

## The Top 10 Tips for Effective Social Networking

1. Social networking online is just moving the cocktail party chatter onto a website. The same skills you use to network at a business function or charity dinner, for example, are the same skills you use online.
2. There is no one "right" social network to be on for business purposes. The "right" one is the one you feel comfortable using. Explore your options.
3. Choose at least two social networking sites to get started. Two feel manageable to most people and give you some basis for comparison.
4. Choose your user name and profile picture carefully based on professional considerations.
5. Create an engaging profile page that tells people who you are—but more importantly, what you will do to help them with their problems. Visitors wish to know not what you do, but what you do *for them*.
6. Engage in the social networks of your choice. Like the Lotto slogan, "you've got to be in it to win it" – participation is essential.
7. Think about what you want to say before you say it. Once posted, even if you erase something from a site it might still be out in cyberspace.
8. Keep posts neutral, business-like and focused. They can include warm touch points and facts, but avoid controversial topics (unless your brand is focused on controversy.)
9. Having a lot of followers is nice, but if they're the wrong followers, big numbers won't matter. You need interested and engaged followers who will interact with you, buy from you, conduct business with you.
10. Be a friend to make a friend. Share, share, and share...links, posts, advice. Help others and be a good friend. Remember the 90/10 rule.