

Bringing Networking to Life

- When you walk into a room, beware of trying to juggle coffee cups, bags and papers. Keep your hand free to shake hands with those you meet...nothing looks worse than fumbling around to free your hand. Get some honest feedback about your handshake from those you trust.
- Keep it simple: **'Hello, I'm... I couldn't leave without coming over to introduce myself and to thank you for the... / tell you what I thought about the...'** You can then follow up with them later if you need to. They are more likely to be able to 'place' you, even though the conversation took a matter of minutes
- If you need to close a conversation, how about: **'I must have a word with ... before I/they leave.'** Use this 'out' sentence to follow on from something you have said, and never after something *they* have just said...Bring in somebody else into the conversation if at all possible, so that the person you are leaving doesn't feel snubbed.
- If you can't remember somebody's name, do be honest. Try: **'I remember your face, I need to remember your name'** They should help you by telling you. And actually, the word 'remember' is much more positive than any reference to 'forgotten', and will be heard that way. It also encourages your subconscious to get to work on remembering...
- Do it tactfully. Make contact and follow through later, **'I have an idea I'd value your thoughts on...when is it best to call you about it?'** Don't try and pin them down now – unless they seem very willing to hear more. And resist the temptation to fling your posh business card at them to get their attention. It really doesn't work.
- **DON'T** turn into a 'Mr/Mrs Mustcome' – **'oh, you must come and see...do... sometime soon'**. Make it happen and say that you'll call to organise it. Or sort it out right now.