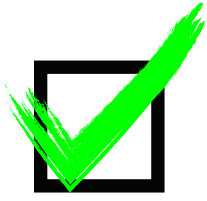




GREATER BURLINGTON
CHAMBER of COMMERCE
A DIVISION OF THE GREATER BURLINGTON PARTNERSHIP



Business After Hours & Networking Event Checklist



The Business After Hours & Networking Event Checklist is a valuable tool that serves to equip both newcomers and veterans alike.

For **newcomers**, the checklist acts as a comprehensive guide, covering essential aspects such as having a professional elevator pitch, dressing appropriately, and bringing an ample supply of business cards. It also offers advice on engaging in meaningful conversations and making connections. By following this checklist, newcomers can feel confident and empowered, ready to make a positive and lasting impression at networking events.

For **veterans**, the checklist serves as a helpful reminder and refresher, enabling them to sharpen their networking skills and stay up to date with best practices. It provides a checklist of items to review and setting specific goals for the event. With the aid of this checklist, veterans can enhance their networking strategies, nurture existing relationships, and explore new opportunities.

Overall, the Business After Hours & Networking Event Checklist serves as an invaluable resource, offering guidance and insights that ensure both newcomers and veterans are well-prepared to maximize their networking potential at upcoming events.

1 Professional or Business to Business Casual Attire

We've all heard the saying "You shouldn't judge a book by its cover." But when it comes to your business, come dressed to impress. Glenn Shepard has a saying "If you would wear it to the State Fair, don't wear it here." Make a good first impression with potential clients. Choose clothing appropriate for your industry and the event. Business After Hours attire is business casual.

Company logo attire is always right!



2 Wear A Company Name Tag

This may seem like it should go without saying, but it needs to be said. If you have a company name tag, wear it. If you have a company shirt that is event appropriate, wear it. Help people connect your face with the business. The more people recognize you and your business, the more likely they are to possibly consider using your services in the future.



3 Bring Business Cards or Digital Business Card

When meeting new people be sure to have a business card ready. Don't rely on potential customers to remember your name and look up your business. Have a card with your contact information ready to give to prospective customers.

Be forward thinking and invest in a digital business card. These cards can be scanned or connect to a cellphone to give your contact information to a prospect. These cards can automatically add your contact information as a contact, have links to your website or social profiles, links to resources with valuable information, and links to videos to demonstrate your product.



