you re-connect, ask great questions to make sure you know what is happening in their lives. This allows you to offer value that is specific to them. If it is a job search driven group, offer to serve as a volunteer and create subject matter expertise. Be the resume expert for your group. Or the interview prep person. If you help someone achieve their objectives in life, you are relevant.
5. **Be Social Media Savvy** – To be effective in today’s world, you really need to be savvy in social media. It is the easiest and most effective way to keep in touch with your network. In a personal way. Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Foursquare to name a few. If haven’t already done so, get started today. Really.
6. **Be Honest** – In order to really do this right, you have to be honest with people. If you tell everyone what they want to hear and promise the world, the results will be poor. If someone approaches you the wrong way, I encourage you to tell them. “Hey, I appreciate what you are trying to do, but . . .”. You can make great friends with people by helping them see the benefits of selfless networking. Those who come to an event as only a “taker” will find frustration in this new economy. Unless someone like you gently straightens them out.

7. **Be Influential** – How do you build influence? Well you can read [my post](#) on the subject. But, in short, it has to do with creating a sense in your network that you have something unique to offer. Something you've created. A group, a presentation, a helpful spreadsheet (for example). You can also do it by being selfless. Over time, your good acts will create a wave of positive momentum. And people will come to events looking for you. That makes networking easy. And fulfilling.
8. **Be Considerate** – If you bruise your network, it will be less pliable. Less interested in supporting you when you need it. And I think we all know that this new economy has been a teachable moment for us all. Don't ask for more than you deserve. Don't disregard a networking request if you can help it. And don't over-use a networking contact.
9. **Be Thankful** – Say thank you. And display your thanks in more ways than one. Know the needs and wants of your network. So that you can give targeted gratitude. Instead of something coming back to bite you, this effort will come back to kiss you. Gently on the cheek.
10. **Be Present** – In order to do this really well, there will be sacrifices. Less time at home with family. Less American Idol. Less Sunday football. OK with that? Being present means that you are there. At the events. And are there mentally as well. Focused uniquely on whoever is standing in front of you. It means having the ability to move around and "be present" with as many people as possible.
11. **Take Selfless Action** – Decide to go to an event with the sole purpose of only helping others. Not ready for full commitment? How about the first 5 people you meet? Every question from you. Your focus. Is on their needs. Not yours. Think that would feel good? It does. And it is not a waste of time. Because while a rare person will walk away having sucked you dry, most will want to make sure to ask you about your needs. Regardless, it will be a nice break from your own "needs". One way to do this is to adopt someone new at the event. Someone who is clearly smart but uncomfortable. Introduce them to a few folks and then look for the next person standing on the outskirts looking for a friend.
12. **Show Relational Intelligence** – I wrote a [post](#) a while back after interviewing Steve Saccone, author of a book called "Relational Intelligence". Steve is a pastor up at Mosaic church in Los Angeles. Summing up this concept? It is "the capacity to connect with other people with skill, warmth, authenticity and compassion". If you have this capacity or show an interest in developing it, then I am in.
13. **Provide Introductions** – Really good networkers are called "Super Connectors" because they have a passion for connecting people. And, over time, they meet more and more people that might be a good friend to someone they already know. You can do this at events, via e-mail, on LinkedIn and even on Twitter. For example, if you thought two guys you met should know each other, you could post this on Twitter: "@Steve Jobs You should meet @BillGates for coffee. Lots in common for sure!" Whether they actually meet is up to them. But you have started the ball rolling and, as a result, may gain "influencer" status for having done so.
14. **Build Real Friendships** – While it is easy to go to events and build acquaintances, a great goal of networking is to slowly develop real friendships. You can't do it with everyone of course, but when you connect with someone, don't let that moment pass. Set up a series of coffee meetings to create multiple impressions. It takes about three personal meetings to turn a first meeting into something that looks like a friendship. And it is not just the time. It's also the commitment. Demonstrated by completing a few transactions (i.e. doing something for each other). This builds mutual trust which is

critical to that early friendship. Great example? Be the accountability partner for three people. Meet them for four successive Fridays and keep them on task!

15. **Speak Boldly** – This is a pet peeve of mine. When people speak too softly and/or without a strong voice. First, I need to hear you. Especially when addressing a group. If I can't hear every word clearly, I will likely tune you out. If your delivery is not clear or if you meander, my confusion will be frustrating and I won't get your message. And I may not decide to introduce myself to you after the intros are over. Finally, if your delivery is timid, I won't know that you are ready to do what you say. So be strong in your words. Let me hear you. And give me a reason (or two) that I can invest some productive time in a conversation with you.
16. **Know Objectives Of Others** – How do you do this? Ask really good questions. Why are they at the event? Looking for work? Consulting projects? Just here to help? Once you know this, you can be a much more active networker for them. And for the people you know that may value an introduction to them. One way I do this for job seekers is through my **Watchlyst™**. If I know you are looking for work, I will invite you to sign up [here](#) so that I can keep a keen eye out for you. And perhaps send you a lead. You can keep your own Watchlyst by downloading my simple spreadsheet [here](#). It allows you to keep track of the objectives of those in your network. A powerful tool that helps you remember key needs of key people.
17. **Remember The Early Days** – Sit back from the computer and think about your first days walking into a networking event. The feeling of insecurity. Come on, we all felt a bit of that, right? You know no one. And, often, no one turns and, with a big smile, says "Welcome!". You probably looked a little timid. A little unsure. And then remember that first person who introduced themselves. The first who sat with you and told you their secrets. Now that you remember all of that, go look for someone to help. Someone who needs your knowledge and experience. Someone whose path would become clearer as a result of spending time with you.
18. **Stay In Touch** – Of course after all this hard work at the event, you can't just let it all fall away. Relationships don't build by themselves. You need to stay in touch. Ask everyone you meet: where can I find you online? Once you know their Twitter and LinkedIn addresses, life gets easy. And fun.

Here's a neat trick. And an alternative for the back of your **Flashcard™**, add your social media



addresses to the back like this:

19. **Show Respect** – While you shouldn't let too many rules inhibit your networking strategy, You need to be careful. Because you can bruise your network. So respect (1) the time of others – don't take more time than you deserve. Have a great 5 to 10 minute discussion at an event, then politely disengage so that they can move on. And so can you. (2) Respect the network of others – don't overuse a name you were given or tell everyone you know about your new contact at XYZ Company. Use the contact, report back to the provider and ask, if possible, if you can share it with others. And (3) respect the personal information of others. Don't share phone numbers or e-mail addresses with a big crowd. Be more purposeful than that.
  20. **Make Eye Contact** – When talking with groups and especially when talking one-on-one, maintain eye contact. It shows respect and indicates you are actively listening. It is a subtle but critical action that says you are engaged and interested. One trick to use when speaking to groups? Engage someone's eyes long enough to fill a water glass. Three or four seconds allows someone to feel that you have noticed them. And that connection will give them a reason to listen more attentively to the rest of what you have to say.
- **Here's a Bonus . . . Smile** - It says that you are open and friendly. I'm not saying to fake it. I'm saying that you should signal to others that you are comfortable in your shoes and willing to engage. Put up a "hard, business-like" persona and you may get fewer conversations and fewer follow-ups days later.

Each of these **Things To Do** can be implemented easily; tomorrow or at your next networking event. These are critical characteristics and skills to build into your networking strategy. **What are your key things to do? What did I leave off?**

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