

Introduction

Those networking events where you fling business cards about madly, speed date business owners, etc – don't work. Often business owners complain that business isn't as good as they would like – despite doing 'networking'.

Here are some tips on Business Networking.

Source: <http://www.kristinaustin.com/blog-articles/5-key-ingredients-for-networking-success/>

Tips

1. You have to keep the WIIFM principle top of mind. Just as you want someone to listen to everything about you, so does the person you're talking to. Take a breath and think about what's in it for them in talking to you? Ask about them, tell them stuff that will help them (don't just blatantly flog your wares). Listening really well also let's you hear more clearly how you (or someone you know) can help them.

2. Make it part of regular your routine and commit to doing it – meet up weekly, fortnightly, monthly. And commit to being there. And whilst that sounds relatively easy, when you've got to get up at 5.30am on Friday mornings – every Friday, at some point, it will seem easier to sleep in. Don't! Commitment gets rewarded.

3. Allow people to really get to know you and get to really know them back. It's so much easier to refer people on if your first sentence to your contact is "I'll get Joe to call you; he's an awesome guy and such a talented (insert profession here). There are also many stories around the traps where the person who's done the referring ends up getting business from their own contact as 'Joe' has done a great sales job on the referrer's services.

****4. Set out to help people**** – BNI have a saying that "giver's gain". If you go to any event to 'flog' your products, you're starting in a tough position. You'll put people off doing business with you and 'networking' won't work. Give often and give a lot. Every now and again, I use to feel that somehow by giving away some of my expertise I was selling myself short, but I've been so rewarded that I don't really question it any more. Sure there might be someone whose out to take the mickey, but most people are just trying to get their heads around stuff. Remember, people do business with people they know like and trust. Proving your smarts ahead of time, makes it much easier for people to do business with you..

Tips (cont)

5. Don't give up looking for networking opportunities until you find what works for you or find your people – when my BNI chapter closed down, it would have been very easy to sit down in a grumpy heap and think "well, that's that. It didn't work!". Instead I visited a bunch of other chapters and kept going until I found one that fit. It's the same with any group. Not all will fit you – keep going until you find one that does.

Effective Strategies

