

# SEVEN POWER TIPS FOR GREAT NETWORKING

Author: Talia Salem [April 2009](#)

## **Get more out of your next event than a glass of wine and cheese cubes.**

Former Clinton White House Director of Events Laura Schwartz has planned some incredible events, from high-profile ceremonies to black-tie dinners—just about anything that has happened on the “18 acres.” This Chicago-based public speaker and effervescent TV personality was the Clinton Administration’s director of television (and the Midwest press secretary before that) prior to planning at the White House and despite the change in fields, she finds the roles to be similar. “Events [like communications] deliver messages, visually with the event and the design aspect, and verbally with hosting.” Each event says something to the guests, and each event is a golden opportunity to communicate and network with those in attendance. As Schwartz says, “We don’t host events, we host guests—they are always the most important part of the event.”

In fact, Schwartz is writing a book on the subject entitled *The Networking Power of Social Events*, slated to hit the shelves in early August. Her debut book explores the power of the social scene, the guest and the host. After all (according to Schwartz) many of the White House events she planned were simply “black-tie meetings” facilitating interactions with guests of similar or differing interests with the possibility of making a great contact or meeting someone that can make a difference.

While a meeting room may be abuzz with animated conversation and the clanking of glasses, Schwartz notes that appearances can be deceiving. “As social as any event may appear, it is business. As a guest, you can get more out of an event than just free food and drink.” Seize the day, she says. That new sponsor, job or event to plan may be at the table next to you laughing at a funny story. Who knows, that tale could be yours, and so could a fabulous new connection. Schwartz encourages everyone to get the most out of each event, and divulges her “lucky seven” tips on marketing you and your company:

**Power of opportunity:** When opportunity knocks, answer the door—now.

**Power of goals:** Make a goal for yourself and work to achieve it.

**Power of preparation:** Prepare yourself for every situation, and don’t be afraid to ask questions so you can learn.

**Power of introduction:** How do you introduce yourself? Rehearse your signature line and be prepared to say it when the moment comes.

**Power of conversation:** You won’t need to know everything, but to try stay up to date so you can take part in a wide variety of conversations. While she reads roughly five hours a day, Schwartz recommends at least scanning news headlines daily or using aggregated new

services like NBC's the [First Read](#).

**Power of business cards:** Don't let that opportunity pass you up; have your business cards ready to hand out.

**Power of follow-up and follow-through:** Make sure you are remembered, and send an engaging follow-up after your initial encounter.

*Laura Schwartz runs White House Strategies and travels extensively both domestically and internationally for speaking engagements. For more information visit her [website](#), e-mail [ashley@whitehousestrategies.com](mailto:ashley@whitehousestrategies.com) or follow her on [Twitter](#) @lauraschwartz.*