



Strategic Networking Cheatsheet

Essentials For Creating
Strategic Connections in
a Hyper-Connected World

You've Got This!

We're thrilled that you're taking steps to improve your networking skills and gaining knowledge to help you be more strategic. This is designed to be your ultimate guide to building meaningful connections and fostering long-lasting relationships.

You'll find an actionable plan that will walk you through the networking process. We've curated a comprehensive list of dos and don'ts to help you navigate the networking landscape with confidence and finesse.

We've also included ready-to-use email and social media templates, ensuring you make a lasting impression in every interaction. Whether you're reaching out to a potential mentor, collaborator, or industry expert, these templates will streamline your communication process. You'll also find topic ideas and sample questions to help you prepare for those first interactions.

Building relationships doesn't stop at the first meeting, and we've got you covered there too. Discover innovative ideas on how to nurture and sustain the connections you've made. From follow-up strategies to engagement tips, we've compiled a wealth of insights to help you cultivate relationships that go beyond the initial exchange.

Remember, networking is not just a means to an end; it's a continuous journey of growth and collaboration. As you dive into this guide, embrace the opportunities it presents and watch as your network expands in ways you never thought possible.

Thank you for entrusting us to help you on your networking journey. We're confident that the tools and strategies within this guide will empower you to become a professional networker.

To your success!

The Causey Team



Your Action Plan

To get the most out of strategic networking, build a simple and impactful action plan. Successful networking is about building genuine, mutually beneficial relationships. Be patient and consistent, and the effort you put in will yield rewarding connections and opportunities.

1

Set Clear Intentions

- **Purpose:** Reflect on why you are engaging in networking. This could be for personal growth, expanding your professional network, or finding collaborative opportunities.
- **Goals:** Define what you want to achieve. This includes building a certain number of meaningful connections or finding potential partners.
- **Personal Branding:** Decide how you want to present yourself. Be clear, consistent, and true to your values and professional identity.

2

Reach Out or Join Networking Groups

- **Identify Relevant Communities:** Look for groups like [The Nonprofit Hive](#), LinkedIn or Facebook groups, or associations that align with your professional interests and goals.
- **Active Participation:** Don't just join; actively participate. Contribute to discussions, attend events, and engage with other members.

3

Set Up and Utilize a CRM/Tracker

- **Choose a CRM Tool:** Select a CRM platform that suits your needs. It could be a sophisticated CRM software or a simple spreadsheet.
- **Record Keeping:** Keep detailed notes on the people you meet, including key information like interests, projects, and any follow-up actions.
- **Regular Updates:** Regularly update the CRM with new contacts and notes from recent interactions.

4

Actively Engage in Networking

- **Initial Networking:** Attend events, participate in online forums, and engage in strategic networking activities like nonprofit speed dating.
- **Follow-Up:** Send personalized follow-up emails after networking conversations. Use the template provided or develop your own style.
- **Ongoing Engagement:** Keep in touch with your contacts through social media, periodic check-ins, and sharing useful information.

5

Review and Reflect

- **Set Regular Reviews:** Schedule an annual review (with yourself) to review your networking activities.
- **Assess Progress:** Assess the progress towards your initial goals. Are you building the kinds of relationships you hoped for? Are you seeing increases in your knowledge, skill, or value in your career?
- **Adapt Strategies:** Be open to changing your approach. If something isn't working, or your goals have evolved – adjust your strategies.



Reaching Out



When trying to connect with someone for the first time, it can be scary, nerve wracking, and sometimes a little frustrating (if they don't respond). These templates will help you confidently reach out to get those conversations started. You may need to follow up once or twice, but be gentle, people are busy and have other priorities. Only connect with those who want to do so.

Don't want to try your hand at reach out? Join a networking group such as [The Nonprofit Hive!](#)

Email Template

Subject: Connecting for [Shared Interest/Goal] in the Nonprofit Sector

Hi [First Name],

I came across your profile on LinkedIn and was impressed by your work in [their area of expertise or a specific project].

I'm [Your Name], [Your Position] at [Your Organization]. We focus on [brief description of your work]. I believe there's great potential for collaboration between us, especially around [specific area of mutual interest].

Would you be open to a quick call or coffee to discuss this further? I'm sure there's a lot we can share and learn from each other.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

LinkedIn Template

Hi [First Name], I admire your work in [their area of expertise]. I'm [Your Name/Role], focusing on [your area]. Interested in connecting to share insights and exploring potential collaborations?

DO'S & DON'T'S

THE RIGHT WAY TO STRATEGICALLY CONNECT



Do Prepare an Elevator Pitch

Have a concise and compelling summary of your work, your organization's mission, and what you're hoping to gain from the networking event.



Do Listen Actively

Show genuine interest in what others are sharing. Active listening can lead to more meaningful connections and a better understanding of potential collaboration opportunities.



Do Ask Open-Ended Questions

Encourage conversation by asking questions that require more than a yes/no answer, allowing you to gather more in-depth insights.



Do Follow Up

After the event, reach out to the people you connected with. A quick email or LinkedIn message can help to solidify the connection and open doors for future collaboration.



Do Share Resources and Knowledge

Be open to sharing your experiences, tools, or resources that might benefit others. Networking is as much about giving as it is about receiving.



Do Respect Time Limits

In a speed dating format, it's important to be mindful of the time so that both parties can benefit equally from the exchange.



Don't Dominate the Conversation

Avoid monopolizing the discussion. Networking is a two-way street, and both parties should have the opportunity to speak and listen.



Don't Be Vague

Be clear about what your organization does and what you are looking for in partnership or collaboration. Specificity leads to better connections.



Don't Dismiss Anyone Prematurely

Every connection has potential value, so avoid making snap judgments based on first impressions or organizational size/mission.



