

The Value of Networking

MSBO Annual Conference 2026

Katrina Morris West Shore ESD

Don A. Ball Warren Woods Public Schools

Description

- This Session is the Value of Networking.
This presentation is to:
Learn the value of networking and how to connect with your colleagues and create your network

Katrina Morris

Executive Director for Michigan Association for Pupil Transportation
(MAPT)

Transportation Consultant for the West Shore Educational Service
District

Don A. Ball

- Certified Operations Director
- College Professor
- Facilities and Transportation Director Warren Woods Public Schools

What is Networking?

The process of building mutually beneficial relationships to exchange information, resources, and career opportunities, or the technical connection of computing devices to share data. It boosts career growth, provides insider industry knowledge, and expands professional circles, with common types including professional, social, and online networking.

What Are the Different Types of Networking

- **Professional Networking:** Focuses on connecting within a specific industry to share knowledge, stay updated on trends, and explore career opportunities.
- **Social Networking:** Involves building personal relationships in casual settings (or online) that may eventually lead to career opportunities.
- **Business Networking:** Targeted toward building connections to benefit a business, such as finding clients, partners, or investors.
- **Online/Digital Networking:** Using platforms like LinkedIn, social media, and virtual events to connect and maintain relationships.

How Does Networking Work?

- **Personal Connections:** Utilizing existing contacts (friends, family, alumni) to gain introductions to new people.
- **Event Participation:** Attending conferences, industry seminars, and social gatherings to meet new people in person.
- **Follow-Up:** Consistently engaging with contacts through emails, phone calls, or in-person meetings to maintain the relationship over time.
- **Reciprocity:** Offering value and support to others, rather than just asking for help, to build long-term trust.

Common Networking Tools & Events

- **Platforms:** LinkedIn, X (Twitter), specialized online forums, and industry-specific websites.
- **Events:** Professional conferences, webinars, career fairs, and local Chamber of Commerce meetings.
- **Strategies:** Informational interviews, sending personalized follow-up messages, and utilizing the "three-minute-a-day rule" for staying in touch.

What are the Benefits of Networking?

- **Job Opportunities:** Access to unadvertised jobs, referrals, and inside information, with networking being a top source for hiring.
- **Brand Awareness:** Increasing the visibility of your personal or business brand within your field.
- **Professional Development:** Gaining new perspectives, learning from others' experiences, and staying updated on industry trends.
- **Knowledge Transfer:** Accessing a wider range of expertise to solve problems and grow your career or business.

Michigan School Business Officials

Michigan Association Pupil Transportation

- MSBO Exchange
- Local Transportation Groups
 - Macomb/St. Clair Transportation Directors
- Attend conferences for MSBO & MAPT
 - Regional Meetings