

The Networking Meeting

Now, let's discuss the networking meeting itself...

- It is a 15-20 minute meeting that you request. You manage the agenda and because you will have planned well for this, you will not waste a moment's time in obtaining your desired information and referrals to additional contacts.
- Take cues from your contact, balancing their personality style with your own. You want to establish a positive rapport, building on the referral that the preceding individual afforded you (e.g. "I hear you're quite a golfer.").
- End the meeting by requesting other referrals ("Is there anyone else you believe I should speak to/anyone you believe would be helpful to talk to?").
- Thank them for their time, their cooperation, the referrals.
- Follow up (always) with a thank you note. At this time, you may wish to add/reinforce/remind any points you may have neglected in the face to face discussion.
- Follow up also, with the results of any contacts they will have provided you. When someone helps another, they like to know how it turned out. Keep them informed with a little note or a quick call.

Summary:

It is an effective sales technique. First, the assumption takes the positive, 'of course you will, won't you' type of approach. Second, providing specific time frames allows your contact to focus in on only two choices, one of which they will prefer. It demonstrates respect both for their time and also for your own time.

You will show that you are being wise, planned, and very organized with this strategy.

Also, staying away from the expectation that you are requesting their time and assistance in the too near future increases the probability that they will agree to see you and won't have a conflict.