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Networking Your Way to Great Relationships

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Presenter

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We will be covering:

- I. Networking Basics
- II. Building Your Business: Networking with a Purpose
- III. Keeping Your Business: The Once and Future Networker
- IV. Networking With Social Media
- V. Helpful Networking Tips

I. Networking Basics



What is Networking?

- In today's business world, relationships are everything.
- Establishing those relationships takes time, effort and above all else, commitment.
- Networking, for our purposes, can be defined as: the establishment and/or fostering of personal connections in the context of a business relationship.

I. Networking Basics

Where Does Networking Happen?

“External” Networking:

- Everywhere!
- Examples: Dinners, Fundraisers, Board Meetings, Civic Events, Cocktail Parties, etc.

“Internal” Networking:

- Marketing yourself to co-workers.
- Being the go-to person.

I. Networking Basics

How Can Networking Help Me?

- Growing your business.
- Retaining your business.
- Climbing the ladder.
- Creating friendships.



II. Building Your Business: Networking With a Purpose

- When starting out, networking can be a daunting task.
- Most people feel overwhelmed by the proposition of meeting new people, spending time in strange environments and speaking with people who might not otherwise be in their “peer” group.

II. Building Your Business: Networking With a Purpose

Planning: Before heading off to your first social event, consider the following:

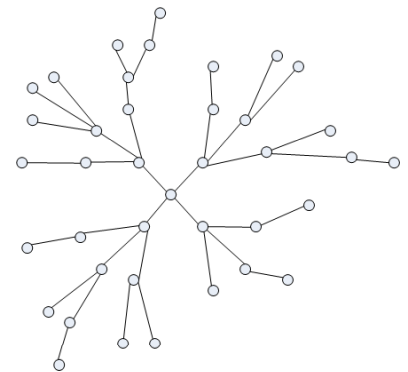
1. Defining Your Market:

- What is my product or service?
- Who buys my product or service?
- Why do they buy it?

II. Building Your Business: Networking With a Purpose

2. Using Existing Connections:

- Who do I know and how can that help me?
- Family
- Friends
- Other Networks (High School, Undergrad, etc.)



II. Building Your Business: Networking With a Purpose

3. Establishing Your “Brand”:

- What are my skills?
- How do my skills relate to my profession?
- Can I be the go-to person?

Example: Social Networking



II. Building Your Business: Networking With a Purpose

Implementation: Once you have established your market, connections and brand, how do you use these skills to grow your network and get business?

II. Building Your Business: Networking With a Purpose

1. Become an Expert:

- The first step to being able to carry on a conversation and sell your services or products is to know what you are selling.
- Always be able to answer questions about your field, products, interactions and business.
- Being knowledgeable, without being pretentious, will impress potential business associates.

II. Building Your Business: Networking With a Purpose

2. Embrace the Experience:

- Most people feel awkward walking into new situations.
- Find some common ground with your audience
- “Mix” at the Mixer.
- Use your knowledge to impress potential clients and connections.
- Be interesting!!! Don't be Plain Vanilla

II. Building Your Business: Networking With a Purpose

3. Give a Little to Get a Lot:

- Meals provide excellent networking opportunities
- People Rarely Turn Down a Free Meal
- 21 opportunities in a week.
- Everyone has to eat!

II. Building Your Business: Networking With a Purpose

4. Service with a Smile:

- Service for non-profit organizations.
- Board Memberships.
- Volunteer Activities (Get your hands dirty!).
- Service as an aspect of your “brand.”

II. Building Your Business: Networking With a Purpose

5. Authenticity Matters:

- Do what you enjoy.
- Enthusiasm is vital to success in networking.
- A genuine interest will pay dividends.
- Handshakes, Names and Eye Contact: Show people that you care!



II. Building Your Business: Networking With a Purpose

6. Follow Up and Follow Through:

- After establishing new connections, solidify them by following up.
- Email, Phone Calls, or other types of communication can help to establish a lasting connection.
- Primacy: Following up quickly can help others remember you.



III. Keeping Your Business: The Once and Future Networker

- Once your network is established, maintaining it and the relationships associated with it can be just as important as forming new relationships.
- Complacency can be the death-nail to a successful network of relationships.

III. Keeping Your Business: The Once and Future Networker

The following steps can help you maintain your relationships:

1. Keep Your Sources in the Loop:

- Newsletters, blogs, and email lists updating your network of your activities.
- “Thank you” lunches for referral sources.
- Cross-referrals

III. Keeping Your Business: The Once and Future Networker

2. Keep Your Knowledge Up-to-date:

- Attend conferences in your discipline (additional networking opportunity).
- Keep apprised of developments in your client's business matters.
- Learn what your contacts are up to.



