

IAEE STRATEGIC PARTNERS



60/60 Rule. One networking technique that Dallmeyer recommends is to make a list of 60 people that are important to your life and career and make an effort to contact them at least every 60 days. This keeps you on everyone's radar and gives them the opportunity to get to know you better. Do not worry if you do not have 60 contacts at first. The more networking you do, the bigger your contact list will become over time.

Watch and Wait. A good alternative to buzzing around the room of a networking function, especially if you do not know anyone at the event, is to just observe what is going on. Eventually, you will see someone else doing the same and you can strike up a conversation with that person. If you speak to one or two people at each event you attend, you will eventually get introduced to the people they know and so on.

Industry Specific. General networking events can expose you to a lot of new people, but they may not share the same professional concerns that you have. By joining industry-related groups, there is a commonality among the members because they share the same issues, problems and experiences.

When you do join these organizations, a great way to dive right into the community is to volunteer. This

may not have an immediate business payoff, but it will give you the chance to expand your network and open up those business opportunities eventually.

"By volunteering, you get on a project and get to know people first hand. That will lead to a better sense of belonging and will also hopefully lead to better business," says Dallmeyer. "Just do your good works and the rewards will come."

Once you have gotten your feet wet in an organization, step back periodically and evaluate how it is working for you. If it is not worth your time, energy and talent, look into other groups that will better suit your needs.

Have Fun. When networking, it is okay to mix pleasure with business – or just to have fun with the people in your circle. Going out to eat, or enjoying a show, or sporting event with your contacts gets to the heart of what networking should be – connecting with other people.

"Networking will enrich your life with new people and hopefully new friendships," says Dallmeyer. "That is what human beings are all about, and that is what the exhibitions and events business is all about – connecting customers to customers." ^{E2}