

Mix and Mingle

Networking Your Way to Career Success!



*Presented by the
The University of Akron
Career Center*

Why is it important to know how to mingle?

- It makes others feel comfortable
- It makes you feel comfortable and more confident
- You make valuable business and personal contacts.

Who is a good Mingler?

● Someone who possesses the ability to circulate comfortably and graciously through a gathering of people—meeting, greeting and talking with as many of them as he/she wishes; creating communication that is warm and sincere; establishing an honest rapport upon which she/he can build friendships; and knowing how to start, how to continue and how to end lively and interesting conversations.

Conquering Mingling Stage Fright?

- Develop a positive mental attitude
- Act your way into a feeling
- Eliminate negative ways of thinking

“Don’t talk to strangers”

“All good things come to those who wait”

- Focus on the benefits of the event
- Plan your self-introduction
- Take business cards
- Think of yourself as the host/hostess, not as the guest.

Introductions:

- Introduce a younger person to an older person
- Introduce a peer in your own organization to a peer in another company
- Introduce a non-official person to an official person
- Introduce a junior executive to a customer or client
- Provide information about each person as they are introduced

- Provide a person's title or place of employment, if know. If not, ask

Remember Names:

- So important, so difficult to do
- Concentrate on the name when it is given to you
- Repeat it mentally
- Repeat it out loud
- If you don't hear a name or don't understand, don't be shy asking for it to be repeated
- If you know a name but are not sure how to pronounce it, take your best shot. Speak with confidence and let the individual correct you

Forgetting Names:

- It happens to everyone
- Admit your memory lapse
- Above all do not skip the introduction because you have forgotten. Generally people will forgive you. Honesty is always the best policy

Using First Names:

- If you should have to stop and think whether or not you should use a person's first name when you greet them, the answer is you should NOT
- Avoid using unflattering comical nicknames as first names. Shorten versions of formal names such as Charlie, Bob, Dick are acceptable, Biff Chuckles, Sis and Bubba are not!

Greeting Others:

- You never get a second change to make a first impression
- Rise
- Step forward and smile, or at least look pleasant
- Give your name
- Shake hands
- Repeat the other person's name and say, "Delighted to meet you Mrs. Adams"

The Handshake:

A good handshake is held for about 3-4 seconds and made with a firm and not bone crushing or limp grip

Times to shake hands are

- When you are introduced to someone and when you say good-bye
- When someone comes into your office from the outside
- When you run into someone outside your office
- When you enter a room, are greeted by those you know, and are introduced to outsiders also present
- When you leave a gathering attended by people from outside

If your hand tends to be clammy, keep a handkerchief inconspicuously in a pocket or handbag. If hands are wet or cold from a drink, wipe them on the side of your shirt or jacket. Apologize for the damp cool hand and continue. Hint, keep your drink in your left hand.

Business Card Etiquette:

- Don't force your card on a senior executive. Wait until he/she ask for yours
- Don't offer your card early in conversation to anyone who is a complete stranger
- Don't scatter your card about in a large group of strangers
- Don't give out if soiled, defective, out of date
- Do carry in the evening at social events
- Never bring it out during a meal

The most important part of business card etiquette is knowing when and how to personalize your card. For example, you can write a special thank you on it when forwarding some material to another's office or write a note and attach it to a resume when introducing someone who has an appointment with a colleague of yours.

Entering a Room:

- Create a mental fantasy that makes the experience more interesting
- Select your first chit-chat buddy/buddies

Select someone you think you have something in common with

Join a group already gathered, “May I join you?”

Position yourself between the refreshments and the entrance

- Master basic entrance techniques

Slipping in

Compliment people

Try the buddy system

- Develop several opening lines that work for you

“Isn’t it great here”

Ask a question

Pleasant self-revelations, “I had no idea there would be so many wonderful people in one room!”

- Develop several continuing lines that work for you

Questions: What did you do this year you never did before?

How did you get here?

- Talk about careers/majors

- Solicit help; walk up to someone and ask if they attended something like this before, any advice?

- Discuss current events

- Talk shop (conferences, projects, work only please)

- Use leading statements; really, tell me more, how did people respond

- Read and comment on name tags

- Make a toast; this one can be tricky, be well prepared

- Chose interesting accessories

Appropriate Topics:

- Gardening

- New developments in Science

- The next Olympics

- Fitness and nutrition programs
- Best-selling books
- News about local performing arts
- Pets
- Environmental issues
- Gourmet cookery
- Current museum shows
- Favorite travel spots or experiences.

Subjects to Avoid:

- Your health
- Other people's health
- Controversial subjects when you don't know where people stand
- How much things cost
- Personal misfortunes
- Trite and overdone subjects
- Stories of questionable taste
- Gossip which is harmful

Knowing When it is Time to Move ON!

- Know when to move:
 - If you are bored
 - If you need to save face; an embarrassing moment
 - If the group is dwindling
- Know where you are headed
- Master basic exiting techniques
 - Tell the truth!

Step away, stop taking, wait and then walk away

New one in, old one out

Shake and break

Human sacrifice; be careful with this

Munchie break and move on

Acceptable Behaviors

Plan, plan, plan!

- Learn from experiences
- Smile
- Maintain good eye contact
- Develop a good handshake
- Use new words
- Listen actively
- Mind your manners and rules of etiquette
- Be creative with your name tag
- Decide to remember names
- Be honest if you have forgotten a name; “I know your introduced yourself, would you please tell me your name again?”
- Use humor appropriately
- Thank the host/hostess

Unacceptable Behaviors!

- Don’t drink too much
- Dress inappropriately
- Camp out at the food table
- Don’t eat, drink and talk in any combination
- Don’t search for powerful people by concentrating on job titles; everyone is important

- Don't talk too loudly
- Don't smoke or have the smell of smoke on your person/breath
- Don't complain about everything
- Don't allow your eyes to roam around the room searching for the next victim
- Don't go into great detail
- Don't finish someone else's sentence
- Don't flaunt your vocabulary
- Don't correct others
- Don't humiliate others
- Don't argue with someone
- Don't sit with people you know

Conversation and Small Talk:

- Be a good listener
- Show interest in others
- Draw others out
- Develop intellectual curiosity
- Know several subjects in depth
- Stay current on news events
- Develop hobbies or special interests
- Admit when you don't know something
- Ask questions
- Give feedback
- Retain information on others
- Be sensitive to timing
- Don't answer in monosyllables

- Ask questions that cannot be answered with monosyllables
- Give compliments without sounding manipulative
- Don't be boastful
- Tell humorous anecdotes rather than canned jokes
- Don't interrupt
- Maintain eye contact
- Read body language for cues of listener's interest
- Think through what you want to say
- Don't talk to fill in the empty spaces
- Talk with, not at others
- Converse without rambling, preaching or instructing
- Take responsibility for your part of the conversation

Resources:

How to Work a Room, Susan Roane

The Art of Mingling, Jeanne Martinet

The Art of Conversation, James Morris

How to Win Friends and Influence People, Dale Carnegie

How to Say Practically Anything to Practically Anybody, Barbara Walters