

Use this checklist to make every industry event count

1 15-30 days before

Get crystal clear on your "why"

- ☐ Define 2-3 specific goals (not just "networking").
- ☐ Write them down and review them each conference morning.

Do your homework

- ☐ Check the attendee list for 5-10 must-meet people.
- ☐ Follow them on LinkedIn with a personalized note.
- ☐ Research their latest work or posts for conversation starters.

Prepare your conversation opener

- ☐ Not an elevator pitch -- those are for selling.
- ☐ Craft a 30-second intro that invites conversation.
- ☐ Practice it until it feels natural, not rehearsed.

2 At the event

Select sessions strategically

- ☐ Choose quality over quantity--downtime for processing is essential.
- ☐ Pick sessions that align with your "why" goals.
- ☐ At the end, try to make a connection with one like-minded person.

Maximize your personal energy

- ☐ Schedule buffer time for processing between important sessions.
- ☐ Plan at least one meal per day for targeted connections; not random networking.
- ☐ Create moments of focus amid the chaos (e.g. a quick walk outside)

Employ connection hacks that actually work

- ☐ Start conversations by asking about their challenges, not their job title.
- ☐ Use the phrase "I'm curious about..." to open meaningful dialogue.
- ☐ Take notes on people IMMEDIATELY after meeting them.

3 After the event

Adhere to the 24-hour follow-up rule

- ☐ Send personalized connection requests within one day.
- ☐ Reference something specific from your conversation.
- ☐ Suggest a specific next step, if appropriate.

Implement your new insights

- ☐ Schedule 60-minutes to review all your notes within 48 hours.
- ☐ Identify 3 action items you can implement immediately.
- ☐ Share your top takeaways with your team for accountability.

Play the long game with your new connections

- ☐ Schedule quarterly check-ins with your most valuable new connections.
- ☐ Share relevant resources and comment meaningfully on their LinkedIn posts.
- ☐ Look for opportunities to support their work before asking for anything.