Dustin Roth

Director of Marketing & Communications

610 N 4th Street, Suite 200
Burlington, Iowa 52601

319-208-0048

droth@greaterburlington.com

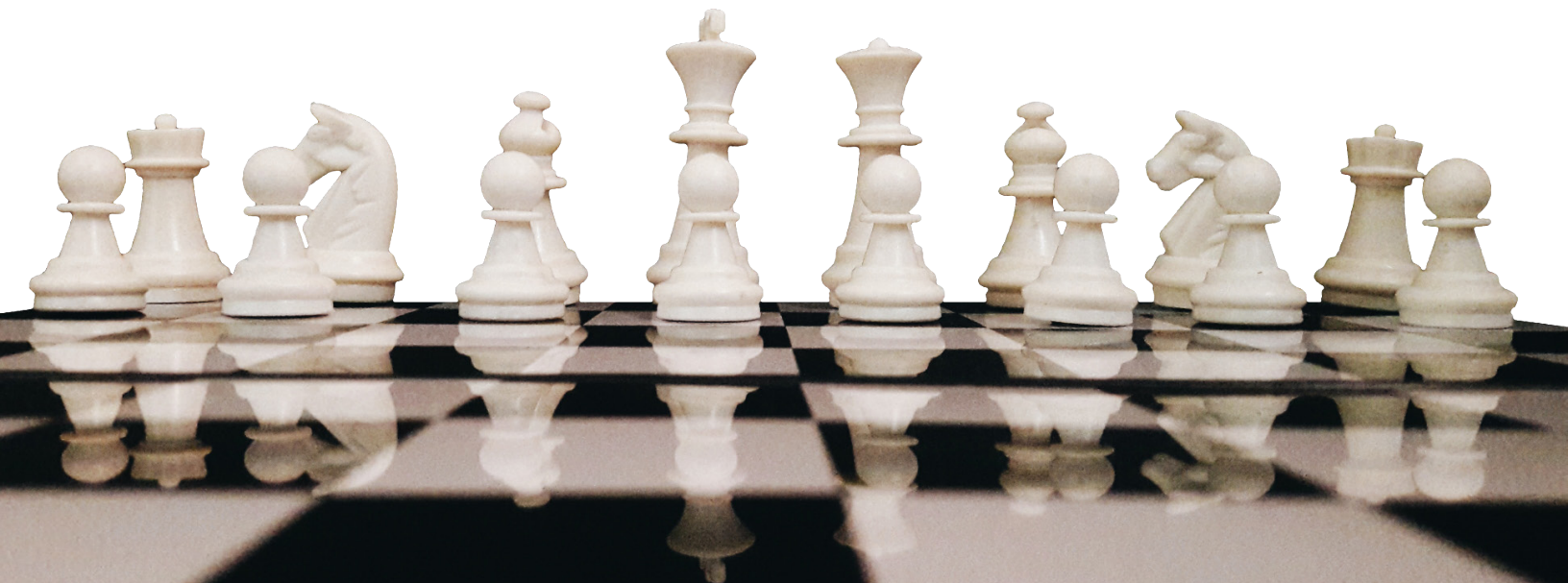


4 Have A Networking Plan

Before you attend your next networking event, consider why you are attending by asking yourself some questions.

- What type of people am I looking to meet?
- Am I looking for a new job or career shift?
- How many follow-ups am I looking to generate?
- What will I look to when determining my networking success?

Formulating a networking plan around your goals beforehand will help define your purpose and determine which actions you should take during the networking event.



5 Set A Goal To Talk To 3 New People

Just starting out networking, new to town, or not sure where to begin? Maybe you're a veteran chamber member who knows almost everyone. Don't feel anxious and don't stop networking. We're here to help. Start by setting a simple goal – talk to 3 new people. Make those connections before you head to the refreshments; it's hard to shake hands and exchange business cards if your hands are busy with a plate of food and a drink!

It may be a little awkward to just go up to a stranger and start a conversation, but that is what networking events are all about! Find a person with whom you would like to start a conversation, introduce yourself and tell them that you're new to town, looking to get to know new people, build your network, etc. Most people at networking events love meeting new people and making connections. Once they know you're new/just starting out they are happy to help you get started.

Ask us for help! Partnership staff and Chamber Ambassadors are happy to help make introductions.



6 Do Research Before Event

Identify 3-5 people to whom you want to connect.

With your networking plan in place do a little research on who you would like to talk to. If you have been at similar networking events before, you may know who attends. If you haven't, feel free to reach out to the Chamber of Commerce staff and ask. We're happy to help you identify people to talk to.

Once you have people identified, do some research on their business. What are their friction points and how could your business help relieve that friction.

7 Have A 30 Second Elevator Pitch Ready

Once you meet a prospective client that seems to be a good fit for your business, you undoubtedly will want to tell them all about your business. Instead of telling them everything you do, have a short 30-second elevator pitch that highlights what your company does and how you help relieve friction for your customers. You can always talk more about your business when they ask questions. Example “what does the Chamber of Commerce do?” Elevator-pitch answer: “We work to create an environment where business can prosper.”



8 Good Ice Breaker & Conversation Starters

When meeting people, you typically start by asking their name and maybe their job title. But then what? Relationship networking doesn't work if your conversation ends with introductions.

Ice breakers are a great way to initiate meaningful conversation. Here are some ways you can stir up interesting conversations with new connections.

- **Prepare Some Trivia:** Come ready with some interesting facts about the city the networking event is set or a historical tidbit about the host organization.
- **Give A Compliment:** Smile and offer kind words about the person's glasses, shoes, or accessories.
- **Ask A Personal Question:** Think about something interesting you've done or somewhere you have visited and use it to ask a question about the other networker's experiences.
- **Solicit Advice:** Whether you ask for a restaurant recommendation or which session looks most promising, asking for advice makes you more approachable.

Whichever conversation starter you choose, make sure you are comfortable with the topic and avoid taboo personal issues like religion, politics, and money.