

Tips and tricks to help you network your way to success

■ We often come up with the same people when trying to decide who the best person is to help us solve a problem or achieve a goal. The danger is that we tend to see them as a specialist, without finding out what else they happen to be interested in. The most common 'error' of all is that we usually forget that they too have a network of interesting, skilled and inspiring people.

How do you decide who the ideal per-

son is to help you? The first group of people you should think of are the ones in the best position to help. Mentors and coaches are a second, frequently overlooked, group. They won't necessarily help you achieve a specific goal, but they can guide you along the way. A mentor or coach could well be a neighbour or relative.

'Networkers' – people with a widespread network and a good reputation – form a third group. They enable you

to reach many more contacts. How do you find them? Via your own network or through the online equivalents – networking websites show you how many people are linked to each of their members. Simply identifying a networker isn't enough. That person has to be willing to put you in touch with other people. And you have to handle your contacts properly. Which doesn't mean constantly inviting them out for dinner – you must just keep in

regular contact. Help them link up with your contacts and keep reminding them how you can be of assistance to others. (iv)

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free networking e-course at www.networking-coach.com

Three tips for successful networking:

1. Make a list of the people who are best placed to help you achieve your objective, even if they are not (yet) part of your network.
2. Find one or more mentors or coaches.
3. Make contact with networkers and keep in touch with them.