

# Networking Top Tips

## Why network?

Networking, as the names suggests, is about building your network. It's about finding people and businesses that can help you raise awareness of your business and build partnerships. Networking comes naturally for some entrepreneurs, while others find it more difficult.

### KEY POINTS

Many people can help you with your Big Idea. Start by deciding who you want/need to network with. Ask yourself who could help you with your idea.

Spend 10 minutes brainstorming who could help you.

Teachers - Be specific – geography/ science/ business studies/ design and technology/ maths, etc.

Family - Do you have a family member who runs a business or could help you to design your product/service? Do they have friends/ colleagues/ neighbours who can help?

Friends - Which of your friends are influencers? You may need them to spread the word about your idea to schoolmates and friends.

Older students – Does your school have a business studies course, for example? If so, an older student may be able to help you with your business plan. Or you could approach previous Big Ideas teams for their advice/guidance.

Your business mentor – remember your mentor is already in the world of business and may have some useful contacts.

Other experts/companies/universities, etc. – remember there are many people out there who you don't know personally that may be able to help you.

### ACTION PLAN:

**Which team member will contact whom & when?  
What will you ask them?**

Teacher  
Friends  
Family  
Older students  
Mentor  
Other  
Other

### Networking on Social Media

Networking used to involve talking to people, face-to-face, at trade shows and other events. However with the arrival of social media a lot of networking is now done online.

The video linked below explores social media, networking, and other tips for young entrepreneurs.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=09MF8UMDtow>

Check which social media platforms your competitors are most active on and see what other activity exists that's relevant to your business. Consider pages and people outside of your school that could be helpful, such as: scientists, lecturers, businesses, etc. When developing your networking plans, think beyond the people you'd typically meet.

Research - identify pages and people on social media that might help you and support your idea?

Create - Build a profile on the most appropriate social media platform for your Big Idea. Check out [Challenge 5 - Social Media Campaign](#) for more information.

Write - with the help of a teacher, mentor or guardian, message or email someone you have identified from your research to introduce your Big Idea and ask any important questions you have that you think they could answer.

You can also learn more about how to use social media in this blog:

<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/>