



PRACTICE  
MASTERY  
INSTITUTE

# POWER STRATEGIES

Essential Marketing Strategies  
for Extraordinary Practice Success



YOUR MARKETING ALCHEMY **NETWORKING** MANUAL

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What can be said but not practiced...  
is better not said.

What can be practiced but not spoken of...  
is better not done.

[So] ultimately [you] will be able to speak without  
trouble and act without disgrace.

– *Thomas Cleary*



Keep it with faith.

Practice it with keenness.

Perfect it with faithfulness...

then, though the task be great, you shall surely succeed.

— Thomas Cleary



# POWER STRATEGIES



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Essential Marketing Strategies  
for Extraordinary Practice Success



# **POWER STRATEGIES**



## **NETWORKING**



# POWER STRATEGIES: NETWORKING

Networking is a power strategy because on its own it is a powerful marketing technique. However, its considerable effectiveness is magnified by virtue of the fact that its principles influence and can be incorporated within many of the other marketing tools.

For example, when applied to liaising with people within the advertising industry, you can build relationships and provide for opportunities and advantages you may otherwise not have.

Networking gives you the opportunity to utilise your unique selling proposition communications. And referrals, in a way, are an extension of networking. That is, working your existing network for relationships to extend interrelationships within that network.

However, there is much more to be said about networking.

But, before we do, let's provide a definition of networking.

While networking has often been described primarily as word of mouth advertising, making it similar, in part, to referral marketing, it relates more broadly to the interconnection and communication between people or within a group. It relates to the relationships between these groups or individuals communicating and the direct selling that results from these, often independent of the business person and without financial remuneration.

Network marketing that has evolved into a multilevel marketing phenomenon differs and is not specifically the networking we are discussing within this strategy.

Simply put, networking is speaking with others, sharing information and ideas, recommending resources and helping people find solutions to their problems. It is the link between people, groups and businesses that establishes relationships and facilitates communication that strengthens both personal, social and business relationships.

“Networking is the cultivation of mutually beneficial, give-and-take, win-win relationships.”

– Bob Berg

## KEY PRINCIPLES OF NETWORKING

Underpinning the success of networking as a Marketing Alchemy power strategy there are a number of principles required that you would adhere to in order to magnify the success. These are:

### 1. High performance client care.

Incubent in high performance client care are three key elements that generate confidence in the networking process.

High performance client care is represented by outstanding service and extraordinary care delivered on a consistent and reproducible basis. The three key elements of high performance client care are:

- i. Outstanding service... outstanding service is important to networking because, when a person, either a potential client, a referee or a potential new client is uncovering information about you, they want to know that you genuinely care about them, that your service will be extraordinary, that you will do something unique and special for them, making their efforts rewarded. Outstanding service builds trust and confidence.
- ii. Extraordinary care... in order for your network to have that confidence and to feel certain about making a recommendation, there needs to be something that you can do for them that will be beneficial and make a difference in their life. Haphazard care, treatment delivered without interest or not directed towards a clearly diagnosed condition, does nothing to offer confidence or certainty in the mind of a client or potential client. Extraordinary care is an inherent part of confidence in networking.
- iii. Consistent and reproducible basis... a person you network with needs to feel confident that not only will you deliver outstanding service and extraordinary care to them, but to the person who they will be recommending, to the people with whom they share a relationship that they will introduce you to.

Anything less than those three elements maintained with integrity within your relationships with people puts the security of your network in jeopardy.

“People don’t refer you because you meet minimum expectations. They refer you because they expect you to do a good job, which enhances their relationship with the person they are referring.”

– Ivan Misner

## **2. You are always networking**

The reality is that you are always networking. Any time you interact with another person or group, you are in the process of networking. You are relating to others, you are establishing or breaking down trust and credibility. You are deepening and connecting your relationship or distancing yourself from others.

Whichever way you look at it, you are always networking. The question is, is your networking working against you or for you?

In the same way that you are always networking, you are always therefore potentially generating more referrals and word-of-mouth marketing activities.

You might be thinking to yourself, “I am not networking at the moment, I am keeping to myself and I am not even actively asking for referrals... I can’t possibly be doing any harm?” Firstly, you may not be doing any harm... but are you doing any good?

Equally, by keeping quiet, keeping to yourself... in any interrelationship and communication with others, the effect of this networking (or, more appropriately, anti-networking) is to create a perspective of others in relation to yourself that you may be aloof, unconfident or disinterested. You may be distancing yourself from potential clients where you could be actively networking and building relationships, even if those relationships are not specifically designed for the purpose of building your practice. You could be focused on finding ways to serve.

