



How do you turn your new contacts into real business, once the networking event is over?

Here are a few sure-fire tips for making – and maintaining – those quality connections:

- **Be Prepared.**

Set a few specific, reasonable goals in advance. Practice speaking succinctly about your business so you'll be able to articulate it many times over on the day of the event. Make sure you have enough business cards to share, and a place to keep the ones you'll be collecting. Dress to impress. Image is important – but make sure what you wear also reflects the personality of your business.

- **Work it!**

Turn a prospect into a solid business relationship. Ask important questions:

“How did you get into this business?”

“What do you like best about your work?”

“Tell me about your latest project!”

Your genuine attentiveness to their answers, along with eye contact and a solid handshake, will help you make a lasting impression and learn a lot about each person's own business goals.

Every contact may be valuable – even if a person is not a good prospect for you, they may know someone who is. Asking the above questions can also lead you to great referrals.

And enjoy yourself! If you're “all business,” your own fantastic, multi-faceted self won't shine through.

- **Share the Wealth.**

Introduce colleagues, friends, and prospects to others. They will be impressed that you're such an important part of the event's success. Presenting at a conference or exhibiting at a trade show? Network with other presenters and exhibitors! You might meet someone unexpected who will change your business – or your life – if your mind is open.

- **Follow Up!**

Nothing projects your professional intent like a thank you note right after the event. Staying in touch with good prospects lets them know you value them.

Employing these effective techniques will help turn your hot prospects into long-term partners.