

## Networking Tips

The **best way to build and maintain your network** is to get out there and use your networking skills. Our community offers numerous networking opportunities, a few of which I'm listing here.

The Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce [www.tompkinschamber.org](http://www.tompkinschamber.org) holds monthly "Business After Hours" events. There are usually several hundred people in attendance representing all areas of local business.

The Independent Consultants Opportunity Network, ICON <http://www.iconconnect.org>, hold a monthly meeting, open to the public that offers an opportunity to network during the first thirty minutes.

Ithaca even has its own branch of an international networking franchise, Business Network International [www.ithacathumbsup.com](http://www.ithacathumbsup.com), which holds structured weekly meetings where people network, refine their skills and generate business for one another.

Women TIES, a Syracuse-based organization [www.womenties.com](http://www.womenties.com) has hosted several Ithaca-area events.

Women Working Together is a monthly lunchtime networking group in Cortland that meets the first Friday of every month (for more information email [grow@cortlandbusiness.com](mailto:grow@cortlandbusiness.com)).

Preparation list for a networking activity:

- It's **good to wear a nametag**, as that will help others to remember you. Make sure that you write your name large and legible. I recommend writing your first name especially large with your last name smaller underneath it. If you have a business or professional affiliation, write your business name along the bottom of your nametag. Consider ordering a high quality magnetic nametag and keep it with you. Where your nametag near your right shoulder, as that is where people look when you shake hands.
- Have a **generous supply of business cards** and have them accessible.
- Think about **three areas of interest** that you could engage in a conversation about and something you could share with others about those.

### **Books on networking:**

Power Networking: 59 Secrets for Personal and Professional Success  
by Donna Fisher and Sandy Vilas

Breakthrough Networking: Building Relationships That Last  
by Lillian D. Bjorseth

Make Your Contacts Count: Networking Know-How for Cash, Clients, and Career  
Success  
by Anne Baber and Lynne Waymon