10 Simple Tips to Be a Professional Networking Superstar!

Guest Hosts
https://youtube.com/watch?v=nUEjICS68AA
https://nerdfighteria.info/v/nUEjICS68AA

[Music]

(00:14) Hey there. My name is Steve Johnson and I am the creator of the video blog FizzyLimon, the classical music channel The Listener's Guide, and the Dallas Opera synopsis series Opera in Brief.

(00:24) I have also guest written and hosted for a couple other channels in my time, and was even on the inaugural "Less Than Famous" panel at VidCon, and I am here to talk to you about what got me pretty much all of that: networking.

(00:36) Now, I know what you're thinking. A lot of inexperienced networkers have this common misconception of a sleazy-looking businessman with slicked back hair and a toothy smile turning on the charm and telling you than any time you're in San Francisco, just talk to your old pal Jim Bob.

(00:49) But here's the thing: nobody really likes Jim Bob. He's just giving you a sales pitch. Networking is really about building a community of people in your field and building mutually trusting and beneficial relationships with them.

(01:03) To borrow from former President John F. Kennedy, "And so my fellow 'How to Adult' viewers, ask not what your contact can do for you, ask what you can do for your contact."

(01:14) If you adopt the mindset of helping others, you'll not only be more fulfilled, but more desirable. And there are some other ways to make yourself more desirable as well. First, Business Insider recommends that you have three qualities: Visibility, Credibility, and Profitability. Essentially, do what you want to do and do it well so that you can show it to the people that you want to sell it to.

(01:33) Next, it's a good idea to have an Elevator Pitch ready. This is essentially and introduction of yourself, your position, your company, and your goals with the listener. The idea is that if you should meet somebody important in an elevator, you should be able to explain everything that you want them to know before they reach their floor. You've actually already heard one of these today. Can we get a replay?

(High-pitched, fast-paced speech from beginning of video)

(02:04) Finally, have business cards. These are definitely important if you want to stay in touch with people that you make contacts with. But keep in mind that these are for the *end* of the conversation. Only give them to people if you get a good enough vibe that you think they're gonna follow up. Otherwise, it's just gonna end up in a drawer, never to be seen again.

(02:22) "But, Steve," you ask. "Where do you find contacts in the first place?" You already have a lot, but you probably just call them family and friends. Professional and hobby associations are also a great way to meet a diverse group of people with similar interests. And finally, social networking, especially with LinkedIn and Twitter, are a great way to find people in your field. Once you have a good idea of who knows who, you can start asking for introductions and branch out from there.

(02:48) Now, when you *do* meet someone, always remember that your number one concern should be building a relationship, not getting a job. Make good conversation. If you're not good at small talk, just ask them questions about themselves. You can even prepare these in advance so that you have an idea of where you want to steer the conversation.

(02:05) Informational interviews are another great way to network. This is when you find somebody in your field that you respect and you ask them for some job advice. Remember that you are not asking them for a job; only tips. Lots of the world's most successful people have essentially replaced their blood with coffee, so an invitation to a nearby cafe for a free cup can be a welcome release from their hectic work days. Just be certain that you pick up the tab as a way to thank them for their time.

(03:30) Sometimes, though, you'll want to meet someone from outside your network, which might mean that you have to send *a cold e=mai*l. Speaking as someone's whose work flow requires a second monitor dedicated entirely to e-mail, you're gonna wanna keep these short if you want a response. Three to four sentences is best, essentially being your elevator pitch plus suggested topics for future conversation at an informational interview.

(03:51) And I realize that a lot of these skills don't come very naturally to introverts, and there is a certain amount of faking it until you make it. Just don't apologize for anything. Everybody else is networking too, and they understand. Apologizing can come across as lacking confidence or professionalism.

(04:07) But if you are genuinely too anxious to talk to strangers, therapists are *magical* and there is *no* shame in seeing one. That's just another topic for another video.

(04:16) So you've successfully made a contact! Congratulations! Now you have to follow through. You want to prove that you're dependable, so do whatever you told them you would. Sometimes you will get rejected, and well, we've already talked about that on this channel.

(04:27) "It's not because you're not the bomb diggity, because you *are*. You *are* the bomb diggity."

(04:32) For cold e-mails, you may not get a response at all, and that's totally okay. It's also perfectly acceptable to follow up on them after about a week. That even shows persistence. Just be sure that you maintain connects that you've already made. Send your contacts links to articles that they might find interesting. Put them in contact with people that you think that oughta know. After all, they need the network just as much as you do.

(04:51) If you are interested in more sources on networking and career building, I've left some links in the description to renowned books on the topic. If you'd like to see more of me, don't forget to check out my channels in the description either.

(05:03) I'd like to give a big thank you to Mike for inviting me to write and host this episode. It's definitely been a blast, and I would like it if you guys could give your appreciation to him as well by giving this a good old thumbs up, sharing, and subscribing, and they will see you next time on "How to Adult."

(05:19) (Music)