### **Note:**

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As an aside, I want to comment upon the intent, attitude and feel of your networking. Many practitioners are desperate for new clients. Their practice coffers are not bulging with money representative of true success.

If your intent for networking (or any other marketing endeavour, for that matter) is to generate clients at any cost, out of a desperate need in particular, it is unlikely you will be attracting the clients you desire.

Most law of attraction experts will tell you that you attract that which is the focus of your attention. If desperation is the focus of your attention, you will attract more desperation into your life.

Instead, focus on service, contribution, your willingness to change the lives of your clients. When this is your focus, you will attract more opportunity to do this into your life.

If your attitude is one of disdain for marketing or discomfort in marketing, you will find that your opportunities are limited in this area.

If you have no interest in or energy for networking... you will have no networking to do.

The process is very simple. Recognise that you have a powerful, life-changing service to contribute to others. Be committed to, and willing to, deliver this service. Recognise that to deliver this service you will need to work with others, communicate with others... and this is exactly what networking is.

As a result, love networking. Put energy into networking. Be fervent and passionate about the process of networking and ensure, by doing so, that you have significant networking opportunities and the ability to generate new word-of-mouth advertising and leads as a result.

This is particularly relevant because you do not know the extent that each interaction has as an influence on both your marketing and your client generation.

It is folly to pre-judge the extent of any networking opportunity as either unlikely to yield quality leads and positive results or the perfect marketing opportunity.

You may find that your inaccurately predetermined attitude costs you literally hundreds of referrals.

Instead, focus upon every interaction as a networking opportunity and behave accordingly.

Consider... and recognise the truth in the possibility (if not fact) that the highest and best networking opportunity and the referrals that are derived from that may not be the most obvious.

### **3. All the time networking**

We have already stated the importance of networking and how you are networking all of the time. You are communicating all of the time and therefore building trust and rapport, establishing relationships and forming the foundation for your network and referrals basis. As a result, it should be clear that you are networking all of the time and, therefore, you are practice building all of the time.

Exactly the same applies to your network, your clients and potential clients. They, too, are networking all of the time.

In fact, most networking is secondary. Once you have networked with colleagues, friends, associates, family, once that networking between you and those individuals has finished (i.e., the communication comes to an end and you are separated by distance), then the real networking that will influence your business begins. That is, the communication *they* have with others.

The true effect of your networking is *reach*.

Reach, insomuch as the communications you have with others and how they filter down the chain into the network of the people you have just communicated with.

For example, you network with a staff member at a health food store. That person begins to tell people within his network, other people within the store, other friends and family members of the wonderful, powerful and life-changing services you supply. All of a sudden, his network of people, his list of associates and members that come into the health food store, begin to hear about the wonderful opportunity to receive life-changing care in your practice.

Here, you realise that your networking has influenced the network of the people you networked with.

Yes, I understand that is a little confusing. However, it exemplifies the point that the majority of networking happens when you are not around to control the dialogue. The influence of the dialogue that happens independently of you is controlled at the time of your initial communication. That is why it's so important for you to have clear, definitive, easily remembered and unique selling propositions.

That is why it is imperative that you learn persuasive communication, that you have dialogues that are meaningful and powerful.

That is why it is vitally important that you understand how to establish relationships, create trust and build connections with people.

All of these elements are at the foundation of networking. All of these elements have at their foundation the desire to serve.

#### **4. Proactive networking**

This raises the key point that networking is a proactive process.

By proactive, I mean pre-meditated, consciously and deliberately thought out and acted upon. It does not happen by chance, happenstance or by luck.

Many practitioners are idealistic (and perhaps a little ignorant) in their thinking that, as long as they do a good job, people will come to their practice, others will refer, and they will be successful.

In truth, there is no rule that says that if you are an extraordinary practitioner with extraordinary skills and abilities... a deep sense of knowledge and understanding about health, wellbeing and how to change your clients' lives... and that if you are

likeable, trustworthy and entirely warranting of an abundance of clients of whom you can serve and of whom you will transform their lives — this does not necessitate you will get referrals or a busy practice.

In fact, it has been my experience that some of the best practitioners in the country are the least busy.

They hold these idealistic illusions as truths... and suffer financially for the consequence.

Please, do not think for a moment that just because you are good at what you do, the clients like you and that people like you and say that they are going to make referrals and recommendations... that they are actually going to do that.

How many times have you met a past client in the streets, who with a genuine smile upon their face said, “Gee, it has been a while since I have come in, I had better come back again!”

They intend to come back. They may even think about you for all of about 3 minutes once the conversation has ended. However, without a proactive follow-up system as part of your networking and communication dialogue, it is unlikely that you will get the rewards that you deserve.

