

# MAKING CONNECTIONS VITAL TO ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS

## On Networking, the Importance of Friends and More...

### Teachers Guide

#### *Relevant National Content Standards for Entrepreneurship*

<h3 style="margin: 0;">Ready Skills</h3> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: small;">The basic business knowledge and skills that are prerequisites or co-requisites for becoming a successful entrepreneur.</p>	
<b>D</b>	<b>Communications and Interpersonal Skills</b> Understands concepts, strategies, and systems needed to interact effectively with others
<b>Fundamentals of Communication</b>	
D.01	Explain the nature of effective communications
D.02	Apply effective listening skills
D.03	Use proper grammar and vocabulary
D.04	Reinforce service orientation through communication
D.05	Explain the nature of effective verbal communications
D.06	Address people properly
<b>H</b>	<b>Professional Development</b> Understands concepts and strategies needed for career exploration, development, and growth
<b>Job-Seeking Skills</b>	
H.17	Utilize resources that can contribute to professional development (e.g., trade journals/ periodicals, professional/trade associations, classes/seminars, trade shows, and mentors)
H.18	Use networking techniques for professional growth

Networking is a skill that involves many Entrepreneurship Content Standards and performance indicators. Perhaps the two that it most closely aligns with are Communications and Interpersonal Skills and Professional Development.

### Networking and Our Society

As our culture and economy have changed, basic conversation skills and etiquette are no longer necessarily taught through example in a family setting. Appropriate verbal and listening skills, basic dining and attire etiquette, are not something that we can assume young people (or adults for that matter) are able to demonstrate. For entrepreneurs and job-seekers both, the lack of these skills and the knowledge of how to use them to network can be devastating.

### Positive Networking

Successful networkers leave good impressions on those they meet. And, crucial to this is making that good first impression memorable, but for all the right reasons. As teachers work with entrepreneurship students, it's important to drive home the point that networking for professional purposes is NOT the same as conversing with friends or family members.

## HINTS AND TIPS FOR THE “NETWORKER”

- Appearance counts!
- Introduce yourself
- The handshake is crucial—practice it!
- Make eye contact—it conveys honesty.
- Repeat the other person’s name at least twice to help imprint it in your memory.
- Do more listening than talking!
- Seek to learn more about the person
- Take more business cards than you give out
- Offer help in your areas of expertise when appropriate
- Online networking is the rage...but networking in person is better
- Practice friendly conversation—it shouldn’t be about self-promotion
- Pick and choose your networking events wisely...don’t spread yourself too thin



# REASONS FOR NETWORKING

- ☑ To advance your career
- ☑ To advance your business
- ☑ To increase your impact in your community
- ☑ To improve your social life



# PHASES OF NETWORKING FOR ENTREPRENEURS

## Phase 1: Preparation

- ❑ Evaluating your business (products/services offered, benefits to others, etc.)
- ❑ Preparing a “This is My Business” Mental Synopsis (Elevator Pitch)
- ❑ Compiling a “prime contacts” networking list
- ❑ Making contacts

## Phase 2: Basic Networking

- ❑ Reach out to friends and family
- ❑ Network with school alumni
- ❑ Network (cautiously) within your employer’s business
- ❑ Attend professional meetings
- ❑ Participate actively in professional organizations



## Phase 3: Advanced Networking

- ❑ Give presentations
- ❑ Publish articles
- ❑ Organize a blog and/or a website
- ❑ Arrange information meetings



## Phase 4: Continuing to Network