

“I Missed the Conference; Now What?” How to Salvage Missing a Networking Opportunity

By [LawVision](#) on March 9, 2018

Okay, you planned to go to an industry conference to do some much-needed networking. You had high hopes of meeting new people, securing some leads for exciting work, and establishing yourself as a thought leader in the industry.

Unfortunately, though, you were side-swiped by a big transaction that just wouldn't close in time or a crucial last-minute response needed to the opposing counsel's motion. Whatever it was, it took precedence over the conference, and you missed out on valuable networking opportunities, forfeited your registration fees, and were only refunded a portion of the expense of your canceled flight.

Now, what can you do to moderate the loss, salvage the cost, and make some new contacts, despite missing the event? Here are some ideas:

1. Once you know you are definitely going to miss the conference, find someone from your firm who you trust to go in your place. Arm this person with lists of people you had hoped to meet and contact him/her periodically during the conference to check on progress.
2. Contact all the people you planned to connect with at the conference, tell them what happened, and see if you can meet them for lunch or have a phone meeting to discuss what you missed. Chances are, you'll be able to turn that conversation into an advantageous discussion about their specific needs.
3. Go through the agenda on the event website and identify speakers who may be good contacts for you. Write them an email and explain what happened and how disappointed you are that you missed their presentations. Make that initial contact a starting point for more meaningful conversation and, perhaps, a new friendship.
4. Find out from attendees you know which sessions at the conference were the most popular and try to create a similar presentation or panel on a related topic for next year's event.
5. Ask those who did attend who they connected with and, from there, identify a person who would be a good association for you and ask for an introduction.
6. Locate a prospect or client who also missed the event and offer to introduce him/her to someone who attended and can give them a briefing on the highlights.
7. Once your fires are put out at the office, use some of the time you would have spent at the conference reviewing your pipeline and trying to connect with prospects in person.
8. Finally, don't worry about it too much. There will be other conferences and events, so find another and prepare for that one!