



## PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

What is professional networking? Andrew Hennigan, author of 'Payforward Networking, says *'Networking is a deliberate activity to build, reinforce and maintain relationships of trust with other people to further your goals. Professional networking is simply networking focused on professional goals.'*

Social networking and professional networking overlap in many ways, however, we aim to provide space for both. Professional networking has more of a 'work' flavour to it and the aim is to make new connections, share ideas, collaborate, work together, make referrals, meet new contacts and make space for potential new opportunities. Some of the aims and benefits of professional networking include:

- *Increasing the number of people you know and who know you. In essence, increasing your contact and connection list.*
- *Opportunity to turn to more people for help and advice.*
- *Networking keeps you in touch with opportunities.*
- *Networking may be very useful at the start of your career when you are less well connected.*
- *Effective networkers are more likely to be offered opportunities.*
- *Networking allows you to contribute something to others – the principle of reciprocity.*
- *Build and maintain professional or business relationships over time.*
- *Achieve goals related to business or professional development.*

We aim to provide relaxed, informal and fun professional networking events: we don't want to live up to the stiff-collar, awkward networking events we have attended in the past – they're not that helpful, right? We know that when people feel more relaxed, they are more likely to feel comfortable chatting and connecting with others, which is what networking is all about.

Professional networking events start with a short presentation/talk, followed by a networking task, time for 'free-form networking' and sometimes a

second talk. Refreshments are provided and we encourage you to bring your business cards, leaflets and anything else you wish to share with others.