



# Avoiding Networking Nightmares

Most of us worry about waffling in front of relative strangers, even in friendly surroundings like internal company away days. What if you get stuck talking to the same people and miss out on making a connection that would really make a difference?

## Get your name right!



**Practice saying you name out loud** so that somebody you don't know could repeat it back you, record yourself and see if you pass the test. There's no need to be over declamatory with your name, just confident enough so that people know who they're dealing with.

**There's no need to bound and leap over;** instead, aim for the urgency you'd naturally have when walking to meet a friend you hadn't seen for a while.

Focus on the person in the group who is speaking as you approach. Smile, but do not attempt to interrupt them. It's likely they will at least return the smile or acknowledge you in some way. Everyone else will see them doing this and will accept you into the group.

## Approach groups you want to join with physical energy



## Facts, not fluff



**Think about the simplest definition of what you do** – Lawyer, Accountant, Project Manager, Sales, Tech Infrastructure, Investment, Finance. Even if this is a bit tricky because your role encompasses many things; persevere and refine, it's worth it because people want to know where you fit quickly.

## This is my niche



**Add some definition by describing what you specialise in.** Your niche can be a group of people, a location, a specific area of work, or even a challenge you specialise in solving. Don't worry about making it spectacular, focus on making real and easy to understand from outside of your company or industry.

## This is my latest insight



**Other people love gaining insights,** they may seem obvious to you because you've been close to them, but to others there're at least interesting and often useful. There are a number of ways of expressing this, these may trigger your thinking:

*"I truly believe that.."*

*"It's less about... and much more about"*

*"The common mistakes/misconceptions I see are.."*

**Leaving groups can be tricky too.** There's no need for gimmicks like pretending you need the toilet or another drink. Everyone is there for the same reason, so when appropriate, thank the person or people for something specific.