

# Don't be a networking Grinch

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As the holidays approach, it can be an overwhelming and stressful time for many business owners and entrepreneurs. It can also be the busiest time of the year for sales, numbers, inventory, etc. Holidays can also add an emotional and financial toll. But, do not let these negative aspects affect your holiday spirits. On the contrary, make use of this time to participate in various forms of networking to improve, sustain, expand and your business opportunities.

Below are useful tips for applying networking into your holiday schedule to build your business, relationships and value proposition.

## A Worthy Cause

Holidays offer chances to volunteer and engage with communities. These are effective ways of promoting your company brand and awareness. As well as, target new markets via networking and outreaches. Consider hosting, sponsoring or partnering with local charities and organizations to support their efforts. You can donate services or products, offer discounts, sponsor events and initiatives. As well as, give monetarily for an end of the year tax break. Be sure to consult your tax advisor or bookkeeper for expert guidance.

## Double Duty Networking

Companies, organizations and associations use holiday events to engage their employees, members and affiliates. If you are invited or hosting events, consider incorporating networking into the scheme of things. Although these are typically more

social than business environments, make sure that you bring your business cards (hard copy or digital). Practice your elevator pitch prior to attending the event. Brainstorm good conversation questions to find commonalities and share interests. Make sure to follow up with a relevant call to action if meaningful connections are made.

## Planning Stages

If you do not have much time to attend events, connect with others in-person or virtually, consider planning out your networking calendar for the upcoming year. Set new and exciting networking goals to keep you active, consistent and engaged. Select events, conferences and meetings

that you want to attend. Make note, post them or save the date on your calendar. Additionally, develop your networking skills by reading publications, listening to podcasts and engaging in business/industry trends. As well as, updating your profiles, marketing materials and other branding tools.

Use these tips to maximize your networking efforts during the holidays. Utilize opportunities to connect, build relations and expand your business endeavors. Be intentional about using your time wisely, interacting with others and various communities. Look for ways to plan ahead and organize your networking activities for the future. Follow these practice advice for immense networking success. **TE**



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