

NETWORK WITHOUT FEELING FAKE



Mastering Authentic Networking

Let's be honest: traditional networking can feel uncomfortable.

Imagine the struggle of awkward conversations. Elevator pitches! Individuals feign concern while quietly searching for someone deemed more "valuable."

It's no surprise that many of us steer clear of it.

But here's the exciting truth: **Authentic networking is all about being genuine.** It's all about forging connections grounded in a spirit of inquiry, kindness, and mutual development.

No matter if you're more reserved, feeling a bit rusty, or stepping back into the job market, you can create a strong network—while staying true to yourself.

Step 1: Transform Networking into "Connecting"

Networking is about building meaningful connections. It's all about forging bonds.

Consider it as:

* Engaging in impactful dialogues * Supporting others selflessly * Connecting with those who share your passions

This is serious business. It's a journey of growth.

Step 2: Begin with Those You Are Familiar With

Set aside thoughts of strangers for the moment. Your current relationships are invaluable.

Compile a list of:

* Previous colleagues or supervisors * Friends from earlier employment or educational experiences * Guides, clients, partners in projects

Then connect with kindness and no expectations:

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“Hey, I’m considering a career change and would appreciate the chance to reconnect.” Your perspective is truly invaluable to me.

Easy as pie. Human being. Completely normal.

Step 3: Transition from Inquiring to Contributing

If you’re concerned about “using” people, consider this approach instead:

* Inquire deeply about *their* work * Provide a pertinent article or concept * Extend an introduction, insight, or gratitude

Offer your support before seeking assistance. Generosity draws people in.

Step 4: Discover Circles That Resonate with Your Vibe

There's no need to mingle at noisy gatherings.

Give it your all:

* Virtual communities or Slack channels * Networking events for those pursuing new career paths * Engaging sessions, online seminars, community networks

Seek out the places where individuals unite for collective advancement—not merely for recognition.

Step 5: Engage on LinkedIn as a Genuine Individual, Not a Sales Robot

* Engage deeply with posts (avoid just hitting “like”) * Offer your insights, experiences, and lessons learned * Reach out to others with context, genuine curiosity, and kindness

There’s no requirement for you to achieve viral success. All it takes is for you to be present.

Step 6: Embrace the Journey

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Building relationships requires patience and dedication.
Some connections could unlock opportunities in just 3 days—some people, in just 3 years.

Maintain your focus, but avoid any sense of urgency.
Keep a record of your discussions. Keep pushing forward. Embrace authenticity.

Closing Thoughts

Embrace who you are and watch your network flourish.

Embrace your true self with purpose.

Embrace your curiosity.
Show compassion.
Shine bright.
Be a source of inspiration.

That's real. That's incredibly inspiring.
And that's how true careers are forged.