

The 10 Commandments of Networking You Must Know to Build Authentic Connections

They say, "It's all about people," and they are right. Opportunities that can change our lives or at least solve a current burning problem all come thanks to people. Networking is an art that holds immense power in our interconnected world. It is the key to building authentic connections that can lead us to personal and professional fulfillment.

With that in mind, I'd like to present "Networking 10 Commandments" the guide professionals and individuals should use in forging meaningful relationships and succeeding in their boundless careers and business aspirations.

As we look through these, do not talk about how you are good at one but point out someone else on your team and how they are good at it.

1. Humanity thrives through collaboration. Most people are happy to help if asked in a way that ignites their willingness to assist. When seeking support, approach others with a genuine request, explaining how their contribution can make a positive impact. By appealing to their altruistic nature and even needs, you are more likely to receive their support.

2. Networking is a powerful skill for achieving our goals. To make the most of this skill, set clear targets and identify the individuals who can help you reach them. By proactively seeking out those who possess the necessary expertise or resources, you increase your chances of success.

3. Build relationships before you need help. Get to know a diverse range of individuals long before you require their assistance. Networking is not solely about reaching out when you are in need; it is about fostering genuine connections over time first. Invest in building relationships with others, nurturing them through meaningful interactions and offering support whenever possible.

4. Be open and approachable to everyone you meet. You never know who you might meet. A simple smile or a friendly greeting can go a long way in creating a positive impression. Treat everyone with respect and openness, as each person has the potential to contribute to your journey, the same as you can contribute to theirs.

5. Strive to create authentic personal bonds with people. It involves showing a sincere interest in others, giving truthful compliments, finding common ground and fostering a sense of camaraderie. By making people feel like you care about them and genuinely investing in authentic relationships, you establish a foundation of trust and support that can greatly enhance your networking endeavors, and vice versa.

6. Be "out there" and engage in diverse networking opportunities. The more you engage with different communities and circles, attend events and participate in professional gatherings to meet a variety of different people, the greater the likelihood of encountering potential opportunities. Embrace new experiences, step out of your comfort zone and seize every opportunity to expand your network.

7. Design your authentic brand and how others perceive you by consistently conveying your strengths and characteristic messages. Define what sets you apart and communicate it effectively. Craft a compelling narrative that showcases your skills, expertise, and unique value proposition. Align your personal brand with your networking goals to attract like-minded individuals.

8. "Follow up" is the golden rule in networking. Actively manage and maintain relationships with the relevant people for you. Engage in long-term communication and stay connected. Remember, networking is an ongoing process that requires consistent effort and nurturing. There are many techniques to follow up, I talk about some of them on my social media channels.

9. Always give without expecting immediate returns. Giving is the "currency" of relationships. There is so much to offer others; from sharing your experiences and giving compliments to dedicating time to help and sharing connections and resources. When you assist others in achieving their desires, it creates reciprocity, paving the way for support when you need it most.

10. The best way to connect with a stranger is by seeking their advice. Most people are flattered when asked for advice, as it demonstrates respect for their expertise and positions you as an eager learner. This approach often leads to meaningful conversations, establishing a foundation for building and strengthening relationships.

