

## Virtual Networking Imposter Top Tips

1. Know your Networking Why - just like physical events, you need to prepare your why, what, when, where who & how. Undertake a priorities exercise – what do you enjoy, what people need/want, what earns you a living.
2. Research and Prepare – check out the format, size, visibility, activities; try before you buy, mystery shop, attend with someone else. Most events follow a similar pattern: arrival/login/small chat, event content, discussion/deeper chat, round up, follow up
3. Get organised – file joining info, warm up your voice, streamline what tech you use & how, practice with friends & family, arrive in time, prepare your screen/mic/camera, open the chat/participants, mute, plan what you say (keep text notes handy)
4. Social Profile Consistency – use settings as anchor points to improve your digital footprint eg. same picture, id yourself, help yourself to be “Known” and remembered (ref. KLT Factor, Know, Like, Trust)
5. Respect the laws of networking – don’t sell, respect the ideal numbers, pause, listen, raise hand, add chat at the right moment, and follow up with 121s and virtual coffees. KIT (Keeping In Touch) counts for everything in relationship building.
6. Human equality – networking just like humanity is a level playing field (people not titles), make business friends, ice-break, we’re all there to network. Be the best version of yourself. Remember that no one can see sweaty hands or brows. Separate feelings from fact.
7. Reset expectations of self and others. People may not be buying right now. Networking is now support, connection, learning. Less can be more. Select contacts to connect, chat or have virtual coffee with. A full room score is not networking good-practice
8. Survey & assess the (virtual) room - Have a response plan – distance self from negative thoughts or people, step away from the noise and be wary of what physical or social media groups you hang out in and any overwhelm they may place on you.
9. Tribes/Networks/Clubs/Buddies - Know your onions – ie tribe – and have several for different reasons in business & in life. Talk to people, ask for help. Get a networking buddy or a leader who cares.
10. Be accessible and consistently visible – connect before, after and between events. It will give you personal belonging and human connection. Virtual cuppas create bonds.
11. Balance stepping outside comfort zone with finding comfortable events/groups. Put on your big girl/boy pants. Now is a great time to make mistakes because everyone is. Reframe how you feel and embrace failure as learning
12. Visualise (networking) confidence – where were you, what happened, how did you feel.
13. Balance modesty and humility with praise for yourself. Internalise your achievements: use Weekly Wins, journaling, gratitude diaries, personal SWOT, asking for 360 feedback
14. Self-Belief - ignore the networking chimp, the neg ferrets, the views of judgement and remember you are not competing with anyone. Don’t sweat the small stuff, recognise your feelings and nerves, break negative self-talk. Then: Just do it. Try it. Like it. Benefit from it.

Related Blog:

How to tackle Virtual Networking Imposter Syndrome

<https://www.colonymarketing.co.uk/business-news/how-to-tackle-virtual-networking-imposter-syndrome/>



## **About Kirsty James**

Kirsty James is the Owner of Colony Networking, Founder and Manager of Lymm Business Centre, Curator of TEDx Warrington and Co-host of both LinkedInLocal Manchester and Warrington.

Kirsty is a champion of small business and uses the power of networking to enable personal and business growth.

She describes her area of genius as being a connections broker. Spotting a gap in their business or personal life and filling it with a solution, service, product or person. She generates ideas and brokers connections to solve problems.

Via numerous event vehicles, she provides the logistics to connect, but much deeper than this she works with business owners (individually and in small groups) to refine their genius, to focus on the messages they share in their on and offline networking, and to understand when they need to turn to the genius of others to solve their problems.

She refers to her events and style of consultancy as being appropriate for those who want to find comfort and confidence and who enjoy networking with humanity and humility.

Kirsty has a strong sense of social responsibility and would refer to herself as a community as well as business networker. Her enduring personal goal is to ensure that community and business are blended into every project she undertakes.

Kirsty prides herself on being an enabler and a connector of people and problem solver by introducing people to the right contacts to solve their personal or business challenges.

Kirsty offer networking events, skills training and consultancy including business development, marketing, lead generation and referral services. She also set up and manages Lymm Business Centre, a support hub for new and young businesses offering affordable office space, room hire, events and support services. In 2019, she acquired the licence to run TEDx Warrington and she frequently co-hosts and collaborates with other networking groups and event concepts inclusive of LinkedInLocal.

