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# Networking While Social Distancing



## 7 Tips to Digital Networking

Social distancing is something we have never encountered before, for our mental health, it is now more important than ever to connect with the people in your life. Human connection is essential, luckily that can still be done digitally, here's how:

1. Write down your networking goals and then figure out how you can digitally accomplish them. Create a networking map intention that is bigger and bolder than you ever imagined.
2. Craft a simple but meaningful text message for the most important people on your contact list.
3. Take the lead -- pick a date and invite people to a mastermind meeting. Your personal relationships can help you reach some of your professional networking goals?
4. Share your strengths and demonstrate your resilience in this new virtual landscape. Sometimes putting people in a mutually beneficial room (or screen in this case) leads to a healthy conversation.
5. Identify the people you need to contact. Find them on LinkedIn, send a DM on Instagram or ask someone in your network to give an email introduction. Be intentional about making a connection. These relationships are key to meet your goals.
6. Ask your mentees or mentors how they are doing and if you can assist them in some way. Show your gratitude for the relationship – genuine gratitude is quite different than random shout-outs. Send a heartfelt note via email, text or greeting card.
7. Keep in Touch (K.I.T.) – Things will never change without action... just pick up the phone and call someone, unscheduled and unannounced. As Gloria Feldt says, "The world moves on human connection." Networking feels less intimidating when you can make human connections. You can turn a mere contact into a solid relationship. Perhaps you knew someone for years but have not taken the time to cultivate a relationship. Break the ice by doing a simple check in. For example, send a compliment in a private message during a Zoom meeting.

## Things to remember when networking

*Dr. Nancy O'Reilly, Founder of Women Connect 4 Good*

- **Connections should be mutually beneficial.** What is your goal in building a network? If your goal is to get something for yourself, you'll work hard and create virtually no goodwill. Think about what you can create with your new connection, not just what that person can do for you. When we infuse sharing and giving into the process, suddenly connecting with others feels good. And it works! Be prepared: offering to help and work with others catches many people off guard. They probably expect you to ask for an interview or a chance to pitch your product, but not a genuine way you can help them.
- **Talk to your connection, not at them.** The old style of networking involved a lot of "selling" your skills and showcasing your knowledge. To truly build connections that work, resist that urge. Instead, when you're talking to someone new, ask her about herself and really listen to her answers. It's bad form to wait for your opportunity to talk without actually taking the time to listen. Acknowledge that conversations (personal and professional) may be more personal right now and that is okay. This means you will have a chance to share conversations that are more candid and vulnerable, and that is what makes us human. Empathy and kindness, which have always been critical, are particularly essential right now.
- **Have three or four "go-to" questions in the bag to keep a conversation moving.** It's never a good idea to just wing it when you meet someone new, especially if you want to make a connection. A few "go-to" questions can be a big help in case a conversation grinds to a halt. (Awkward!) It doesn't matter what the questions are, but you might consider thought provokers like, "If time and money were no object, what would you be doing right now?" Or perhaps something more along the lines of "What is the hardest part of your job?" Chances are, the other person will be happy to move away from tired "Where are you from and what do you do?" conversational territory – and you'll stand a much better chance of discovering his or her values, goals, and interests.

## GET DIGITAL TODAY!

- Make sure all of your social media platforms are up to date.
- Craft a template message that you can quickly switch around to personalize for the recipient when doing outreach.
- Find a clean well lit area where you can have your video meetings and friendly meet-ups.

You have the power to build the network you need to reach your goals, use your **#powerTO**.  
Need help figuring out how?

**LEARN WITH US**

# Power TO Purposeful Networking Map

Worksheet to plan a purposeful digital networking strategy towards leadership.

## Step 1:

Write out your networking goals. What areas of your network do you need to focus on?

## Step 2:

Use the networking map to serve as a methodical approach to relationship building. You will be able to see where your most valuable relationships lie, engage in a meaningful and authentic way, and finally pair your relationship-building efforts to your intentional professional and personal goals.



**Affirmation:** *I am grateful for the people that influence my career, I appreciate the people that have inspired me to propel my professional and personal development!*

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