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Six Tips to Make Networking Encounters More Successful

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Networking happens, but networking planned is more effective. As you network toward a new position or a promotion, plan ahead. Keep the following tips in mind.

1. The most important personal attributes for successful networking are psychological. They include a willingness to work at it, a real interest in other people, and the tenacity to keep going.
2. Research first. Learn all you can about the people you plan to meet, the organization behind the meeting you are attending, the issues in today's world that matter to them.
3. Use research to formulate questions related to the world of the people you will meet. Being relevant is the first step in engaging in meaningful conversations with others.
4. Explain your own background, interests and wishes in terms of the benefits to the listener. Many people focus on the features of their past — where they've been — instead of why the experience matters.
5. In conversations, those who speak more of the time usually think it was an excellent conversation. During conversations, look at the person speaking rather than around the room. Really hear what they are saying.
6. Keep track of your initiatives and the results — both good and bad — that flow from them.

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