

# Networking and Elevator Pitch

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## Networking: What Does It Actually Mean?

For some, networking implies being outwardly social, going to many parties, or being a very charming person. This sounds like a whole lot to live up to, but networking is much more simple than that! ***Networking is establishing and maintaining relationships with people by offering them something of value.*** “Value” offered might be referring your contact to someone in your network, or providing information in a field you know a lot about.

## Tips to Seeking, Establishing and Maintaining Valuable Relationships:

1. **Be confident, be yourself.** Many musicians new to networking think they need to assume a role of some kind, or are too self-deprecating. Confidently being yourself is always the way to go.
2. **Be the ideal person that you would want to play and work with.** This means always appearing professional, being gracious with every person you meet, keeping your word and being alert to what others seek in their favored colleagues.
3. **Find the performers and individuals who are doing what you want to be doing.** Get to know them, and have them know who you are so that they might send work your way. Seek out events where there are new circles you want to be a part of. Attend concerts series you may eventually want to be a part of, or begin attending concerts at new venues and get to know the performers and their circles.
4. **Always carry business cards.** While your business card will ultimately end up in the trash once the information is digitized, giving your business card is a gesture that shows you’re a serious musician.
5. **Follow up after meeting someone or working with someone,** and remember to offer something of value. This might be asking to meet up for coffee, forwarding an article your contact will benefit from reading, or inviting them to a reading session so they can get to know your playing. Following up will help this contact remember and gain a clearer idea of who you are, which may lead to more work for you.

## The Elevator Pitch: What Is It?

An elevator pitch is an extremely brief explanation of **who you are, what you do and why it matters.** It is called an elevator pitch because it should be so short that you can deliver the explanation during a quick elevator ride with someone. **End your pitch with an ask.** Consider how the person you are delivering your pitch to may help you in the long run. Without overwhelming this person, ask them something to do something easy for you, even if it’s as simple as taking your contact info or asking if it is OK for you to schedule a meeting over coffee.

## Why is the Elevator Pitch important?

Throughout your career, opportunities will likely arise unexpectedly. You must be able to concisely explain to strangers what you do and impress upon them that it matters. Be prepared for these moments--Don’t miss any opportunities if you can help it. **Practice your elevator pitch** in front of a mirror, record video of yourself pitching, or ask colleagues for feedback. Ask yourself and your colleagues if it was clear, convincing and memorable. If your pitch is not all of those things, it is probably a sign that *you* are not completely sure or clear as to why you or your organization is important.