

THE TOP 12 STRATEGIES FOR NETWORKING SUCCESS



NETWORKING: *a supportive system of sharing information and services among individuals and groups having a common interest. Effective business networking is the linking together of individuals who, through trust and relationship building, become walking, talking advertisements for one another.*

1 - NETWORK EVERY MONTH: Networking is one of *the most* effective ways to grow your business. You are reaching out to potential new clients and you will also be connecting with people that are willing to trade services with you and support you in your goals.

Entrepreneurs have a huge range of experience and one great connection will provide both of you with the boost you need to launch you into the next stratosphere.

2 - CHOOSE WISELY: Time is money and you don't want to waste time at events that don't float your boat or build your business. Make sure the networking event you attend is connecting you with people that resonate and match your value system. All networking groups operate differently. You will need to find the group that is in line with your business needs and have the right vibe for you. Sometimes you need to shop around to find your people!

3 - OVERCOMING SHYNESS: The thought of networking is daunting for many of us but you need to decide what's more important; your success or your level of comfort? Growth means putting yourself out there and it's a little uncomfortable sometimes. Pull up your big girl panties, hold your chin up and put your shoulders back. If a new pair of shoes or a new outfit will make you feel more confident than get out there and go shopping. Once at the event, *make eye contact* with people and when introductions are made; make a point to remember their name (*link their name to someone you know and imagine that name written across their forehead. You will remember it for life.*)

4 - HAVE CLARITY ABOUT WHAT YOU DO AND WHY YOU DO IT: It's that age old question. "What do you do?" Plan ahead for this question; dig deep to find your "WHY". Why do you do what you do? Be authentic. The days of the dry elevator pitch are gone. People are looking for passion & emotion mixed in with that great service that you offer. Write it out in about two sentences so that when you say it it is effective, interesting and to the point.

5 - PREPARE: Make sure you have business cards!! Having a pen and paper is handy and don't forget to make sure your phone is fully charged!

6 - DON'T GO WITH A FRIEND: if you do, don't sit together. Remember, you are there to make *new* connections. When attending networking functions, go by yourself or at least communicate to your carpool buddies that you should all fan out. Going solo encourages people to approach you and makes it easy to mingle and initiate conversations.

7 - RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: Networking should be genuine and authentic. We are building trust and relationships by listening and learning. Listening allows you to find out about a person and how you can help them. Whether it's to support them as a peer or to provide them with a service that you offer; establishing a relationship opens the doors to friendship, support & new business.

8 - ASK OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS: Think of questions that ask the “who”, “what”, “when”, “where”, and “how or why” to really open up the discussion. People love to talk about themselves and this shows a person that you are interested in them and makes the conversation deep enough to be able to see if you can help one another.

9 - THE TOP 5 RULE: “You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with”. And that's the key to making it to the top in any industry. Those that are strong leaders with happy lives and thriving businesses are the people that have started off where you are and have been through the ups and downs of building a business. They have gotten where they are through tenacity, hard work and getting over hurdles and setbacks. Their stories and experience will inspire and empower you to do the same.

10 - FIND YOUR PEOPLE: Make it a goal to find three people that are a fit for your business. Collect their information and connect with them. *facebook/instagram/linkedin*. Perhaps you are looking for a social media expert or a web designer; or you are a flower shop that wants to partner with a bridal salon - this is how magic is made.

11 - GET SOCIAL: Remember that fully charged phone? Use that to get some pics with your new cohorts. Instagram & hashtag those moments and like & tag each other's businesses and get even more exposure for both of your businesses. We are here to market ourselves and social media is a powerful tool to grow your networks and let people know that you are serious about what you do.

12 - INVITE: Once you've found your network, spread the love. Building a business is about building relationships. Once you've found the network that matches your vibe, invite those that share the same values. Inviting people into your networking world helps you keep track of the people that you have connected with and helps others to build their businesses. *Women supporting women.* There is nothing more powerful!

