



**A GUIDE TO NETWORKING:**

# HOW TO WIN ADVOCATES FOR YOUR SME

**BIBAN: FOSTERING TANGIBLE  
OPPORTUNITIES**

**Inside:**

- › How Biban 23 opens doors for SMEs
- › Strategies for successful networking
- › The Biban 23 app

## BIBAN 23:

# THE PLACE TO BE FOR NETWORKING

Monsha'at, the authority responsible for supporting, developing, and nurturing the SME sector in Saudi Arabia, is proud to organize the Biban Forum in Riyadh. Biban 23 brings together thousands of startups, investors, policymakers, and entrepreneurs from around the world. Exciting speakers, informative workshops, funding platforms, and networking opportunities are some of the attractions on offer to this year's attendees.

### Biban 23 in figures



**105,000**

visitors



**750+**

local and  
international  
startups



**350+**

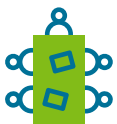
global speakers



**120+**

government and  
private enabling  
entities

### Opportunities for attendees



**300+**

workshops



**20,000+**

training and development  
opportunities



**4,000+**

consultation sessions



**650+**

opportunities to pitch  
your business ideas



**50+**

franchise brands

# NETWORKING MADE SIMPLE

Communication and connection are key parts of the entrepreneur’s journey to success.

Networking is, in the first place, the ability to see which foundations, ideas, and trends are governing the marketplace you’re stepping into – and then knowing who you want to meet and at which intersection you should join.

That is one of Biban 23’s main objectives: To create opportunities for existing players in the marketplace to strengthen their connections, and for newcomer entrepreneurs to find and position themselves among their industry peers.

## The importance of networking

Through networking, you can find valuable resources, support, and opportunities to further your personal growth and the growth of your businesses:



New connections create space for information exchange on how resources can be attained or shared



The entrepreneurial journey isn’t always easy, and networking is a great way to find others who are climbing the hill toward success



Networking can support you with a problem you’ve been facing, especially if another entrepreneur is using their talents to do something that would complement your own services

## Biban 23’s 9 key doors for entrepreneurs

The Biban 23 doors will help SMEs network, upskill, and find financing. With special programming focused on each door, entrepreneurs can refine their business strategies.



**Start Door:**  
Business Start Journey



**Innovation Door:**  
Creativity and Development



**Franchise Door:**  
Brand Expansion



**E-commerce Door:**  
Digital Business Technology



**Enablement Door:**  
Supporting & Enabling



**Market Door:**  
Services and Products



**Growth Door:**  
Business Development and Prosperity



**Start up Door:**  
Promising Entrepreneurial Projects



**Funding Door:**  
Funding Solutions

# THE "5 W'S" OF NETWORKING

The good news is that effective networking doesn't have to be complicated. By using the '5 Ws' - **What, Why, Where, When, Who** - you can approach networking in a purposeful and strategic way, and get the results you're looking for. Whether you're a seasoned networker or just getting started, this simple framework can help you build meaningful connections at Biban 23 and beyond. Remember, there are over 100,000 attendees at Biban 23, and you could meet many remarkable people.

So go ahead and ask yourself these questions to help you set your networking ambitions:



## Why are you interested?

- › Why are you attending Biban 23?
- › What are the reasons for your interest in this event?
- › Do you hope to meet people you know, strengthen connections, or make new ones?
- › Is there someone who you hope to meet?



## What is your goal?

- › What do you want to accomplish by the end of Biban 23?
- › Where would you like to be in your entrepreneurial journey after Biban 23 compared to where you were before it?



## When to approach?

- › At Biban 23, be sure to plan when you will be able to approach, interact with, and properly explore new ideas with your network. Be sure to find time at the event and not miss out on the opportunity to discuss topics of shared interest



## Who to network with?

- › Have you identified the people at the event who can help you further your entrepreneurial journey?
- › Are there any other people to meet that may be interesting?
- › Have you prepared a short pitch about yourself and your company?



