

ACTIVITY: YOU MAKE THE CALL— NETWORKING FAUX-PAS

Read each scenario below. Determine what the person's mistake was and what should be done differently.

1. Tom works primarily out of his home office. He does consulting and has several large, respected companies as clients. He often just wears jeans and a t-shirt when not meeting with clients. Today, he needed to run in and drop off a small job he did for a company for which he's hoping to do more work. He figured he'd just be running in, dropping it off, then leaving, so he didn't bother to change his clothes. On the way in, he happened to run into his contact person on her way to lunch, and she just happened to be with the vice president of the business unit.

What could Tom do differently?

2. Jamal has spent a lot of time developing his network. He's in sales and his industry is predominantly male. One of his new customers, Karen, just took over the buying position at one of his major clients. Upon meeting her, when she put out her hand for a handshake, rather than firmly shaking her entire hand, he lightly squeezed just her fingers. Karen gave him a rather odd look, and she hasn't returned his calls.

What could Jamal do differently?

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3. Kim is just out of college and is anxious to build a good network as she's building her career. She attended a networking event especially for students and was eager to really work the room. She had about five people on her target list. She got there, walked in, and immediately spotted one of the people on her list. She approached the person, introduced herself with her 30-second speech, and asked about finding a copy-editing position. As the person started talking, Kim noticed another person on her list nearby. She couldn't help but keep her eye on her as she passed—she didn't want to miss out on the opportunity to meet that person. She interrupted her speaker, quickly thanked him, then dashed off to meet the other target person.

What could Kim do differently?

4. Erin has been working in her field for over 15 years and has very valuable experience. She just started a new position at an up-and-coming biotech firm. She hasn't had business cards printed yet, and is attending a conference where she could make some good connections. She worked with her administrative assistant to make some business cards she could take with her. They found some green paper and tried to get as much information as they could on them: the name of the company, the logo, the address and Erin's mail stop, the corporate phone number, her direct line number, her cell phone number, her e-mail, the company Web page address—that's just on the front. On the back, they listed the company mission statement and key services offered. They don't look as good as the ones coming from the printer, but at least she has something to hand out.

What could Erin do differently?

ACTIVITY: HIGH-TECH BRAINSTORM

Discuss the following questions:

1. What are some of the ways you've used technology for networking?

2. What are some of the ways you've seen other people network with technology?

3. Create a list of some ways you'd like to use technology for networking. Describe how you would get the necessary information.
