



The best tools to build your network (and your portfolio)

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Use these real estate and construction principles to build your network, and you'll achieve superior ROI on your portfolio and your relationships.

1. Build a strong foundation. This applies equally to buildings and relationships. It is crucial to develop mutual trust and respect, to create a solid foundation for long-term business opportunities.
2. Set a realistic schedule. You can't install a roof the same day you break ground, and you can't close a sale the first moment you meet someone. Building new business takes time. Create networking plans, and development plans, that reflect realistic timelines.
3. Work with a dedicated team. Build relationships with loyal advisors, mentors, alliance partners and referral sources. Connect with skilled professionals who share your values and goals, and they will help you build your business.
4. Provide extra amenities. Offer something of value to others, like an introduction, invitation, referral, advice, or assistance with a problem. This will actively demonstrate your added value, instead of just describing it.
5. Maintain high occupancy. Prevent vacancies in your buildings and in your networking schedule. Network regularly to meet new people and re-connect with existing contacts. Avoid excessive turnover by staying engaged, to learn people's needs and respond effectively.
6. Highlight best features. Keep doors open and windows clean, to create visibility and attract prospects. Articulate your services clearly in person, on paper and online. Highlight your unique expertise and distinguish yourself from competitors.
7. Prepare for the walk-through. Make a great first impression, in appearance and attitude. Be warm, inviting and personable. If you seem unpolished, unapproachable or unresponsive, prospects and tenants will walk away.

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