

## Prepare

- Be ready with a one-minute commercial about yourself  
This is not your life history, describe an interesting project you have worked on recently, a passion for a particular area or emphasis in your field of study, and a few words about your interest and enthusiasm for your work and desired position
- Have several key conversational points in mind

## First impressions

- Dress appropriately and accessorize conservatively
- Turn off your cell phone or be sure it is on silent
- No gum or candy
- Check your teeth and face

## Body language

- Stand up straight; your posture should be relaxed and confident
- Keep your arms to your side - body language open
- Smile 😊

## Work the room

- Do this alone. Often, we attend functions with friends, bringing our social comfort with us. This is the time to show your independence (you won't be taking your friends with you to interview or work)
- Scan the room - look for the professionals you want to approach, if one of them is unattended approach them first.
- Asking a simple question is often a great way to start a conversation - even a mundane question such as, "interesting group of folks" or "It's a great night for an event such as this" ...
- Avoid politics, religion, and potential "hot topics" in initial conversations

## Introduce yourself

- Wait for a pause in the conversation
- Make eye contact
- Extend your hand during greeting for a handshake (firm but not crushing)

Balance the conversation - make room for and encourage others to talk. **Listening** is a very powerful tool when it comes to establishing relationships. Be polite and show a genuine interest in the other person.

- This is not about the food and drink
- This is not about asking for jobs
- This is about meeting people and making connections

You never know who you might be getting to know. Even if they have no obvious connection to your ambitions, they may well know people or hear of opportunities that will be perfect for you in the future.

Be generous in making room for and introducing others, use this opportunity to display your social aptitude and grace.

## Introductions

- Use titles - never assume the right to use first names, wait to be invited
- Ms. if unsure of status, it is fine to ask women what they prefer
- Rank - lower to higher
- Age - younger to older

## Graceful exit

- It has been a pleasure meeting you, I have enjoyed speaking with you, etc.

## Set up follow up

- I will call you, email, in the next week to follow up on the idea we talked about

## Follow up

- No matter how successful an evening of schmoozing, it means nothing unless you follow up. E-mail is perfect for this type of contact. Reintroduce yourself with a short, well-written note within a day or two of meeting.
- Avoid the standard: "Nice meeting you, looking forward to talking to you soon" message. You took this person's card for a reason – mention something you discussed, or send a link to an article or newsletter you think they can use.
- If you're sending your resume, remember to thank them for taking the time to do you this favor. Once you do get a job, keep good contacts updated on your situation, whether or not they, or their advice, helped you at all.

## QUESTIONS

- Can you tell me a bit about your background?
- How did you get started in this industry?
- What's the company culture really like?
- Can you describe a typical day or week?
- What advice would you offer to someone trying to break into this industry?
- What do you like the most and least about the industry? About the job? About the company?
- How would you approach a job search for this organization or industry?
- Could you recommend other colleagues with whom I can speak? Is it OK to use your name when I contact them?

*Remember: Be curious and try to imagine what the other person's world is like. If there are ways you can help them in some way, take the opportunity to do so. Most importantly, have fun!*