

Strategic networking planner

As a leader, your value and insight can grow through the quality of your external relationships.

Networking at this level isn't about collecting contacts, it's about cultivating meaningful, mutually valuable relationships that extend your reach and relevance.

This activity helps you build a strategic networking portfolio. A focused list of connections that expand your thinking, strengthen your professional brand, and create opportunities for collaboration, innovation and impact.



STEP 1 | DEFINE YOUR NETWORKING PURPOSE

Instructions: Before connecting others, clarify what you want to achieve. Reflect on the following questions below:

- What are my current leadership or career goals that external connections could accelerate?
- Which industries, organisations, or communities align with my growth priorities?
- What conversations do I need to be part of to stay informed, future-focused and influential?
- What perspectives or voices are missing from my current network?
- How will I add value to others through my experience, insight or connections?

MY NETWORKING PURPOSE

STEP 2 | CURATE YOUR NETWORKING PORTFOLIO

Instructions: Think about the mix of people who can broaden your perspective or open strategic opportunities. Capture details for each key contact.

NAME & POSITION	ORGANISATION OR AFFILIATION	WHY THIS CONNECTION MATTERS	RELATIONSHIP STATUS	NEXT STEP OR ACTION	FOLLOW UP OR VALUE ADD
			<div><input type="checkbox"/> Haven't met</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Connected</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Established</div>		
			<div><input type="checkbox"/> Haven't met</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Connected</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Established</div>		
			<div><input type="checkbox"/> Haven't met</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Connected</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Established</div>		
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CONVERSATION FOCUS

When you meet or connect, aim for insight and reciprocity rather than small talk. Here are some general prompts to get your thinking started:

- “What changes in the market are influencing your priorities right now?”
- “How do you create alignment when senior perspectives differ?”
- “What are key insights have found through your own network?”
- “Do you think there are any ongoing trends right now that others might be underestimating?”
- Create an opener linked to the reason you are building your network

STEP 3 | REFLECT AND STRENGTHEN

After each interaction, capture insights and next actions. Reflect on the following questions below, and record your key insights from each connection.

- 1 What did I learn that shifts or reinforces my perspective?
- 2 How might I add value back to my connections? E.g. through introductions, ideas or visibility?
- 3 Does this relationship align with my long-term direction or brand?
- 4 What’s the right way and frequency to stay connected?

NAME OR CONTACT	KEY INSIGHTS

STEP 4 | ASSESS YOUR NETWORK BALANCE

In the table below, you'll see key categories of people valuable for you to be connected with. For each one, select the option that best reflects your current network: choose **Strong** if your connections and relationships for that category are sufficient, **Build** if you have some but may need to expand or strengthen, or **Gap** if you currently have none.

CATEGORY	EXAMPLES	STRONG	BUILD	GAP
Peer leaders	Senior HR / L&D / OD leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industry influencers	Thought leaders, speakers, researchers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cross-sector innovators	Tech, startups, NFP, public sector	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mentors / Sponsors	Executive advocates, board directors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future collaborators	Consultants, vendors, clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

STEP 5 | VISIBILITY AND MOMENTUM

Strong networks thrive on visibility and consistency. Consider these elements as you continue strategically networking:

- 1 Which industry events or forums should I attend or speak at?

- 2 What communities or publications align with my expertise?

- 3 How can I regularly share insights that position me as a valued voice in my field?

By the end of this task, you'll have a clear, purposeful view of the relationships that matter most and a plan to build them with intention.