

ATTRACT CLIENTS ONLINE

BRILLIANT NETWORKING AND FOLLOW-UP

"Dig your well *before* you're thirsty."
– Harvey McKay

You've already created your elevator speech, which gives you the wording you need for networking and connecting with your ideal customer. But how comfortable are you with networking, whether it's the formal type, such as a networking group, or just talking casually to people at an event?

When you network well, people will refer you who aren't even clients!

Very few people love networking – for most, it falls somewhere between a chore and an outright terror. You can use tapping for the terror, but being prepared can help you feel much better, enjoy yourself more, and get better results.

You Must Continuously Market

Until you are making at least 75% of the income you want to make, you need to spend 3 hours per day marketing. Networking is an important part of your marketing.

KEYS TO BEING A GREAT NETWORKER

- 1. Make sure you're fishing in a stream with the right fish!**
Only go to networking events that have your target market, or ones that you believe will have your target market.
- 2. Networking is really about connecting, not about getting clients.**
So focus on asking more questions than you answer, and show genuine interest in other people.
- 3. Try different groups to see which ones resonate for you.**
Perhaps the structure of a BNI group is right for you, or perhaps you prefer a more loosely structured gathering.
- 4. Become a resource for other people outside of your area of expertise.**
When you connect someone with something they need, you become memorable. People like, know and trust you.
- 5. Be prepared with your elevator speech.**
Know how to talk to people about what you do in a way that centers on them.
- 6. Don't go into fees or hiring at a networking event.**
Instead, take a card and say 'May I call you tomorrow/next week to discuss this, so that I can really focus on what you need?'
- 7. Have an answer to the question 'How can I help you? What do you need?'**
If it's clients, be clear on the type of clients you're looking for. If it's a different resource, like a VA, web designer, or accountant, networking events are good places to ask. People like making referrals.

8. Have a system for your business cards.

Put yours in one pocket, and ones that you collect in another pocket so you can keep them straight.

9. Ask people 'Who are you looking for at this event?'

10. Follow up, follow up, follow up!

If you take someone's card and say that you'll call them, DO IT! If you don't get them, keep following up until they tell you not to. Stay polite and professional – you never know when you'll get a response on the 4th try.

11. Be willing to tell people the story of how you got into your business.

This is different than your elevator speech, and may make you appear a fascinating conversationalist. Again: memorable.

12. Ask how others got started in their businesses as well.

Most people love answering this question, and reconnecting with the power of how they began their business.

13. Don't worry about how many cards you give out.

Instead, consider how many cards you can collect. Do not, however, put those people on your mailing list without sending them a personal request first! That's just rude.

14. Don't spend all your time talking to people you already know.

Yes, it's safe, but it's also pointless. Connect with them, yes, and be friendly, but talk to new people as well.

15. Remember that networking opportunities happen all the time –

at parties, in the supermarket, when you meet a friend on the street who's with someone you don't know.

16. You can network at an event in your industry, or related industries, or even at an event for your hobby.

Anywhere people are gathered is a good place to connect, and share your passion – which means your business, and your message.

17. Networking doesn't mean selling – it means connecting.

HOW TO FIND NETWORKING EVENTS

Since you've identified your target market, it's now time to identify how you can connect with them. Although traditional networking events like Chamber of Commerce gatherings and BNI can work well for some people, you need to consider where you can find YOUR target market.

As a reminder, here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Where does my target market hang out?
- What do they read?
- What do they listen to?
- How do they consume information?
- Do they belong to associations or organizations?
- Who else serves my target market (associated businesses)?

List all the places your target market is likely to gather, or ways that you could connect with them:

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT NETWORKING?

You must be

1. Passionate about what you do
2. Confident about what you provide
3. Articulate about your message

What do you feel when you hear the word 'networking'?

What are the stories that you tell yourself about networking?

FOLLOW UP AFTER NETWORKING

If you network but don't follow up, the networking was a waste of time.

Creating a systematic method of tracking your networking and contacts will allow you to measure your results and success. Here is one structure for follow up.

Follow Up Structure

1. Initial contact after meeting

- Could be email or phone call
- Remind them where you met and something that was said
- Send 'freebie' information
- Include tagline, expert title, website (or all 3) in your email signature

2. Put contact into database

- Create a systematic way to keep up with people you meet (Highrise, etc)
- Connect with them via social media, if appropriate

3. 2nd contact

- Call them
- Include call to action for strategy session
- Schedule call or send calendar link

4. 3rd contact

- Could be a postcard, letter or handwritten note

5. Strategy session

- (Covered in Sales module)

6. Thank you note or gift

- Thank them for their time
- Send card or small gift if they have hired you

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Find a networking event you can attend. Research your Chamber of Commerce's events and Google local meetups. Once you find one, ask people there for their networking recommendations.