## **Social Media and Website**

<a href="https://www.colonynetworking.co.uk">https://www.colonynetworking.co.uk</a>
<a href="https://www.facebook.com/colonynetworking">https://www.facebook.com/colonynetworking</a>
<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/in/kirstyjames">https://www.linkedin.com/in/kirstyjames</a>
<a href="https://twitter.com/colonynetwork">https://twitter.com/colonynetwork</a>

## **Offers**

Please email [kirsty@colonynetworking.co.uk](mailto:kirsty@colonynetworking.co.uk) to:

- obtain a copy of Kirsty's top 10 networking tips and exercises;
- obtain a code to try a Colony networking event;
- Request a free initial phone or video consult;
- obtain information about networking workshops or 1-2-1 support; and
- receive networking update newsletter and blogs.



## **Current Projects and Passions**

Kirsty James manages several growing ventures in Warrington. Her main business, Colony Networking, offers business development events and support, networking strategy and skills consultancy, training workshops and lead generation services.

She also runs and supports other several networking and business and community support projects including TEDx Warrington, LinkedInLocal Warrington and Manchester, Think Family Matters, Lymm Business Centre, Lymm Directory, and SoupOnTheGo Crowdfunding Events.

Kirsty has helped hundreds of businesses, on a 1-2-1 basis and via her events which currently run in Lymm, Warrington, Newton-le-Willows, St. Helens, Chester, Liverpool, Alderley Edge and South Manchester.

She solves problems by providing ideas and valuable connections. She champions small business growth and generates awareness of ventures that support the local economy. Kirsty is generous with her time, collaborative and innovative.

Kirsty is passionate about motivating and inspiring small business owners to be bigger and better versions of themselves through knowledge, confidence and connections. Kirsty offers professional, supportive events that are friendly, informal and conducive to growth with access to resources, blogs and presentations. It is commonly joked that if Kirsty doesn't have the direct answer, she will know someone who does.

The time-saving and supportive access to solutions and contacts is how Kirsty adds most value. She gets great feedback, is accessible and respectful but above all is responsive to changing requirements in the business networking arena.

Kirsty is a dynamo of energy but has modesty. She refers to her events and style of consultancy as being appropriate for those who enjoy "comfortable" networking with humanity and humility. She epitomises what a growing small business can achieve and has an exciting vision for Colony and further business ventures and how they may benefit the local economy.

Kirsty grew up and still lives in South Warrington and has a strong sense of social responsibility. 2020 will mark Kirsty's 13th year in business.

Her business strapline 'success in numbers' summarises perfectly her business values and the collaborative methodology she's employed to grow Colony from a free drop-in coffee morning on the side of her day-job to a commercial entity comprising several brands and numerous event formats.

Her ventures enrich the framework of business support in/near Warrington and include:

- Colony Networking: mixed networking and workshops in Warrington, Lymm, Newton, Chester, Liverpool, Alderley Edge. Comprises the sub brands Colony Women, Club90 and Colony Wellbeing, Colony Virtual.
- TEDx Warrington.
- Think Family Matters, a social enterprise offering community networking and parental education events focused on wellbeing.
- LinkedInLocal Warrington and Manchester.



- Lymm Business Centre.
- Lymm Directory.
- SoupOnTheGo Crowdfunding Events for social enterprise/grassroots projects.

Kirsty also supports Warrington & Co Business Exchange as the Start-Up sector lead; Lymm Business Traders Association; Lymm Neighbourhood Planning Group; the Lymm Directory development, and Lymm Business Centre via The Sanctuary Hub CIC.

Her businesses have also supported local charities, including STEPS, Foundation4Peace, Warrington Disability Partnership, Brainwave, St Rocco's, Creating Adventures and 1Voice.

Colony's strapline is 'Success in Numbers' which transcends business and community ventures by employing a 'pay-it-forward' mentality and a style of collaboration and community-focus that differentiates it. Colony has never deviated from its founding commitment to focus on the end user's needs and offer support and connections. Colony will continue to work with business support bodies, authorities, and communities to make a positive contribution to the Warrington economy.