No, it is imperative that you be proactive with your networking and word-of-mouth advertising.

It is essential that you not fall prey to one of the greatest illusions of marketing... that those who are good at what they do deserve success.

The truth is, those who deserve success are the ones that go out and get it.

## **5. A caveat on “you are always networking”**

I would like to place a caveat on my statement “you are always networking.” While it is true that every interaction, every dialogue and communication is a networking opportunity, networking as a marketing endeavour is focused in a dispersed, undirected way.

Yes, you are networking all of the time. Every interaction is a networking opportunity. However, proactive networkers, effective marketers using the networking strategy, recognise and emphasise their marketing endeavours in small, focused areas or groups.

If you disperse all of your energy, and do not return to a networking group, you have communicated with the group once, and most likely limited your influence.

Greater influence comes from repeat communications. When you communicate more frequently and more often with others, you provide them the opportunity to get to know you and to build trust in the relationship... You imbed your philosophy and message within their subconscious mind by repeat communications.

As such, when you network, be proactive in communicating with the same people repetitively and consistently.

The more consistent your communication with a networking group, the more likely it is to gain success from that group.

## **6. Characteristics of successful networkers**

We will talk more about this point in a more structured way. However, I would like to raise one of the key characteristics of a successful networker.

Tony Alessandra, sales and communication expert, created a program called the *Platinum Rule*.

The *Platinum Rule* is an extension of The Golden Rule. The Golden Rule being, "Do unto others as you would have done unto you."

The *Platinum Rule*, however, states, "Do unto others as they would have done unto them."

This is pivotal in networking.

Not only must you show genuine interest and caring in the lives of the people you communicate with. Not only must you be listening to them, hoping to understand their needs and find a solution for their needs... you must treat them in the way that they want to be treated.

They may not want to be treated the way that you want to be treated. So there are limitations to The Golden Rule. However, when you know what it is that they want, how they want to be treated... the *Platinum Rule* gives you an immense opportunity to achieve a deep relationship, a connection, and enhances your networking opportunity.

*But, if I am busy enough... Do I really need to network?*

You can choose to use any marketing endeavour at any time. However, you may not know what is around the corner at every moment. As such, I consider that constantly marketing is an essential element of every successful practice.

If you have 15 fishing rods in the water at once, you have a higher increase in likelihood of catching fish... and, isn't that the primary reason you go fishing?

As such, I would implore you to be constantly aware of the importance of networking and guarded in your communications so that you are demonstrating yourself the way that you would ideally like in your networking communications.

“A true networker is one who constantly seeks to form new relationships and strengthen them by helping others solve problems and achieve goals.”

– Ivan Misner, *Truth or Delusion?*

“All things being equal, people prefer to do business with someone they know and trust. All things not being equal, people prefer to do business with someone they know and trust.”

– Ivan Misner

“It is not what you know or even who you know — it’s how well you know them, how well they know you, and how well they know the people you want to meet.”

– Ivan Misner

## 7. A word on networking events

While networking is a proactive, conscious and deliberate marketing endeavour and while networking is something that you do all of the time, there are specific and definitive networking opportunities, some of which will achieve greater results than others. To succeed with networking, you need to discern which ones are going to be most effective, how much concentrated effort to apply to them and whether or not they are achieving the outcomes you desire.

Ivan Misner in his book, *Truth or Delusion? Busting Networking's Biggest Myths*, defines several different networking opportunities:

- i. Strong-contact networks (referral networking groups such as BNI) structured explicitly to pass business referrals among members.
- ii. Casual-contact networks (chambers of commerce, for example) that bring people together in a less structured context.
- iii. Service organisations (Rotary, Lions etc.) are associations that exist to provide and support humanitarian efforts and good works in the community, often bringing people together to facilitate referral and knowledge networking.
- iv. Professional associations or, “Knowledge networks” are established to exchange information and ideas.
- v. Social/business organisations often combine social activities with business networking.
- vi. Women and men’s networking groups are still important as networking opportunities.
- vii. Online networks and forums are creating an opportunity to network.

It is important to make a decision on how you are going to network, and to consciously invest time as an active networking strategy. However, you cannot work each of these networks simultaneously while remaining effective.

To do so would be potentially exhausting, would constitute far too significant a commitment and would likely diminish your efforts in other marketing areas.

Choose to network all of the time. However, choose to be proactive in a networking environment and consciously make a choice.

For example, you may find that a BNI networking group exists in your town. This may be one of your monthly breakfast meetings. However, there may be three in your region. The amount of time and energy expended in being part of all of those three may be exhausting and an inappropriate expression of your time.

