

#HIREBLACK

Juneteenth 2021 NetWERKing Guide

HOW TO TAKE OVER THE NETWORKING GAME

When we asked the #HIREBLACK community what the most difficult part of networking was...

28% of you said “I don’t know what to say”

1. Closed mouths don’t get fed - We definitely understand how nerve racking networking can be. However, talking to strangers is a great way to expand your network both personally and professionally. You never know what opportunity the right connection can bring -- be bold enough to speak what you want and position yourself to get it. Shoot your shot and don’t reject yourself before you take your shot. These career coaches have signed up to connect with YOU.

2. Do your research - Don’t go into a networking situation blindly. Take time to read their bio. Look them up on LinkedIn. Check out their socials. Read articles they’ve written. Gather as much info as you can so that you can plan your interaction! *This leads to the next point.*

3. Have a goal in mind - Come in with a strategy. What’s your main goal? Are you looking for a job? Career advice? A mentor? A potential business partner? Use the information you gathered to understand what a successful session looks like. Be intentional about your time - all of the time.

58% think it’s fake/inauthentic. *Networking, that is.*

4. Relax and be yourself - Transparency is key. If you feel that your connection is really dope and you would love to stay connected, say that. If there is a specific request you would like to ask, ask it. People may be more willing to help than you think, but no one can read minds.

5. Ask questions about the person, not just about what they do - Get to know the person behind the title. Find out why they do what they do. Get to what really motivates them. Once you get them talking, you gain more insight into how you can also be of value to them. *Oh yeah, that’s another thing...*

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Remember: “Networking is more about farming than it is about hunting” - *Dr. Ivan Minser, BNI*

6. Play the long game - Networking is about relationships, not transactions. Staying in touch doesn't need to be weekly or even monthly. Instead, pencil a reminder to yourself to touch base, check-in, or send an update on your career and life goals once per quarter. This is the part of networking that people miss.

Staying in touch keeps you at the forefront of their mind for future opportunities. It also encourages you to keep track of your progress, *but that's a conversation for another day.*

Your periodic check-in conversations can be about:

- Articles they might be interested in or featured in
- Their achievements; It's important to keep up with their progress
- Niche subjects they may have mentioned
- Updates and developments about your industry
- Staying in touch; A simple note to check in goes a long way

7. Keep your word - If you can't follow through on something, don't promise it. If you say you will follow-up, send an email, or attend their event, be sure to follow through on your word.

8. Look for ways to add value - Even if you're in a junior position, you have skills and experiences that can provide value to other people. Are you a wiz in Tik Tok? Do you have relationships with vendors in Atlanta?

If you're struggling to find a career coach, start where people have told you you're great and compile a list of benefits you can offer in exchange. After all, relationships are about give and take.

9. Prepare your pitch - We saved the scariest best for last. You know who you are. We need the people you're networking with to know who you are, too. After all, they can only buy if they know what you are selling to them! Don't sell yourself short.

Come up with a clear and concise way to introduce who you are, what you do, why you do what you do, and why you want to connect with them. Make it clear how the person can help you.

LET'S WERK. ENJOY YOUR SESSION!