

Tips for networking

Types of networking groups

In a networking situation there will generally be two types of groups of people in the room: *open groups* and *closed groups*. Open groups are those that are easily approachable, with the group members standing angled to each other suggesting they are open to new comers. Closed groups are those where the members tend to stand facing each other or close to each other, and are hard for a new comer to become a part of.

Tips for organisers

When organising a chapter networking event try to be aware of these types of groups throughout the session. If there are individuals standing by themselves, take the initiative to talk to them and try to introduce them to an open group. If there are too many closed groups it may be time to make a formal welcome announcement or to walk around with trays of food to try to open these closed groups to other members and conversations.

Tips for individuals

When joining a networking situation, start by identifying the open groups in the room. The easiest way to join in is to approach someone who is on their own and start a conversation. Next easiest group to join is an open group of two people. Closed groups are not impossible to enter, but you need to work harder to join.

When introducing yourself, say your first name (pause) first name then last name, as this repetition helps people to remember your name, followed by your job title. Then introduce your job by describing it in some detail so that the other person can actively participate and get a conversation going.

When leaving a group of more than one person, leave on a pleasant note and excuse yourself on another matter, such as getting refreshments. If you are with just one person, try to introduce them to someone else first before leaving.

Further information

This briefing note is based on the Fundraising Institute of Australia's professional development workshop and the work of Will Kintish. Further information can be found by searching 'Kintish' on You Tube.

We can help

Let us know if you would like some advice on planning and running a networking event.

Contact us

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