## Where can you find it?

- › Biban 23's 9 doors can help you locate the right people to network with, whether it's through the funding door, market door, innovation door, or any of the other six doors to learn more about SME programs and incentives



# HOW TO CRAFT AN ELEVATOR PITCH

As you encounter new people each day at Biban 23, mastering the art of introducing yourself and making a lasting impression are the bedrock for creating meaningful future connections.

To prepare an elevator pitch, all you must do is answer three short questions in thirty seconds.



## Who am I?

Mention one interesting fact about yourself that will draw people in and make them want to learn more about you.

- › **I'm Maha,** I studied English and engineering and worked for two years on identifying technological solutions to lower electricity costs.
- › **I'm Ahmed,** I studied marketing and Arabic literature and spent three years designing new online curriculums in modern Arabic literature.
- › **I'm Sara,** I studied biochemistry and helped launch the first vegan burger in my hometown.



## What do I do?

Not all of us have the most exciting company or project—yet. Talk about what kind of long-term achievement you hope to make.

- › **I'm Maha,** and I'm changing the way cities help their residents install solar panels on their own.
- › **I'm Ahmed,** and I'm creating new ways to lower online education costs for students of every age and background.
- › **I'm Sara,** and I'm helping bring cheap, delicious, and healthy food to everyone's front door.



## What's my ask?

Remember, you are not here to make small-talk. The goal of the pitch is to graduate to the next level: a business card, email exchange, coffee, internship, interview, introduction, or investment.

- › **Maha:** I've heard so much about the progress you've made raising funds for PV projects. I would love to learn more about your experience. Can I have your card?
- › **Ahmed:** I am very impressed with how you managed to launch two new online products in less than a year. I'd love to hear more on how you did it, can we arrange a suitable time to discuss this in more depth after the Biban forum?
- › **Sara:** I've eaten at your restaurant so many times. I love how you stay loyal to classic items while still introducing new ones. I'd love to learn more. Can I have your card?



## Tips to remember:

- › **Be genuine:** show interest and real appreciation for your interlocutor.
- › **Be concise:** people are busy and attention spans are short.
- › **Be specific:** know exactly what you want to achieve from the conversation.

# THE ART OF PERSUASION



If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view

People are usually less complicated than we think. In essence, they want to feel understood and appreciated. In business, being able to sell is central to company growth, whether by moving products, or selling the idea of the business itself. To begin to sell, take an interest in who you are speaking to, how they see the world, and what they want. And then help them understand that you both want the same thing.

## Know your audience



Before attempting to be persuasive, establish a connection with your target audience and develop a genuine interest in them by listening sincerely and understanding their needs, interests, desires, and values.

## Hone your message



Your message is your selling point. Help others appreciate what you have to say by aligning your message with your moral and business values, presenting logical facts, and understanding the emotional factors behind your argument.

## Keep upbeat



A positive approach is more persuasive than a negative one. Being curious and courteous, asking questions, and maintaining a positive body language will help ensure you are open and welcoming, allowing your target audience to open up to you.

## Give before you take



When there is a sense of exchange, people are more likely to reciprocate and engage with you. Maintain a "Givers Gain" attitude by taking the initiative to follow up with your target audience after you meet and holding up to any promise or commitment you make.





## ABOUT MONSHA'AT

Established in 2016, the General Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises' (Monsha'at) chief objective is to organize, support, develop, and sponsor the SME sector in accordance with best global practices. In doing so, it will vastly boost private sector productivity and help increase SMEs' contribution to GDP from 20% to 35% by 2030.

Monsha'at deploys a wide range of initiatives that directly speak to the challenges that SMEs face in the market, with assistance being further broken down by company size and type. In addition to providing firms with critical administrative and technical support, Monsha'at also assists SMEs with marketing and human resources.



### Vision

To make the SME sector an essential engine for economic growth in Saudi Arabia and an enabler in achieving Vision 2030 and beyond.



### Mision

Develop and support SMEs to enable them to prosper by driving cooperation forward with our strategic partners in the public, private, and non-profit sectors, both locally and internationally.

Please visit [www.monshaat.gov.sa](http://www.monshaat.gov.sa) for more information.



[www.monshaat.gov.sa](http://www.monshaat.gov.sa)



[info@monshaat.gov.sa](mailto:info@monshaat.gov.sa)



+966 800 301 8888