

ATTRACT CLIENTS ONLINE

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM EVENTS & CONFERENCES

Whether you are a coach, consultant, product creator, or an offline business, there are conferences that you can attend to network, learn something new to improve your marketing or business skills, form new relationships with like-minded individuals, and build your business.

If you plan ahead, you can make participating and attending conferences and events a great opportunity to make great connections to move your business forward.

Here are some tips on how to network effectively, make great connections, follow up from those you meet at an event or conference, and process all the great information you will receive.

TIPS

- **Decide before you go what you need most.**
Are you looking for clients, JV partners, speaking opportunities, accountability partners, etc.? When you're clear, you can communicate to others what you are looking for succinctly.

- Research the presenters and other participants you want to meet.

You can visit their web sites or look them up on social media to find ways to start a conversation about their business or interests. This will not only help “break the ice,” but show you are interested in them and their mission.

- Pull out your best elevator speech, and don’t be afraid to tweak it.
- Support the event host, and other attendees.

Most people there are her/his fans, so be respectful of the event. The same goes for other attendees who do what you do. If you offer a similar service, distinguish yourself, make yourself unique.

- Ask people what they do and who they are looking for.

This is like any good networking opportunity. When you can connect two people who may need each other, they will both be grateful to you. You never know where this kind of connection may lead down the road.

- Create a process for the business cards you receive.

For example: Left corner means hot lead, right corner means possible JV. When you have a few quiet moments, jot down some notes about the conversation on the back of the card so you will remember the key points later. If you commit to following up, be sure to keep that commitment.

- Sit with a different person at every break.

Some event hosts will remind you of this, but many won't. If you came to an event with a friend, you can meet up with her after the event ends for the night. Be sure to invite some of your new friends to connect at the next break, at lunch, or over dinner.

- Have your calendar on your phone or with you so you can schedule follow-up appointments on the spot.

This shows you are serious about following up and will save you time, as well as avoiding voicemail 'tag' and delays.

- Be prepared to play full-out.

Don't skip sessions, walk away from conversations, etc. Have breakfast with people, go out afterwards. This is especially important if you're an introvert. You may need to get a room to yourself to recharge your batteries, but play full-out when you're in the event space. Arrive well-rested so you have maximum energy.

- Dress for success.

This is not the time to relax and be casual. That doesn't necessarily mean dressy, but dress in accordance with your brand. Do your makeup, hair, etc. Be 'on' from an energetic standpoint and a physical standpoint.

- Do your online research.

If you connect with someone at the event, look up their website/Facebook page/Linkedin profile or Twitter page that evening so you can comment about it to them the next day. What do you like about it? What do you have in common with them?

- Take pictures of yourself with other attendees and post them on social media sites like FB and Pinterest.

Particularly if there are well-known people, or folks that you admire at the event, get your picture taken with them. (Tip: Take your name tag off when you take your picture.)

- If you have a social media presence, share about the event while you're there.
- Follow-up after the event.

Send an email, and offer your freebie or another gift, and invite them to join your list. Share your favorite 'aha' or action step. If having a follow-up conversation is the appropriate next step and they live in a different part of the country, consider setting up a virtual coffee (or tea).

- Network, don't sell at the event.

With very few exceptions, you're not going to sell at the event. It's a networking opportunity, not a sales opportunity. You are going to connect with people so you can sell to them later.

TIPS FOR PROCESSING ALL OF THE GREAT INFORMATION FROM AN EVENT

- **Ahas**

Keep a separate 'Aha' sheet for the really good stuff that you want to remember. Perhaps emotional Ahas and action items.

- **Color-coding**

Use different colored pens to write different concepts and ideas - is this a now, later, or someday, or never for you?

- **Reviewing**

Review the day's materials at the end of the day, even for 10 minutes. Everything will stick much more, and you'll remember the key points that were relevant for you.

- **Processing time**

Use the plane flight on the way home, or the day after the event, to create an action list of what you'll do next, based on what you just learned. Be realistic - don't try to take on too many new things at once. One or two things implemented is better than 10 things half-done and driving you crazy.