



NETWORK EVERY WEEK

Skillful, disciplined networking does not happen by accident. High performers build broad and diverse networks by optimizing all three phases: preparation; execution; and follow through. They maximize their personal and professional opportunities by networking every week. And when they do, they are ready.

PREPARATION

Make a list of at least a dozen networking events over the next month:

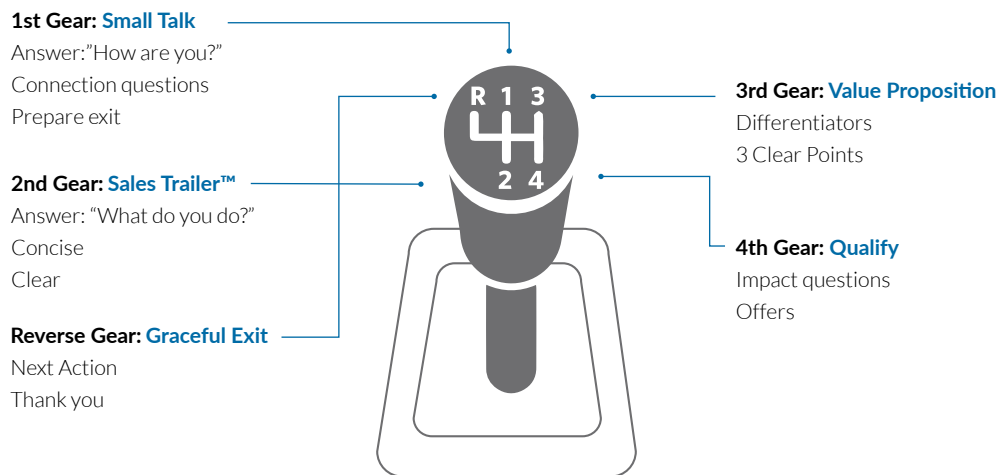
For organized events, send an email to the organizer graciously requesting the attendee list. Go to LinkedIn or a similar resource to do a tiny bit of homework to try to identify your best targets and load their pictures on your phone.

For any other networking situation, write down as many types of contacts you can think of who would be helpful for you to meet at this point in time (personal or professional). For example, you might want to meet people who; work at a particular company, know a specific individual, have an understanding of a particular industry, share an interest that you have, have a skill you are looking to learn, have access to a group you want to join, etc.

EXECUTION

Now design your networking conversation. An efficient and effective conversation does two primary things; it serves as an 'on-ramp' into the conversation you want to have and it quickly determines whether this is a conversation you should be having.

Think of a short networking conversation like driving a car with a manual transmission. Every networking conversation has four forward gears and a reverse gear. Here's what they look like:



GEAR #1

Every conversation starts with the most common question you get asked in your life; "How are you?" You need an interesting answer that immediately sets the conversation off in the direction you want it to go. You then drive this small talk with interesting connection questions. Finally, you need to prepare an exit - something you say during small talk that will allow you to exit this conversation gracefully.

GEAR #2

After a minute or so of small talk, you will be asked the second most common question of your life; "What do you do?" And again, you need a clear, concise, and interesting answer called your Sales Trailer™.

GEAR #3

Now your conversation partner will ask; "What does that mean?" And your answer should provide them with just a little more context on you and your business. You can design your answer around your value proposition, your differentiators as a person or business and/or your '3 clear points.'

GEAR #4

Once you have given them a bit more context, they will ask something like; "How do you do that?" In response to this question, you will need a qualification question you would use to determine whether this person is in fact a prospect for you and your company, or not. Either one is fine. You will also need an impact question or two that goes deeper into what you are hearing.



NETWORK EVERY WEEK

REVERSE GEAR

The goal of a networking conversation is to make a short, meaningful connection which ends in an action of some form: exchange of contact info/cards, an introduction, an agreement to meet, or simply a thank you for the time spent. Once that action is complete, you gracefully use your exit to move on to the next person.

SALES ENGINE EXAMPLE:

Answer: "How are you?" → Connection Questions → Prepare Exit

How are you? I'm well, thanks. I'm actually working on several of the most interesting projects I've worked on in my career, so I'm having fun.
 Question #1: What brings you to this event?
 Question #2: What does success look like for you for this?
 Exit: I've been looking forward to this event, as there are a bunch of people I'm here to see. I'm sure you are the same...

Answer: "What do you do?" → Concise

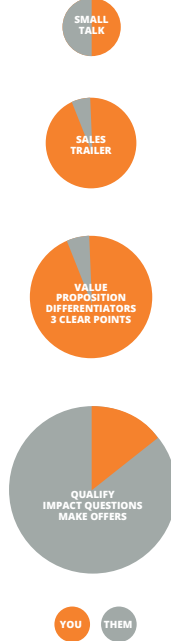
Sales Trailer: I run a company called Sales Engine. What we do is help companies build and tune their sales engine.

Value Proposition → **Differentiators** → **3 Clear Points**

3 clear points: We look at the sales process companies use, the tools to support the sales team, and the knowledge, skill and discipline of the team itself.

Qualify → **Impact Questions** → **Make Offers**

Qualifying question: How do you think about your sales team now?
Impact question: What worries you the most about your sales team?
Impact question: If you could give each person on the team one sales super-power, what would it be?



NOW YOURS:

Answer: "How are you?" → Connection Questions → Prepare Exit

Write down a response to "how are you?", a couple of good questions to ask and your exit here

Answer: "What do you do?" → Concise

Write your Sales Trailer here

Value Proposition → **Differentiators** → **3 Clear Points**

Write what makes you different, valuable, or your 3 clear points

Qualify → **Impact Questions** → **Make Offers**

Write some qualifying & impact questions, really listen and be ready to exit

FOLLOW THROUGH

Networking isn't over when the event ends. Now you must embed that person in your network by capturing relevant details in your CRM system and building the discipline of timely, relevant, and crisp follow through communication:

- In your database, capture contact information, the interesting details you learned about that person by using your connection questions and where and when you met them
- Review the notes you captured on your phone or on the back of their business card within 24 hours
- Determine what you can provide to help them progress (an endorsement to someone else, an interesting article, help with a specific challenge, etc.)
- Write them a note making your offer and asking to keep in touch (using your quarterly Progress Report, for instance)
- Tag your database with a reminder to follow up with them in three months time

EXAMPLE #1

Subj: Great to meet you

Dear Adrienne -

Even though you are an Arsenal fan, I wanted to make a point to follow up and say how great it was meeting you at the Kellogg Alumni event last night.

The story you told about Marketing Attribution was very interesting, it reminded me of [this white paper](#).

If you do not have time to read the entire thing, the key bullet point that I left with was that Attribution and Analytics in Marketing rely completely on Data Quality, much like we discussed, and it lays out a few key first steps to executing that vision.

I'm attaching my last "Progress Report" (the way I love to stay in touch with people...feel free to opt out!).

Best,
Craig

EXAMPLE #2

Subj: Connection that might help you

Dear Lance -

Last night's back-to-school fest was a blast! It was great watching the kids play together on a perfect night.

You mentioned a struggle to find the right promotional materials for your roofing business. On copy is my friend Kandace, CEO of Ascent Group, who specializes in supplying exactly that service to growing small Businesses.

I hope you two can connect and help each other out, and let me know if you need anything from me.

Best,
Craig

EXAMPLE #3

Subj: