

# SURVIVAL GUIDE

These handy dos and don'ts will help you to make a good impression at the ACT Annual Conference in Manchester, which takes place on 20-22 May

**DO** wear your name badge at all times. It's for security – yours. Name badges help delegates to identify people at six paces that they'd rather avoid.

**DO NOT** look at or hold up your own name badge when introducing yourself to people. It makes you look like a gatecrasher who's forgotten who you're supposed to be.

**DO** rehearse getting out of tedious conversations by saying convincingly: "Excuse me, I've just seen someone I've been trying to catch up with all day."

**DO NOT** get offended if someone says to you: "Excuse me, I've just seen someone I've been trying to catch up with all day." Consider yourself as having had a lucky escape.

**DO** remember that it's not necessary to enter into a multimillion-pound deal with an exhibitor just because you've queued for almost five minutes for their barista-prepared coffee. It's just a cup of coffee.

**DO NOT** look IT vendors in the eye unless you really, really, really want to discuss buying whatever it is they're selling. If they do catch your eye, quickly grab any handy brochure, stare at it intently and wander off as if deep in thought.

**DO** remember to collect all the fluffy toys, gadgets and stress balls available from



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the exhibitors' stands, especially if you have small children at home.

**DO** play 'Bull\*\*\*\* Bingo' during the conference sessions. It makes them even more interesting.

**DO NOT** actually shout "Bingo!" out loud when someone says 'holistic', 'leverage' (as a verb) or 'no "I" in "team"'.  
**DO** ask questions in conference sessions. You're not the only person in the room wishing somebody would ask that question – so be that person: ask the question.

**DO NOT** tap the mic, blow into it and ask: "Is this thing working?" It is – as every

deafened delegate in your conference session will now grimly attest.

**DO** practise beforehand the ancient art of balancing a lunch plate, a drink, some cutlery, a napkin and your conference bag, all while shaking hands, exchanging business cards and introducing yourself to another treasurer just as you've taken a large mouthful of curried chicken.

**DO** bring as many business cards as you can. LinkedIn is all great and wonderful, but you'll need to swap business cards in order to remember who it is you want to connect with on LinkedIn afterwards.

**DO** remember to plonk a business card in every exhibitor's 'prize draw' goldfish bowl. Goodness knows, you're bound to win something, eventually.

**DO NOT** plonk your business card in any goldfish bowl that contains actual goldfish.

**DO NOT** try to sing the BBC *Test Match Special* theme tune on the coach that takes you to the gala dinner at Old Trafford. It will sound so much better if you get the whole coach to sing it on the way back afterwards.

**DO NOT** roll up your dinner menu like a cricket bat and pretend you are Ian Botham/Don Bradman/Freddie Flintoff/Rachael Heyhoe-Flint/Viv Richards hitting it for six at the after-dinner drinks.

Yes, the gala dinner is at Old Trafford, but all you'll do is whack someone in the eye. Bad risk management, that.

**DO** remember it's in Manchester this year. If you booked for Glasgow, that was last year. If you booked for Liverpool, you need to get to these things more often. ♡



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