



Seven Secrets

For Increasing
Profit by Building
Meaningful Relationships

How many times have you dreaded going to yet another networking event because you felt they had become simply a waste of time?

You're tired of "meeting" a lot of people, and gathering a lot of cards, but walking away without any prospects for business.

**Here are Seven Simple Secrets
that will turn networking
nightmares into profit-building
relationships.**



Be Interested to Become Interesting

Have you ever felt the person you were sharing the amazing product or service of your business at a networking event was looking for an escape route to get away?

Making business connections is important, but you have to start in neutral - not like a NASCAR driver on race day.

I saw this happen at a Chamber event. A sales rep for a cabinet company had another member literally cornered while he attempted to SELL his fabulous cabinets to him. The intensity of the sales pitch (which to me read as desperation) was clear, as was the uncomfortable body language of the member being solicited. Anyone could see how turned off he was by the incident.

How do you become INTERESTING?

1. Be INTERESTED first! Ask a few questions about them to build rapport – How did they get in to their line of work? What is their favorite aspect of their business? What do they do when they aren't working? The rest will follow naturally.
2. Take a deep breath and listen. You will become very memorable for showing interest in them, and they will want to know more about you!
3. Follow up: "Tell me more" is a great tool in a conversation. You have just let someone know you want to go deeper than small talk and that speaks volumes.

Don't Sell Your Product Before They Buy You!

Sales today are based on relationships and building trust. There are probably lots of people who sell exactly what you do. Why should they do business with you?

In the same way you show interest in your networking partner's business, they will reciprocate with you and ask about your interests.

Customers will become referral partners for life if you take the time to build a relationship with them.

It is much easier to do business with someone you have been referred to, so invest in YOU first!

The better job you do building trust, the faster your business will grow!

How do you build TRUST?

1. Be patient – Trust Takes Time. In the same way you need to get to know someone and their business, they need time to get to know you.
2. Get personal. We all have lives outside of work. Explore what you have in common. Shared experiences and commonalities cement a relationship even more!
3. Set up a meeting to learn even more about each other. A coffee shop or over lunch are great “neutral” zones. Continue to build the relationship with dedicated one-to-one time.

Connect Through Authenticity

Have you ever heard the phrase – “Facts Tell, Stories Sell?”

Facts, while important, can be boring and can lose the audience. People don't care HOW you do what you do, it's about how it helps or benefits THEM.

A friend of mine runs a concierge business. They provide a variety of services including airport drop-off and pick-up, house and pet sitting while you are away, errands, and organization of your home or office.

“Jeanne” helped a woman who was overwhelmed with going through her parents’ belongings after they had passed away.

The garage where the items had been stored for three years (did I mention overwhelmed) was full of boxes and containers and although a double-car garage, had no space for a car.

The thought of sorting through everything was very stressful and it was easier to avoid the garage than deal with the contents.

Jeanne shared how she really enjoys helping people sort through memories. It makes her feel good to know what “treasures” touched someone’s life. She mentioned that she helps her client sorts at their own pace and will make arrangements for donations or a garage sale if need be. Her clients have told her how much it means for her to honor the experience.

If you haven’t guessed, the overwhelmed woman was me.

It was because of Jeanne’s authenticity in the experiences she shared that I hired her to help me.

How do you connect through AUTHENTICITY?

1. Share an experience where your product or service made a difference for someone. There is no better way to connect than through authentic emotion.
2. Focus on the positive. Highlighting negativity will bring about a different emotional response and may not be seen as authentic. People want to associate with others that lift them up.
3. Your genuine self should always show up. People can tell if you aren't being genuine about them or their product. Your reputations remains long after you leave a meeting!

Ask the One Question Most People Never Ask

“How Can I Help YOU Succeed?”

It might sound counter-intuitive, but the best way to get business is to help grow someone else’s business.

Most people have an agenda of meeting a certain number of people, or connecting with a certain number of qualified prospects – you’ll be a breath of fresh air if your AUTHENTIC purpose is to see how much value you can add for others at the event.

