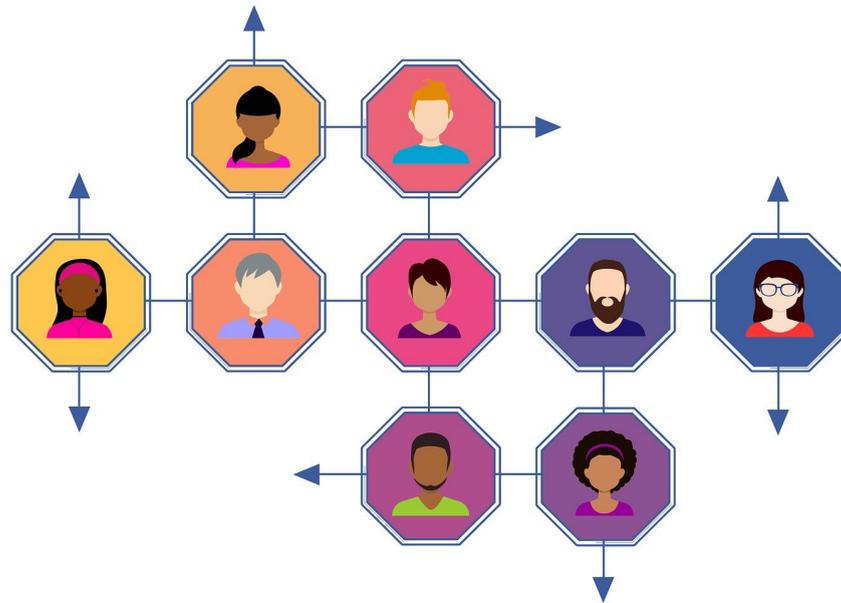


# 5 Quick Networking Tips for Entrepreneurs Short on Time

[Regina Arnold](#)



Networking is one of the most important things you can do as a business owner. But because of busy schedules, it can be the last thing on your to-do list.

Studies suggest that networking at events can gain companies up [to 20% of their new customers](#), and a networking strategy can also be the key to finding new investors and partners that will help to grow your business.

Unfortunately, it isn't always easy to network successfully.

Not only do you have to get used to the awkward initial introduction phase when you're trying to make connections with others, but you've got some serious time constraints to worry about, too.

Building connections **does** take time. But, as every entrepreneur knows, **time is money**. So how do you ensure that you're still working on your networking strategy when you're strapped for time?

Try these five strategies...

## Make It a Daily Habit

**The more you practice networking as a daily habit, the more naturally it will fit into your day.**

Rather than setting aside an hour a week where you can go and talk to people who could help your business grow, you **use five minutes each day**. Start the morning by sending emails to others and connecting with your peers on social media.

Put phone calls with potential partners and investors into your calendar and work through them every time you're stuck in traffic or waiting for something else to happen.

If networking is as much of a habit as brushing your teeth or your hair, then it starts to feel more natural and builds your self-confidence.

What's more, when networking becomes a habit, it also emerges as something that you force yourself to make time for. You're less likely to make excuses that you don't have a minute to spare.

## Leverage New Connections

Networking isn't just about building new relationships.

You probably already have some quality people in your existing network who could help to introduce you to important figures in your profession. A great place to start building your network is in your own workplace.

Get to know your teams and learn about their background. Grab lunches with staff when you have the opportunity and look for chances to get to know new people through them, too. **You might discover that your internal network has a lot more value to offer than you originally thought.**

Getting to know your team could also reveal that certain employees have hidden talents that you could be utilizing better in your business.

## Use Existing Activities

If you already take part in social activities from time to time, why not use those as part of your networking strategy? If you regularly volunteer at nonprofit organizations, for example, then you can strike up conversations with people in this environment.

Even if you don't gain any valuable connections, making the time to connect with others and practice your networking skills will benefit you in the long run. You can chat everywhere -- from your gym to standing in line at the grocery store.

**TIP:** While in a conversation, instead of asking, "Do you know anybody who....?" Try asking it this way, "I'm curious, who do you know that ...?"

Asking it the first way will always be answered with a YES or NO. Asking it the second way allows people to try and think of someone they know.

Getting practice into your day where you can work on your ability to build emotional links to others is a lot more valuable than most people realize.

## **Schedule Important Events in Advance**

If you do want to make time for a specific in-person networking event, then it's important to prepare well in advance. Chances are that you won't be able to attend most events at the last minute, but **you can go to the important ones by staying organized.**

To help improve your chances of regularly networking, try to attend at least one each month – even if it's an online event. Make a list of the events that you most want to attend and add them to your calendar, so you have plenty of time to prepare.

Be selective about the kind of events you choose. Ideally, you'll want to visit an environment where you can reach people who are going to benefit you and your business.

## **Use Social Media**

Finally, social media is one of the most popular and convenient ways to network these days.

Make a little time each day to go through your LinkedIn connections and reach out to those who might be valuable to your social circle. **The key to success with social media networking is ensuring that you don't let it eat up too much of your day.**

Set a specific amount of time aside so you can avoid getting distracted for too long. If you have multiple social accounts, consider consolidating them with a social media marketing tool, so you can share content more easily and attract potential connections to you.

## Looking Forward

**Networking is vitally important for your success and that of your business.**

Keep these tips in mind to enable you to perform critical networking activities without taking too much time away from the rest of your business.

Remember -- social media can be the start of a solid business relationship, but there's nothing better than taking it further to a face-to-face meeting. Seeing the expression on faces in conversation is priceless!