



Let's talk about the relationship: Networking and Valentine's Day

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Like dating and love (and friendship too), networking is about developing meaningful relationships. To honor Valentine's Day, we highlight the rules of romance to apply to your networking efforts and business relationships.

Kiss a few frogs. According to the fairy tales, you have to kiss a lot of frogs before you find your handsome prince. Likewise, you need to connect with a lot of people to find your best clients. Pucker up.

(Don't) play hard to get. To network effectively you need to be accessible and available, and let everyone know you are eager to connect. Be a player, and make the first move. Call your contacts and schedule many business dates.

You can't hurry love - or business. Don't attend a networking event expecting to land a new client immediately. (You wouldn't expect to land a marriage proposal during a blind date!) You won't truly know if you have a deal, or a future together, during a five-minute chat. If there is any connection or chemistry, then meet again to learn more about what you can offer each another.

Be a matchmaking millionaire. Smart business people - and cheesy reality shows - know the value of matchmaking. Make strategic introductions for others, often. You will be respected, admired, and invited to a lot more parties.

Live happily ever after. In business, as in love, all parties must work at keeping the relationship alive and productive over the long term. Communicate often, support each other's goals, and spend quality time together regularly. And always share your chocolate. The end.

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