Is there someone they would like an introduction to? You might know someone in the profession they are seeking, or even the specific person.

Letting them know you are willing to help them with their success speaks volumes in business!

PLUS, reciprocity works! If you help them, they will want to help you in return!

How do you make that ONE QUESTION meaningful?

1. Ask them to share with you what to say, listen for or look for if you are speaking to someone that could be beneficial to their business.
2. Arrange a personal introduction to someone in an industry that could be beneficial. For example – a jeweler would love an introduction to a wedding planner, estate planner, caterer, divorce attorney, and banker.
3. Always make warm introductions for someone so their new introduction is expecting to hear from them and welcomes the contact. A lead is basically a cold-call.

Let Go of Attachments

(This one might surprise you!)

Are you focused on the person in front of you or on the phone or digital device in your hand? Nothing says, "I don't care," more than putting your electronics before a human experience.

We live in an electronic age and many of us would be lost without our calendars, notes, reminders, social media, etc. Our phones and tablets have become extensions of ourselves. They also can be useful in a business environment to set appointments, look up an important fact or website, or even make a presentation with.

Devices are also a huge turnoff if not used appropriately as well.

Have you ever been in a meeting with someone who responds to every phone call, message, email, beep, chime and buzz on their device? How has it made you feel?

How do I LET GO without being out of reach or out of touch?

1. Disengage from the electronics and engage with the person in front of you. You will discover many more rewards including a great business relationship!
2. If you have to take a call or answer a text ask permission first. Let the other person know you care enough to ask.
3. Excuse yourself from the area you are meeting in to take the call or text and keep it as short as possible.

Make it Easy for Them to Ask the Right Question

Is there something you really want your networking partner to know about you?

Ask them first!

There are bits of your story that make you unique, that you want people to remember about you. But you want to stick to the “be interested first” rule. So how do you open the door to telling your story while focusing on them?

Most of the time if you ask someone a question regarding something you yourself want to share, after they finish sharing with you, they naturally will ask the question back to you in return!

Reciprocity works, and it's human nature to respond in kind. Besides, when you ask interesting questions it makes their next question a “no-brainer.” Which makes the conversation easier for them!

How do you know what question is the RIGHT QUESTION?

Here are three of my favorites: Give it a try! But remember that this is your opportunity to get them to ask a question that lets you talk about your unique story. So craft your question accordingly.

1. How did you get started in this profession?
2. Why you are passionate about what you do?
3. Do you have a favorite customer story?

Follow Up is Key

Now that you have made some new connections, it's time for the most important next step – Following up!

So often we walk away with a stack of business cards and they end up in a drawer and we wonder why our business is struggling.

Remember, trust takes time and you have to build a relationship.

While doing “something” is better than doing “nothing,” trust is built on following up in a way that is meaningful to the other person.

While it's tempting to think the next step is going to be a meeting to talk about how you can help them by selling them something (And that's what many sales gurus teach) you probably know from being the prospect that there are better ways to build a relationship that will lead to profit.

What is the appropriate way to FOLLOW UP?

1. Send a note through the mail. We are all bombarded with emails daily and yes, they are a great form of communication. But a mailed card says something special. Let them know how much you enjoyed meeting them and inquire how their business is doing.
2. Did you offer to connect them with someone that would help their business? Make good on the offer and then call to let them know. Or maybe you can invite them to another networking opportunity and make introductions for them there. What a hero you will be!
3. Keep in touch on a regular basis. Get together for lunch or coffee or just call to check in and say, "Hello, I was thinking about you today." A few minutes of caring will make someone's day.

“The more you invest in building relationships, the more you will see the success and profit from your endeavors! ”

Happy Networking!



Barbara Abramson brings synchrony to corporations, Board of Directors and Networking groups through workshops and team-building exercises. For more information, contact her at 407-947-6287 or via email at Barb@BarbAbramson.com