Mastering Virtual Networking

The pandemic may be over, but connecting with people virtually is here to stay.

In many fields, knowing how to network virtually has become an important part of professional growth and career advancement.

Whether you're seeking new opportunities, expanding your professional network or looking to establish valuable connections, participating in virtual networking events can be a powerful tool. However, navigating these online gatherings effectively requires a strategic approach and adherence to certain dos and don'ts.

DO

Test your technology. Before the event begins, ensure that your technology is working smoothly. Test your internet connection, audio and video settings to avoid any technical glitches during the event. Familiarize yourself with the platform being used for the networking event to navigate it effortlessly.

Create a professional virtual background. Choose a clean and professional virtual background for your video conferencing calls. Opt for neutral backgrounds or branded backgrounds that reflect your professional identity. Avoid distracting or cluttered backgrounds that may detract from your professionalism.

Dress appropriately. Treat virtual networking events with the same level of professionalism as in-person meetings. Dress appropriately for the occasion, choosing attire that reflects your personal style while also aligning with the event's tone and audience. Dressing professionally can help you make a positive impression and command respect.

Prepare an elevator pitch. Craft a concise and compelling elevator pitch that introduces yourself, highlights your expertise and communicates your career goals. Be prepared to share this pitch confidently during networking conversations to make a memorable impression on other participants.

Engage actively. Actively engage in conversations and discussions during the networking event. Listen attentively to other participants, ask thoughtful questions and contribute valuable insights and perspectives. Demonstrate genuine interest in others' experiences and expertise to foster meaningful connections.

DON'T

Multitask. Avoid multitasking during virtual networking events, as it can detract from your ability to fully engage and participate. Focus your attention solely on the event and the conversations taking place, giving each interaction your undivided attention.

Overshare personal information. While it's important to build rapport and establish connections during networking events, refrain from oversharing personal information that may not be relevant to your professional goals. Maintain a level of professionalism in your interactions and focus on discussing your career aspirations and achievements.

Neglect follow-up. After the networking event concludes, don't neglect to follow up with the connections you've made. Send personalized thank-you emails to express appreciation for the opportunity to connect and reiterate your interest in staying in touch. Nurture these relationships through regular communication and networking opportunities.

Disregard networking etiquette. Adhere to established networking etiquette and norms during virtual networking events. Avoid interrupting others, monopolizing conversations or dominating the discussion. Respect the perspectives and contributions of all participants, fostering a collaborative and inclusive networking environment.

Forget to polish your online presence. Take the time to review and polish your online presence, including your LinkedIn profile and professional social media accounts. Ensure that your profiles are up-to-date, professional and reflective of your skills and experiences to leave a positive impression on potential connections.