



THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SUCCESSFUL NETWORKING

From GEMM, the Gender Equity in Museums
Movement

Use the **5 Things You Need to Know** for information on building and sustaining your career, dealing with gender bias in your workplace, and making change. Share this resource with colleagues and friends.

Networking is something all successful museum leaders do. It is as important in day-to-day work as it is in a job search. If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a group of friends and colleagues to navigate the 21st-century museum world. Whether you're looking for a new job, writing an article, or speaking at a national meeting, make sure you're in command of these five things.

- 1. It isn't sleazy.** Networking isn't dating. Sure it sometimes involves drinks and light-hearted conversation, but you are not looking for a life-long mate, and you're also not trying to con someone. Networking is about meeting other people, sharing knowledge, and potentially making connections that benefit *both* parties.
- 2. It is more than just job hunting.** Networking is an opportunity to expand your support system, the group of people you can rely on when you find yourself in need. Yes, that can be employment, but it can also be a recommendation for new donor software or a shoulder to lean on when you're having a tough day at work. Remember that you have (or will have) many problems over the course of your career that your future network is going to help you solve.
- 3. You have to give, too.** One of the best parts of networking is being able to help others solve their problems. Doesn't it feel good when you connect your old graphic design intern with a non-profit that needs help with a new project? Going into an event with this mindset will help you feel confident and results-oriented.
- 4. It works best when you set out to learn something new.** Always have a question at the ready when you meet someone new. Not only does being curious put others at ease, they will no doubt love to offer their opinion on the best place to get brochures printed for cheap or who to work with in city hall. And the next time you run into them, you'll be able to let them know you took them up on their sage piece of advice.
- 5. You're already doing it.** Not all networking takes place in a hotel conference room with wilted vegetables and plastic nametags. Whether you are talking with colleagues online (Twitter, listserv, etc.) or meeting new people at your neighbor's annual summer BBQ, you're networking. Keep it up!