

**Schmoozing 101: Working the Room for Maximum Results  
Tips and References**

**Tips in Preparation for an Event:**

1. Do your homework: know who's going to be in the room.
2. If you're on staff of the organization hosting the event, don't wait for an RSVP report. Follow up with potential guests early to reinforce the invitation and make them feel welcome.
3. Set personal goals for the event (i.e., make three contacts).
4. Plan, write, and practice a self-introduction.
  - a. Tailor it for the event. Include your name, what you have in common with the other people at the event, and something interesting to engage others in light conversation.
  - b. This is not a pitch or elevator speech, but something you can say about yourself that you feel genuinely excited about.
5. Prepare questions you want to ask, including: small talk – two or three items to ease and comfort; questions that could lead to the information or introductions you hope to gain; and a story that conveys your passion for your organization.
6. Bring business cards and a pen with you.
7. Practice using host behavior. (The host of the event always has something to do. Graciously introduce yourself, make others comfortable, and introduce guests to each other.)

**Tips for During an Event:**

1. Use host behavior. Introduce yourself and help people connect at the event. Don't use "guest behavior" such as standing by waiting to be introduced or rescued.
2. Help others first, then they'll want to help you. Ask what they hope to get out of the event and consider how you can help them do it.
3. Listen – with an interested face, eye contact, and a smile. (No room scanning.)
4. Observe business card etiquette. Provide your card following a conversation where rapport has been established. As you receive a card, ask if you can write on it. Make a note to help you remember the person, the conversation, and any next steps. If they didn't ask you for your card, ask them for theirs first.
5. Ask for advice or assistance. If someone offers to help you, know what you need or want. Even if you think you already have the best advice around, ask for more. It may reinforce what you already know, or it may surprise you. Asking for help with introductions or connecting is usually welcomed. Most people have been helped like this by others and want to "pay it forward."

**Tips for After an Event:**

1. Send a personal note – "It was good to meet you."
2. Mention details making it clear that you remember who they are.
3. If you offered to help them with some follow up, do it and let them know when it is done.
4. Remind them if they offered to help you by saying "thanks for your offer to help me connect with ...."

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**Tips for Event Planners:**

1. Provide name badges whenever possible to help people connect.
2. Engage registration runners. (These cannot be development officers.)
3. Involve students/end users whenever possible.
4. Centralize where event dates are listed.
5. Help others “host” by providing RSVPs and event details in advance and update regularly.
6. Create the right tone for the event through room set-up that provides enough space to mingle and limits the noise level so that guests can converse.

**References:**

RoAne, Susan. *How to Work a Room: A Guide to Successfully Managing the Mingling*. Shapolsky Publishers, Inc.: New York, 1988.

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Kilkenny, Shannon. *The Complete Guide to Successful Event Planning*.

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