

You are going to read an extract from a book on networking and public speaking skills. Six paragraphs have been removed from the extract. Choose from the paragraphs A-G the one which fits each gap (1-6). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use.

TALKING TO PLANTS AND APPROACHING GROUPS

In this book extract from "...and death came third!" Andy Lopata and Peter Roper show nervous business people how to network with panache.

At networking events, I will often look to start a conversation with people who are on their own. It is much easier than breaking into a group conversation and the chances are they won't tell you to leave them alone and go away. Very few people go to networking events for solitude.

1

When approaching these people you are already at an advantage because they will both respect your courage (which they have probably lacked) and be grateful that you've taken the time and effort to relieve them from their anxiety. They are probably just as nervous as everyone else, and they'll be delighted to get into a conversation with you. You've rescued them from walking around, avoiding interrupting other people for fear of rejection.

2

Having spoken to them, try not to leave them on their own again because you'll just return them to the same state as you found them. Move on with them and introduce them to someone else.

3

If someone is talking and you interrupt, or ask if you can join them, people will stop listening to the person who's talking, and invite you into their group. That's great for you but not so nice for the person who is talking. Stand just on the edge of the group and wait for the appropriate time.

4

Alternatively, it may be that they're talking about something in which you have an interest, in which case, when there's an appropriate pause, you can just say, "Excuse me, I heard you mention so-and-so. Can I ask you a question? Are you involved in that? And you're in the conversation. Or it may just be that you have a pause, and you ask "May I join you?" But it's always best to wait for the right pause in the conversation.

5

While the guide lines above are important, you need to be aware of the body language of people talking to each other and networking events. Whether in couples or groups, people will always send very clear signals about approachability by the way they are standing.

6

Reading this body language may mean that you are better advised approaching two people rather than a group.

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