

# Introduction to Networking: It's Not as Scary as You Think!

## Why Should You Network?

- To build relationships, both professional and personal
- To increase your profile and demonstrate your expertise
- To build your confidence
- To exchange knowledge and ideas
- To gain access to opportunities
- To give back to the community

## Networking Tips for Introverts

### 1. Don't try to be an extrovert

- Be yourself. Introverts bring unique skills to networking events.

### 2. Focus on your strengths

- Connecting with people one-on-one.
- Being a good listener.

### 3. Network your way

- There isn't one right way to network.
- Figure out what works for you and find suitable opportunities.

### 4. Be prepared

- Remember your SMART goal.
- Have your business cards ready.

### 5. Know your limits...

- If you hate big crowds, avoid large, crowded events.
- If you need a break, take one.

### 6. But don't be afraid to take risks

- Stepping out of your comfort zone can help build your confidence.

### 7. Follow up

- Send an email, connect on LinkedIn, or arrange an in-person meeting.
- Remember to mention how/where/when you met.

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## Types of Networking Opportunities

### Obvious Opportunities

Professional association meetings

- EAC branch meetings, PWAC chapter meetings, IABC Canada events, etc.

Networking groups

- Entrepreneur & Business Start-Up Network, National Association of Women Business Owners, Ottawa Freelancers, etc.

Online networking

- LinkedIn, Facebook groups, professional forums, etc.

Informal social events

- Dinner parties, potlucks, a drink with colleagues, soccer practice, etc.

### Less Obvious Opportunities

Volunteering

- EAC, PWAC, Parents' Council, Humane Society, Run for the Cure, etc.

Doing a good job

- Demonstrates your expertise
- Shows people you care about the quality of your work

Helping others

- Shows that you think about others, which is often reciprocated

Having coffee (or tea) with a friend

- You never know where the next opportunity might come from

## Further Reading

- *Networking for People Who Hate Networking: A Field Guide for Introverts, the Overwhelmed, and the Underconnected.* Devora Zack.
- *Your Network is Your Net Worth.* Porter Gale.
- <https://eacconference2014.wordpress.com/2014/05/27/attending-the-eac-conference-get-your-moneys-worth-by-networking/>
- <http://www.modernacu.com/12-networking-tips-for-introverts-or-anyone-who-doesnt-love-networking/>
- <http://www.michaelpage.com.cn/career-centre/growing-your-career/benefits-networking>
- <https://hbr.org/2012/01/the-introverts-guide-to-networ/>

## Your SMART Networking Goal

First, identify your networking goal.

My goal is \_\_\_\_\_.

Second, ask yourself, is my goal...

<b>Specific</b>	Can you answer the questions when, where, who, and why?
<b>Measureable</b>	How will you know that you've accomplished your networking goal?
<b>Achievable</b>	Can you actually reach your networking goal? What actions do you need to take to get there?
<b>Relevant</b>	How does your networking goal relate to your overall goals for yourself and your career/business?
<b>Time-bound</b>	What is the time frame required to reach your networking goal?

## Sample SMART Networking Goal

First, identify your networking goal.

My goal is to meet international editors who work in the medical/health editing field.

Second, ask yourself, is my goal...

<b>Specific</b>	<p><b>Can you answer the questions when, where, who, and why?</b></p> <p><b>When:</b> June 12-14, 2015</p> <p><b>Where:</b> At the Editing Goes Global conference in Toronto.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> Other editors who work in the medical/health field.</p> <p><b>Why:</b> To expand my network of editors who work in my field, which will broaden the pool of expertise I can draw upon when I have specific questions about medical/health topics in other parts of the world.</p>
<b>Measureable</b>	<p><b>How will you know that you've accomplished your networking goal?</b></p> <p>When I have connected with at least four medical/health editors at the conference, and when I follow-up by connecting with them on LinkedIn after the conference.</p>
<b>Achievable</b>	<p><b>Can you actually reach your networking goal? What actions do you need to take to get there?</b></p> <p>Yes, absolutely. Thanks to social media, I have already identified several editors that I want to meet, which gives me the added benefit of knowing what they look like ahead of time. I need to make sure I have my business cards with me and remember to take deep breaths before I approach someone.</p>
<b>Relevant</b>	<p><b>How does your networking goal relate to your overall goals for yourself and your career/business?</b></p> <p>Expanding my network to include international editors who work on medical/health documents will give me access to a global pool of professional expertise, which will help me deliver high quality work to my own clients. It may also lead to new opportunities.</p>
<b>Time-bound</b>	<p><b>What is the time frame required to reach your networking goal?</b></p> <p>I have given myself until the end of the day on Sunday, so I can take advantage of all the opportunities to meet my goal, and build in breaks if I start to feel overwhelmed.</p>