

How to become effective at networking: Four key tactics

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As lawyers you are often required to attend many types of events, industry, association and firm sponsored events. This can take a considerable amount of time away from your billable hours. If you are not making the most of your time at these events by networking, then you are wasting your time – and time = money.

However by becoming effective at marketing yourself at these events, you could turn this wisely invested time into hundreds of billable hours in the future and become partner at your firm faster, or grow your solo practice larger. HERE IS HOW!

Be strategic! You don't have a lot of 'spare' time on your hands. Don't bother going to events that don't target your target audience. Only choose events that will give you the opportunity of meeting people that may have the power and influence to give you business.

Meet the presenters and organizers of the event. Meet the presenters because theoretically the people that speak at these events have a vast amount of knowledge in the area they are speaking on. By building relationships with these people you are adding to the value that you give to your clients because you are expanding your resource network. Meet the organizers so that you may begin to build relationships with them until such time where an opportunity may arise for you to speak or present on a certain topic-and raise your profile!

Meet new people. You are there to meet new potential leads, so don't hang around with your friends or other associates from the firm. If networking is new to you, and you are still a little apprehensive about meeting people in a larger setting, get into the habit of sitting at a table where you do not know anyone and introduce yourself with your business card. The people sitting at that table will reciprocate and then you will find out immediately who you should be talking to first. It will not matter

what table you sit at, there will be at least one person of interest to you.

Ask a question and introduce yourself.

Give yourself a 30 second infomercial at every event by doing your homework and preparing an intelligent question that relates to the topic of discussion and something that you are doing to help your clients. It will show everyone in that room that you care about your clients enough to attend these events. This will help you build your profile by getting your name and your firm name out there and everyone in that audience will know who you are. Over time this becomes very powerful when they see and hear from you at every event. The chances that even one person will come up to you following the event will dramatically increase and prevent you from having to fish for them.

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