

11 Tips for Effective Networking

Networking is one of the main reasons people join **The Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce**. It is certainly one of the best methods of marketing for many businesses. If we define networking as the conscious process of meeting people to expand our business, here are some tips to do it more effectively.

1. Choose your events carefully. The Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce is one of the broadest venues around, having a large number of quality events and programs to facilitate networking among its members.
2. Go alone or leave your friend when you arrive. You're there to meet *new* people, and to learn about *their* business.
3. Wear your name tag *high on your right side*, where it is more visible during a handshake and when you're seated.
4. Approach and introduce yourself to groups of two. You might be interrupting larger groups and a single person might be difficult to break away from.
5. Develop a few low-key phrases to break away politely from someone when the contact runs out of value.
6. To get the conversation going, ask them what they do. When they ask the same of you, describe what you do in 25 words or less – *in terms they can understand*. And don't give out your brochure at the event; leave a reason for another contact.
7. Ask for business cards and give yours to anyone who *shows interest* in what you do, not necessarily to everyone you meet. Your business card should carry the message you want to leave with people – what you do (what you can do for them).
8. Arrive before an event begins and plan to stay for a few minutes after it's over. These are great times to move around and introduce yourself to people.
9. If it's a sit-down event, don't sit as soon as you get there. Once you do, you really can't move around and meet people.
10. Attend Maximize Your Membership, the Brookfield Chamber's Networking 101 session, to learn more tips & tricks about networking.
11. Attend events consistently. Remember it takes 5 or 6 insertions of an ad before you can expect to get results. So attending events once every few months is almost a waste of time for networking purposes. *Attend events consistently over time.*

Make great connections!