



The Reluctant Networker's 52 Networking Tips

Making Connections...
...with Confidence



The Graceful Exit

One of the challenges of networking at an event is you'll meet a new person and hit it off. Then, because they aren't comfortable meeting new people, they will latch onto you and never let go. Even if you are enjoying your chat, you aren't achieving your networking goals.

So, what can you do to stop this from happening? How do you make the graceful exit? Here are a few ideas.

1. **State your goals.** Let your conversation partner know about your networking goals for the event and ask them to excuse you. This is one of my favorites because it's altogether possible that they might be willing to help you with your goals.
2. **Make an introduction.** If the other person is new to the venue and you already know a few people there, go out of your way to introduce them to one of your acquaintances. When they get into a conversation, you can easily excuse yourself.
3. **Apologize to them.** Acknowledge that you may be taking up too much of their time with your conversation. You might be preventing them from accomplishing their networking goals. Ask if there is anything you can do to help them with their networking.



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4. **Schedule a one-to-one.** Only if you do want to continue the conversation at a later point, ask them if they brought their calendar and then go ahead and set up the appointment right there. When you are done with that, there's a natural expectation that you will be parting ways for now.
5. **Use an excuse.** Here's where you can use the "need to use the restroom" or "need to refresh my drink" explanation. Most people will understand entirely. Of course, you should make sure that the excuse you use is true. Having someone catch you in a mistruth is far worse than being trapped in a conversation that might go on forever.

I'm sure there are many other techniques for gracefully exiting the conversation. The very best of them show respect for the other person and may actually benefit them in the long run.

Remember that what you want is to extricate yourself without harming the potential relationship before it's had a chance to start.



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Recommended Resources

The website: <http://www.thereluctantnetworker.com>

The blog: <http://thereluctantnetworker.blogspot.com>

Our workshops: <http://thereluctantnetworker.com/content/workshops-and-training>

Background and Testimonials

Originally a computer programmer, Greg Peters understands the challenges facing every reluctant networker. He also knows, however, that networking is a learnable skill. In 2009 he founded The Reluctant Networker, LLC and has since worked with clients in technology, finance, and sales to help them build networks of powerful connections. He is the author of the blog "The Reluctant Networker" and contributes weekly networking advice to local radio and news outlets. He also presents to larger groups to spread the word that, performed properly, networking is the most powerful way to achieve success and significance in our lives.

"Just wanted to say THANK YOU for being our speaker for our January Grow Your Business Workshop. The time, energy, and effort that you provided was greatly appreciated. We have received some tremendous feedback from those who came (and even those who wish they would have). Thank you for helping us in our efforts to build a strong Downriver community! We would love to have you come back to speak for us again anytime!"



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~ Mark Tremper, Downriver Community Federal Credit Union

“Greg opens doors. By inviting me to a special networking event, Greg enabled me to make a crucial connection leading to a new position. Thank you, Greg! You are a powerful speaker, and an even better networker.”

~ John Arenz, Trust Officer, Wealth Management Group, United Bank & Trust, Ann Arbor, MI

“For a self-proclaimed 'nerd', Greg is a sensational person who happens to have a knack for putting others at ease with their fears and provides a steady approach for networking. I recommend seeking Greg's expertise if you have any hesitation at all regarding networking and speaking in public; his methods have greatly helped me get out of my own way.”

~ Rich Austin, Associate, Sandler Training Center - Ann Arbor