Tips for Networking and Building Relationships

Since networking is all about building and maintaining relationships, it can be helpful to keep the following tips in mind:

1. Networking is about contact and connection: Whether it's eye contact, face-to-face contact, phone contact, or email contact, it all counts. Be genuine and authentic in your interactions. Listen actively and ask questions to learn more about others. Follow up with a thank-you message or note after networking events or meetings.

2. Be the one to initiate contact: Be proactive in building and maintaining relationships. Maintain a positive attitude and be approachable. Keep your eyes and ears open to prospects in any situation.

3. Be bold and take risks: There is no need to limit yourself to who you reach out to. Thinking about sending a message to the CEO of a startup you're interested in? Go for it!

4. Anticipate silence: Be patient and persistent in building relationships and expanding your network. For every 10 messages you send, you might only get 2 responses or a 20% return. And that's ok. The idea is to keep going and continue to build connections.

5. Be consistent: The point is to show up and continue building connections regardless of your response rate. If you don't put in the work with networking, your connections will be limited. Stay organized and keep track of your networking contacts and interactions.

6. Pass it on: If someone reaches out to you, offer them the help you would like to receive from others. Provide value to others, such as sharing resources or making introductions. Show interest and enthusiasm for the other person's work and experiences.

7. Always respond: Follow up on leads or referrals in a timely manner. Not only is it polite, but it also ensures that you will be able to build relationships with the connections you make through networking.