



# INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING

**Training material**

**INCONEXT PROJECT**

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## INTRODUCTION

The constant and rapid changes in the market force companies to continuously look for new ways to survive, grow and be competitive. Thereby, the success of a company depends on its strategic collaboration with other organisations that influence the creation and delivery of its products or services. Complex and flexible structures of cooperation are evolving within networks. Networks of industries, organizations, enterprises, and individuals contribute opportunities and resources to complete e.g. innovations.

Networking can be defined as a social structure that focuses on a variety of organizations, companies and individuals who share a mutual relationship based on shared ideas, values, interests, financial exchange, and friendship and so on. In short, networking - is the total (including all members of the related and intertwined) activity that connects individuals, organizations or businesses. Networking is important as it allows partners to have an outermost edge of the world, this provides an opportunity without significant financial resources to learn from each other (exchange of experience), this leads to a formal contact when sliding into second position and the central axis of the plan is – communication.

### Course Content

Day 1	Time	Day 2	Time
Introduction	0,5		
Why networking? Effective business networking tips	1,5		
<i>Break</i>			
Business networking models (including clusters, technology platforms etc.)	1		
Relationship networking & Strategic networking	1		

<i>Lunch break</i>			
Virtual Enterprise Networks	0,5		
International network activities benefits	1		
<i>Break</i>			
Tools to network internationally more effectively	1		
How to make the most out of business international networking	1		
<i>Conclusion and Q&amp;A</i>	0,5		
<b>Time total</b>	<b>8</b>		

## Why networking? Effective business networking tips

Many extraordinary careers would not be possible without a network that helped them introduce their market ideas. The career of Bill Gates heavily relied on the network of his mother. You can find success stories of entrepreneurs using their networks to achieve their goals in newspapers, books, TV and radio. Anyhow, in the business world networks provide three advantages:

- Private information
- Access to diverse skill sets and
- Power

Private information: When we are making a decision we rely on both, public and private information. Nowadays, public information is easily accessible from a wide range of sources, but as everyone can get the information, it is difficult to gain competitive advantage when using it. On the other hand private information offer unique knowledge that cannot be retrieved from public sources. Private information can be: release date of a certain product, a software code in development, interests of potential partners. Private information

## What to do when networking?

Networking is not an art which is only for talented persons, although networking comes easy to some people. Networking can be learnt quite easily by using guidelines.

Here are some hints that help you to successfully network (guidelines are retrieved from web pages Online Social Networking and business know-how:

1. Always be networking: Every person you meet has the potential to be useful: be it that he/she can help you directly or can introduce you to his network.
2. Networking is not prospecting: Develop some degree of relationship with each person you meet.
3. Cast a wide net: Prejudging barks you from networking successfully. Targeting is concept that can be applied in marketing, but in business targeting has the potential to be go too far.
4. Find out what you want: How can you expect from others to give you what like, if you do not know by yourself what you like.
5. Know whom you like to meet: If you do not know, who you want to meet, how should you network help you getting in touch with that kind of person.
6. Use the right platforms and events to meet the right persons. Join business networking sites such as xing or linkedin. Furthermore attending adequate events help you to connect with potential prospects.
7. Don't make your networking partner feel exhausted: In a networking relationship focussing on giving creates trust and it is more likely that you will receive.
8. Be as perfect as you can: It is necessary that always make a great impression: be it your personal appearance, you networking profile or you communication style. This may help to maintain a good contact to your key networking contacts.
9. Strive for consistency: In business networking you should not rely on discontinuing bursts of activity.
10. Diversify your contacts and try always to use new and creative ways to meet people.
11. Always put extra effort in your networking activity: Do you think, you have done all you can do? Normally you can always do a little bit more.
12. Time is a scarce resource, so use it effectively. As you cannot do everything, you should prioritize your networking activities.
13. Be organized: A database or something similar might help to organize your contacts. Having your contacts' names, personal information and a log of interactions with them prevent you from exploiting them.

14. Talk to your contacts: Talking with them via phone, skype and in face-to-face meetings, helps you getting more personal and making closer connection. This does not mean, that you should not use e-mails and chats.
15. Do not abuse or spam your networks.
16. Learn from experts: There are many excellent networking books and seminars, where you can learn from the best networker.
17. Build your network, before you need it: If you create your networks, only, when you need it, you will be too late.
18. Be authentic.
19. Follow up quickly and adequate on business networking referrals: When people give you referrals, your actions reflect on them. Respect that and your referrals will grow.

**Hint: Write a list of your best business contacts. Assess, if you are benefiting from them and if they benefiting from you.**