Top 10 Tips to Networking

1. **Plan your networking:** Plan your networking before you start out, think about the different tools that you are going to use (will it be face-to-face, over the telephone, or will you use social media?) and think about what you wish to gain from each encounter. It is a good idea to plan how you are going to follow up each networking session.

2. **Target relevant people:** Try and target groups that are relevant to you, for example get in touch with people that can help you make that next move in your career, can help you get in touch with someone who will give you information about a career change, or can help you get into a different role completely.

3. **Elevator speech:** Try and think about who you are, what you do and the skills that you have. How would you sell yourself to someone in one minute? Plan a concise and engaging 'elevator speech' to sell yourself to others.

4. **Stand out from the crowd:** Lots of people are looking for jobs, so think about the things that are unique to you. What have you done that is interesting? Do you volunteer? What skills do you have? Have you got any hobbies that stand out?

5. **Be positive:** Whether you are networking face to face or online, try and talk about yourself positively, and with confidence. It helps to use bold statements and positive language. If you are meeting someone, smile and put your shoulders back.

6. **Be passionate not personal:** When engaging with others for professional networking, be engaging and passionate, and if possible objective about topics. Try and avoid being personal, emotional or subjective.

7. **Take care with texts:** We often send emails, instant messages and text messages without too much thought. It is assumed that the other person on the end of the line will understand our tone. Take a little extra time to check how they might be interpreted by others.

8. **Follow up:** If you have made connections with people, it is best practice to follow up on these. Networking is only useful if you maintain the connections, and carry on developing them.

9. **Make a record:** If you are connecting with a lot of people, it can be hard to remember who you have been in touch with. It might be useful to keep a record of the interactions you you have made, including details of who they are, a brief outline of what was said, and any contact details for them.

10. **Seek feedback:** It is hard sometimes to hear feedback about yourself, but it is the most valuable tool that you have, and it is completely free. We are not always sure of how we appear to others, and so a little constructive criticism can help us to develop to make networking more effective next time around.