

9 Holiday Networking Tips

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Holiday events are happening left and right. These 9 tips will help you take full advantage of the networking season.

1. Every event is a networking opportunity. Many people share a common good mood and are receptive to meeting new people at this time of the year. Treat every event you go to as an opportunity to build new relationships.
2. Set a goal. Approaching each event with a goal in mind will help you walk away with real results. For example, at an event where you know there will be 30 people, your goal could be introducing yourself to 10 new people.
3. Don't forget your business cards AND a pen. When you hand out your card take a second to write a note on the back. It will help jog the person's memory when they find it in their pocket the next day if they see "Insurance for Ricky's trip to Brazil" instead of just your name and number. Even if you're just recommending a great golfing website to a new acquaintance, jot it down on the back of your business card. They'll have a subtle reminder of your services in hand later.
4. Don't cling to your friends... or the buffet. Friends and good food can distract you from your mission: to meet prospective clients. Make the effort to break free from what's comfortable to clinch some important face time with prospects.
5. Have something of value to follow up with. Be prepared to offer to send something valuable to each new contact — whether that's a copy of an article you wrote, the name of your mechanic — anything that can help you build the relationship.
6. Don't bore people with "what you do". When describing your job, don't launch into a 30 second spiel. Even 15 seconds can be too much. Convey in a few words the value you offer: "I help people get the best health insurance for their money."
7. Be memorable. With so many events held during this time, your face could fade fast from a prospect's memory. Make your conversation stand out by being attentive and asking thoughtful questions. Show sincere interest.
8. Ask for contact information. If someone shows interest in your services, don't hesitate to ask for their contact info. You'll be surprised how many people will give it out — if you ask. Always let a person know you will be contacting them so your call is expected.
9. Timely Follow up. The holidays are a busy time. If you get an email address, send them a little friendly note after the event to let them know you'll be giving a call after the holidays to discuss their insurance needs.

Keep these tips in mind and make this holiday season pay off for you in a new list of warm contacts.