

The Sales Machine

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Characteristics of a Successful Networker

Follow up – Ranked as the top trait of successful networkers. If you present opportunities to someone who fails to follow up, you will eventually stop wasting your time.

Have a positive attitude – A negative attitude makes people dislike you and drives away referrals. A positive attitude make people want to associate and cooperate with you.

Use your enthusiasm – To be respected within a network, we at least need to sell ourselves. People who show the most motivation get the most referrals.

Be someone others can trust – When you refer one person to another you put your reputation on the line.

Listen – Your success in networking will depend on how well you listen and learn.

10 Networking Questions That Work

These questions are not designed to be sales oriented. They are friendly and fun to answer.

1. How did you get your start in the business?
2. What do you enjoy most about your profession?
3. What separates you and your company from the competition?
4. What advice would you give someone just starting out in the business?
5. What one thing would you do with your business if you knew you could not fail?
6. What significant changes have you seen take place in your profession over the years?
7. What do you see as the trends of the future?
8. What are the strangest or funniest things you have experienced in your business?
9. What have you found to be most effective for promoting your business?
10. What one sentence would you like people to use in describing the way you do business?

How to Get Referrals!

Referral DO's

1. Be visible and well liked! Make sure people know who you are and what you do. Get out of your home or office and mingle.
2. Show up! Expand your range of interests and involvements.
3. Reach beyond your profession for business connections. Anyone who does not compete with you is a potential partner.
4. Connections should work both ways. Referring should make sense to both sides.
5. Don't be shy, ask for referrals. Who do you know?
6. Get all the important information. Ask qualifying questions. Find out as much as you can about the referral.
7. Schedule time to focus on referrals every day. Make a list of contacts to call. Write a script.
8. Say thank you. Take 30 seconds and write a hand written note.

Referral DON'Ts

1. Don't inappropriately use acquaintances or membership lists to build your network.
2. Don't grab the spotlight or chair at every committee.
3. Don't expect colleagues with similar credentials and expertise to share with you.
4. Don't rush into business relationships. Get acquainted, don't be pushy.

Building Your Brand Image

You Have to Get the Foundation Right

The first rule of creating a brand is to develop a strong foundation by defining a very concrete and distinctive brand promise. Your brand needs to differentiate you from competition, and it needs to be real. Use your personality as a guide in communication. Remember, each time you communicate it either reinforces or weakens your brand. Another key aspect of your brand foundation is defining the key message. Your identity should be distinctive and memorable.

Be Different, You Need to Stand Out From the Crowd

Brands are built on four key customer perceptions: differentiation, relevancy, esteem and knowledge. The first aspect of your brand success is its ability to differentiate.

Be Consistent

Consistency is critical to your brand strength. Could you imagine if Coca-Cola decided to change the shape of its bottle because another bottler could provide lower prices? Not a chance. Is McDonald's changing their special sauce? No way.

Dress the Part

Packaging is important. Make sure you look good. It's better to be known as the sharp dresser than the person who always looks like they are frazzled.