

Networking Tips for VentureFest 2022

As we prepare for VentureFest North East later this month, Samantha Vassallo, Managing Director of B2B marketing agency Horizon Works, provides some refresher tips on networking.

Always be prepared

Prior to the event ensure you are aware of the event themes and who the key speakers are. Make sure you take enough business cards and that they are easily accessible. Consider if you need to take brochures or other marketing information with you.

Set objectives and reasonable expectations

Ask yourself why you are attending the event. Are there any delegates or guest speakers you would like to approach? You can save yourself time by having some key targets in mind.

Ask open-ended questions during conversations

This means that you should use questions which ask who, what, where, when, and how as opposed to those that can be answered with a simple yes or no. This form of questioning opens up the discussion and shows listeners that you are interested in them.

Have your 'elevator' pitch ready

It's important to be able to articulate what you do in a short and precise manner. If there is more than one person from your company attending, you should all be saying the same thing – consistency is key! Make sure you explain how your business benefits the particular industry you are focusing on.

Be engaged

Listen carefully, keep eye contact, never interrupt and don't be afraid to ask questions! Win people over by sharing your enthusiasm for what you do within their industry.

Networking isn't a competition

It's about building relationships, growing your database of contacts and actively maintaining them. You can also learn about key industry trends that could impact on your own business and pick up on new ideas.

Don't 'sell sell sell'!

You'll have more chance of success by making genuine conversation, building rapport and showing interest in what the other person has to say. Remember, you're

trying to develop a relationship with a new contact and maintain a good reputation within the industry.

Follow-up

It's important to follow up on your new connections. Remind them of who you are and what you do, provide them with access to more information and a means of progressing the relationship e.g. would they like to sign up to your e-marketing or would they like a meeting to discuss your services? Follow up with a LinkedIn connection request too, if that's possible.

Evaluate

Take time out to evaluate your networking. Did you achieve what you set out to do? How would you adjust the way you networked? What could you do differently next time?

Horizon Works is a Partner of the Innovation SuperNetwork and will be exhibiting at VentureFest North East.

You can find out more about Horizon Works here: www.horizonworks.co.uk