

# Network like a Pro at Work



**THE SKILL OF** establishing and maintaining good network is critical for career growth. Building a good network not only helps reap benefits in your current organisation, but often comes in handy even after you switch jobs. Sreeradha D Basu gets the experts to tell you how to network like a pro

## 1 Be Proactive

"Be the one to make the first move instead of waiting for others to approach you," advises Prashant Deo Singh, Head- HR & General Affairs, Panasonic India. Many feel a bit hesitant, even scared, to go out and network, and the first few attempts in particular, may even be awkward. But if you hang in there and persevere, it will soon come easily to you.

## 2 Reach Out Far & Wide

Instead of confining yourself only to people in your department, or at a certain level, try and reach out to as many people as possible. Says Ronesh Puri, MD of head hunting firm Executive Access: "Try and gain acceptability at different levels. That way, your influence will increase."

## 3 Think Long Term

Networking isn't a numbers game; it's more about the quality and depth of the relationships. "That means going the extra mile for the people around you. Don't think about how you stand to gain in the immediate short term. It's more about the long-term perspective," feels Executive Access' Puri.

## 4 Get to Know Them Well

The best way to build a good rapport with others is to be genuinely interested in them. Learning to communicate with different people from different backgrounds is an important networking skill, and one that will hold you in good stead in your career. "You need to get to know the other person beyond work; find out about his/her family, personal interests and more," feels Deo Singh.

## 5 Be Genuine

Go the extra mile to interact with and help others at work but be genuine. "If you are the kind who agrees with someone today but turns around and does the exact opposite tomorrow just because it serves your interest, no one will respect you or take you seriously," cautions Ronesh Puri. "Be consistent in what you stand for. Try and create a positive impact and make a difference to people's lives at work," he says.