

Guide to Confident and Accessible Networking at Building the Future

BUILDING
THE FUTURE

ahead



Networking can sound intimidating but at its core, **networking is about connecting with others**, by getting to know what they do, sharing a bit about yourself and getting curious about their experience or organisation. You never know where the conversation might lead!

At events like Building the Future, it's completely normal if that feels a bit overwhelming, especially if there's a lot going on around you or you're not sure where to start. That's why preparation is key.

Preparing for the event

A bit of preparation can make a real difference in reducing uncertainty and helping you to feel more confident before you approach employers.

Before you start speaking with employers, it might help to think about what you'd like to get out of the day.

Set some small, realistic goals like speaking with three employers or getting contact details from one.

You might like to **draft a short introduction** or elevator pitch. [Click here for a video on crafting your elevator pitch for career fairs](#). You can keep this very simple with some of the following in mind:

- Introducing who you are
- Briefly describe your background or experience
- Share what you're interested in or hoping to learn
- Ask a question

Think about **what supports might help** to make you feel more comfortable during the event. Not every environment will meet your needs fully, but you can shape your experience to work better for you by:

- Requesting accommodations
- Bringing supports like headphones, sunglasses, notes or cue cards
- Taking short breaks and deciding how long you want to stay
- Giving yourself time to recharge afterwards



Reframing nerves into curiosity

If you notice yourself feeling nervous, you're not alone! Most people feel that way, even if it doesn't look like it. Sometimes it can help to **shift the focus away from 'saying the right thing' and instead get a bit curious**. You might like to think about the following before you go into the conversation:

- What could I learn from this person?
- What might be interesting about their role or organisation?
- What's one thing I'm genuinely curious to know more about here?

Questions to ask/that you may be asked

Having a few questions in mind can take the pressure off and help to ease yourself into conversation. **You might like to ask some of the following questions:**

- What type of experience or background are you looking for?
- What do you enjoy most about working here?
- What does progression or development look like?
- How do accommodations typically work?
- What does inclusive culture look like in your team?

You don't need to ask them all. Just follow what you're genuinely curious about.

It's important to remember that **employers may also ask you some questions** to get to know you a little. Some examples might include:

- Could you tell me a bit about yourself? (Remember your elevator pitch!)
- What are you interested in or hoping to do next?
- What skills, experience or perspectives do you feel you bring?

You don't need to have perfect answers for these questions, focus on being honest and keeping it simple.



Tips for the day

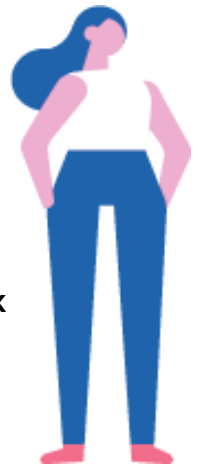
As you move through the day, **be kind to yourself!** You don't need to speak to everyone and do everything perfectly.

The event is about learning, connecting and getting more comfortable in these types of spaces. **Showing up and taking part is already a big step.**

Listen to your body and **take breaks where needed.**

If you have a good conversation and it feels appropriate, you can always **ask for contact details** to follow up after the event.

Remember your value and what you bring!



After the fair

Networking doesn't stop when the fair ends. If you feel it's appropriate, you can:

- Send a short thank-you or follow-up message
- Connect on LinkedIn and personalise your message
- Stay in touch occasionally, without pressure

Think of networking as an ongoing process where you're building a professional community over time.

And lastly, have fun! This is your chance to explore, be curious and have some interesting conversations with inclusive employers. Go at your own pace, take the pressure off yourself and remember that even one small chat can make the whole day worthwhile.