III. Keeping Your Business: The Once and Future Networker

3. Maintain Your Team:

- Maintaining a helpful team around you can be one of the most important aspects to keeping business.
- Treat those in your network (and others) well, they are vital to your success in business.
- Competency is a must.
- Example: “Full Service” law firms.



IV. Networking with Social Media

- In the current business climate, social media has vaulted to the forefront of networking.

- Instead of asking for a card, people commonly ask, “are you on Facebook/Twitter/etc.?”

- Social media can provide another helpful tool to any successful networker.

IV. Networking with Social Media



Facebook:

- Creating a “page.”
- Establishing a professional Facebook.
- Grooming your digital footprint.
- Determining the effect of Facebook networking.

IV. Networking with Social Media

Twitter:

- 140 Characters
- Great tool for updating clients and contacts on recent activities
- “Lists”
- A Twitter account can act as an excellent marketing tool.



IV. Networking with Social Media

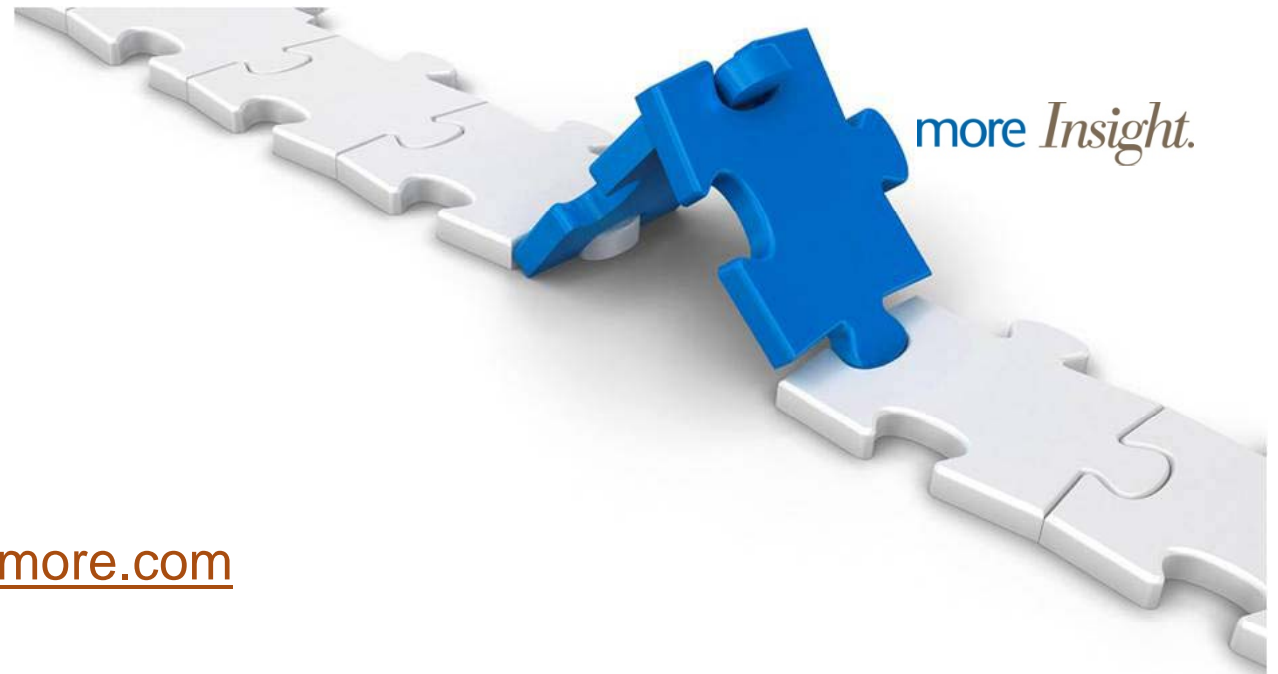
LinkedIn:

- The “professional” social media platform.
- Helps potential clients determine experience.
- Provides a place where contacts can refer potential clients.
- Independent networking opportunity: the “LinkedIn Network.”



V. Helpful Networking Tips: 5 Tips to Build and Sustain Your Business Connections

1. Define Your Market and Your Brand.
2. Use Established Connections.
3. Follow Up!
4. Be an Effective “Brander.”
5. Learn to Play the Game.



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Questions?

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