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5 Steps to Networking

BY PAM CHAMBERS, FOUNDER OF PAM CHAMBERS CONSULTING

Working the room can propel your professional and personal goals into overdrive. Presentation coach Pam Chambers shares tips on how to make the room work for you.



Pam Chambers
Founder, Pam Chambers Consulting
Photo: Courtesy Pam Chambers

1. Target the Trinity

Always talk to the most important person in the room, such as the guest speaker. Also challenge yourself by meeting someone who might intimidate you as well as someone you can learn from. Meeting these individuals will not only help to expand your roster, but will also shore up your confidence and sharpen your expertise.

2. Listening Is a Virtue

Some people think they are not interesting enough to take the time of anyone important. Here is a life-changing fact: You don't have to be interesting as long as you are interested. Get others to talk about themselves and you will automatically be fascinating. By listening, you can learn interesting things about others – and sometimes about yourself.

3. Get Contact Information

Always ask for a business card. When you accept someone's card, do these three things: look at it intently; say something about it ("Nice logo!"); and store it in an upper shirt pocket or a designated place in your handbag. Never place it below your waist, not even in your wallet.

4. Foster a Relationship

Offer an invitation for coffee or lunch. Make it clear you'll be hosting and give your guest a choice of two locations, days and hours.

5. Practice Makes Perfect

To master the art of working a room, attend at least two networking events per month. Soon you will look back and feel proud of your personal and professional growth.

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