

STARTUP
ENTREPRENEUR
ACADEMY™

Setting you up for business success

Networking Online and
Offline Worksheet & Tips

4. Next, ask around. Post it on your personal profile wall. What groups in these social media platforms should you be a part of? If there aren't any groups, as in Instagram's case, who should you follow and engage with? The secret is to find and start connecting with the right people. Jot down some groups here with their links so you can refer back. Make a list of as many as you can find, as well as individuals who are reaching your same target demographic.

5. Out of your list of groups, pick three to five at most as this is about all the time you'll have to really dive in and start engaging with members. List those out here and request to join them. If you find that the group isn't all it's cracked up to be, remove yourself or unfollow the group and choose another. Always have at least three you're active in. You can also make a list of individuals here you'd like to reach out to.

6. Next, create a short personal message for each specific person you want to connect with. It's okay if it's similar for everyone you want to meet, as long as it's personally directed to them. Even do a little research on the person if you can. People love when you do this as you took the time to get to know them first. As people accept your connection request, take the conversation to the next step. Here's an example.

"Hi (name). I see you live in Gilbert, AZ and have young kiddos. I do too! I'd love to connect with you and get to know you better. Shall we schedule a time for a virtual latte?"

Networking Offline

1. Similar to networking online, you'll want to do the same sort of research here. Look through the organizations surrounding your city. Where does your ideal target market hang out? Chambers, associations, moms groups, business lunches? Check out your local business calendars in your city and/or Meetup.com. This is a great tool to see where your ideal target market is. Identify a few groups you'd like to "visit" to determine if they're the right fit for you. This can also include groups that meet virtually and not in person as groups are moving more toward convenience. List those groups here.

2. One thing you'll need to prepare is an introduction. Most every group encourages you to stand up and say who you are. But many people fail at this important step. Based on the module presentation, take some time here to craft your 60-second elevator pitch so that you stand out from the crowd. What are the problems you solve and the benefits you provide? Hint: your name and company should be the very last thing you say. Practice this until you feel comfortable saying it whenever and wherever you are.

3. Next, create a calendar schedule of the networking events you plan to attend in person and/or online virtually and register for these. I'd suggest not more than one to two networking events a week as you can easily suffer from networking burnout, but when you're first getting started, good to start getting out there and practicing. Use a tool like your Outlook or Google Calendar and start registering. When registering, connect with the group leader. Ask questions like these.

Can you tell me the focus/mission of the group?

How many people typically come to the group?

Will I have an opportunity to introduce myself?

Is there a guest speaker or is it more of a group discussion?

What is the commitment to belong to your group and the monthly or annual dues?

From his/her response, you can then decide if it's a group you want to be in and commit to. Like social media online groups, choose a few that resonate with you. As your business gets busier, your time to get out and network will become more limited.

4. After you've attended some networking groups and become familiar with the format, you'll need to create a follow-up strategy, particularly with people you want to continue staying connected to. Save their information on your phone or desktop or scan their card. Craft a follow-up message here you can save to your desktop to be more efficient. Just like your social media inquiry to connect, this, too, should be personalized and sent out within 48 to 72 hours of meeting them. Here's an example.

Hi (name),

I very much enjoyed connecting with you at (name of group). I would love to stay connected and/or meet for a live or virtual coffee someday to continue our conversation. If there's anything I can do to help you, please don't hesitate to ask. As I come across people to connect you with and/or things that may interest you, I'll make sure to send them your way.

Thanks so much!

(Your name)

You can also proceed to connect with them on the social media platforms you're more active on like their social media FB business page, LinkedIn, etc.

If you have any questions I can answer about networking, just let me know. Post the question in the comment section of this module or in the FB community so I can address it. Happy networking!

Tisha Marie Enterprises

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