Don't Forget to Exchange Contact Information

Always have a way for people to contact you after the event, such as business cards or digital contact info.



Don't Over-Promise

Only commit to actions or follow-ups that you can realistically handle. It's better to be honest about your capacity than to disappoint later.



Don't Ignore Follow-Up Opportunities

If someone reaches out to you post-event, even if you don't see an immediate benefit, a brief response can keep doors open for future collaboration.



Start The Conversation

Looking for great conversation openers to break through the surface level chatter? The following questions can be used as is or modified to help you build your relationship.

Knowledge Exchange

- What's the most innovative project you worked on recently?
- How do you approach problem-solving?
- Can you share an impact story that really embodies your mission?
- What do you think the future of our sector holds in the next few years?
- What advice do you give to someone new to our field?
- How do you measure the impact of your programs or initiatives?

Building Relationships

- What inspired you to get into your career?
- How does your personal mission align with your organization's mission?
- What partnerships have been most meaningful to your organization?
- How do you see our organizations potentially collaborating?
- What challenges have you faced in building partnerships, and how did you overcome them?
- What's are you passionate about?
- What do you find most rewarding about working in this field?

Diversify Learning

- Have you adopted new strategies or tools lately that have been effective?
- What's a lesson you've learned recently that could apply to other areas in our sector?
- How do you stay updated with the latest developments in our field?
- What unconventional approach has your organization taken that others might learn from?
- What's the biggest risk you've taken in your work, and what did you learn from it?

Efficiency and Effectiveness

- How do you manage to balance multiple priorities effectively in your role?
- What time-saving tools or techniques have you found most useful?
- How does your organization streamline decision-making processes?
- What strategies do you use to keep your team motivated and efficient?
- Can you share an experience where being efficient led to a significant impact?
- What's your approach to managing tight deadlines or urgent projects?
- How do you ensure your team's efforts are aligned with your organization's goals?

Mentorship and Support

- Who has been a significant mentor in your career, and what did you learn from them?
- How do you foster a supportive environment within your team?
- What's the best piece of advice you've received in your professional journey?
- How do you approach mentoring others in our field?
- What challenges have you faced in your career, and who helped you navigate them?
- What qualities do you look for in a mentor or mentee relationship?
- How important has peer support been in your professional development?



Following Up



It's critical to send a follow up message via email or LinkedIn after you connect. Below is an example email template you can copy, paste, and customize for a quick and thorough follow up.

Email Template

Subject: Fun Connecting Yesterday

Hey [Name],

I wanted to express my appreciation for the opportunity to connect with you on [Date]. I found our conversation about [specific topic or shared interest] particularly insightful and engaging.

[Include a personal note or reference from your conversation to show genuine interest and to jog their memory, e.g., "I was fascinated to learn about your innovative approach to [specific project or initiative]."]

As I mentioned during our chat, I am very interested in staying connected and finding ways we can collaborate or support each other's work. [Mention a specific idea or project that was discussed, if applicable].

I've attached [any relevant documents, links, or resources that were promised or discussed during the conversation] for your reference. Please feel free to share any additional information you think might be helpful or relevant.

Would you be open to scheduling a follow-up meeting or call in the next few weeks to continue our conversation?

Thank you once again for your time and insights. I look forward to the possibility of working together and contributing to the important work you are doing in [their field or area of work].

Best regards,

Your Name

LinkedIn Template

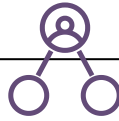
Hi [Name],

I enjoyed our conversation about [specific topic]. Your insights on [specific discussion point] were especially intriguing.

I am very interested in staying connected and finding ways we can collaborate or support each other's work. [Mention a specific idea or project that was discussed, if applicable]. How about a follow-up call or meeting in the coming weeks?

By the way, I've attached [any relevant documents or links] for your reference.

Looking forward to the possibility of working together!



Staying Connected

Don't just let your networking be "one and done". Staying top of mind with professional contacts over the long term requires consistent and thoughtful engagement. Here are some strategies to consider:

Build a Personal CRM

Utilize a personal Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool such as [Dex](#), [Moments](#), or build something basic with [Airtable](#), [Notion](#), or simply a spreadsheet. Keep track of your contacts, note important details like birthdays, career milestones, and personal interests. Regularly review and update this information to keep your interactions relevant and personalized.

Regular Check-ins

Schedule periodic check-ins via email or social media. These don't always have to be work-related. Sharing an article, congratulating them on a personal or professional achievement, or even just saying hello can keep the connection alive.

Social Media Engagement

Follow your contacts on platforms like LinkedIn or Twitter. Regularly interact with their posts by liking, commenting, or sharing. This keeps your presence in their network active and visible.

Provide Value

Share resources, articles, or information you come across that you think would be beneficial to them. This not only keeps you in their thoughts but also positions you as a helpful and resourceful connection.

Celebrate Milestones

Acknowledge personal and professional milestones such as work anniversaries, promotions, or personal achievements. A simple congratulatory message can go a long way.

Start a Mastermind

If you believe in the value of deeper relationships with a set of individuals to coach each other, share through successes and failures, and exchange information, consider starting a mastermind group with several of your connections.

Offer Help

Be proactive in offering assistance if you know they are working on a project or might need help in an area of your expertise.

Reconnect Periodically

Don't hesitate to reach out to someone you haven't spoken to in a while. A simple message acknowledging the gap and expressing a desire to reconnect can rekindle the relationship.



Speaking of being strategic...

Need To Execute Your Strategic Plan? Let's Chat!

Does your organization have a strategic plan that just sits on the shelf? We have a proven methodology and software to help your team make the impact you're aiming for.

www.causey.app