Focus in smaller areas. Misner tells us that, with your network, “It needs to be both broad and deep.”

### **Note:**

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Other places that you can consider networking include your church, temple, mosque or spiritual group. Your children’s sports teams or sporting associations. Your local political associations or groups, charity and fund-raising events and groups as well as health clubs.

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## **8. Before, during and after networking**

We have just defined that it is important to recognise where you are going to be networking and to maintain proactive communications with that network.

Before you network, it is important to plan your networking communications and dialogues, where you are going to network and the outcomes that you desire.

It is important to understand how you are going to serve and what contributions you are going to make to these people that will form the foundation of your communication and dialogue.

When you are with the people in your network, dialoguing with them... you will be present, listening and searching to understand their wants, needs and desires and finding if not offering, a solution for them.

Many people feel that once the networking event is over their networking job is done.

Nothing could be further from the truth. You have put tremendous effort into preparing for your networking at the time... now, it is imperative that you continue to apply effort after the networking event.

You need to continue to demonstrate and communicate your appreciation after the event, maintaining contact with the person after the communication. You need to continue to maintain that communication, touching base regularly. Continue to offer service, insights and value to that person's life, business, etcetera.

And when they provide a referral, when they make a recommendation... again, communicate with them, thanking them and communicating your appreciation. Continue to offer service and solutions to them. Most importantly however, continue to provide high performance client care to the person they refer.

The intensity of your work in networking does not stop once the networking event is over. In fact, if anything, the intensity increases to ensure that the expectations built in the mind of the person you have networked with are not only met, but are exceeded.

Taking this attitude not only broadens the networking opportunities... it deepens them!

In this way, you eliminate referrer's remorse.

## **9. Elements of a successful networking referral**

So you have been to a networking event and it went well. In fact, people thought your unique selling proposition was a powerful solution to their wants, needs and desires. In fact, they knew a friend who needed exactly what you had to offer.

They made an immediate referral. Well, what now?

- i. Make sure you get the name and contact details of the person making the referral... jot down any memory jogs that will help you remember their face, the conversation you had, and what you need to say in appreciation. It also helps to take notes and remember anything that may have come up in the conversation, such as hobbies or interests, what their wants, needs or desires were, and any way in which you feel you may be able to serve them in future.
- ii. The name and contact details of the person being referred... ensure that you know who it is that he feels you can help, and how you can contact them. Gather any other information about them that you may feel is important or necessary.
- iii. A request to call their friend... ask the person referring the new client for them to call their friend to let them know that you will be calling and that you have the opportunity to provide a solution for them.
- iv. Permission to use the referrer's name... once you have asked them to give their friend a call, let them know that you will be calling them afterwards... and ask if it is okay that you let them know that they called them. Get permission to be able to use their name in the communication, bridging the communication gap.
- v. Follow up... make sure you follow up with the person as soon as possible and practical, offering them the solution to the challenge that has been presented by their friend.
- vi. Make the appointment... it is important to realise that the communications you have with potential clients need to be more than cursory. There is a reason for them, and that reason is to make an appointment. Use the scripts as documented in the *Sales Mastery* program on how to convert an interested client into a client having the commitment of an appointment.
- vii. High-performance client care... when the client makes the appointment, ensure that you deliver outstanding service and extraordinary care on a consistent and reproducible basis. Reinforce the positive experience they have to maintain the positive feedback they give about the interaction and relationship, both to their friends and to the person who referred them.
- viii. Thank your original networker... make sure, now that you have had the interaction, that you thank the person who referred them. Demonstrate appreciation to your network for their contribution and effort and let them know how things have proceeded.

- ix. Continue networking... continue to network with that individual, offering him benefits or advantages from the relationship that you have established.
- x. Continue networking... no, this is not a typo... continue your networking or referrals-based communication with the client that was referred in by using the Seven Steps to Guaranteed Referrals process within the *Practice Mastery* modules.
- xi. Continue networking... yes, here it appears again... don't stop networking now, continue networking in the other pools that you are fishing.

## **10. Networking, at its core, is about relationships**

I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that, as with working with your clients, it is not just about the health care you deliver. When you network, it is not just about getting business... it is about the lives of these individuals.

Successful networkers are, at their core, genuine and caring people.

Yes, they have an interest in growing their business. However, the purpose of growing their business is to serve, to contribute and to positively impact and influence the lives of others.

When you hold this philosophy at your core, you are a service-oriented person.

A service-oriented person is focused not only on how their business can serve other people...they are focused on how they can individually serve other people and how they can grow through the interaction of the relationship. In essence, they look to deepen the relationship. They focus not only on health care and their business... they focus on their lives, their families and their interests and hobbies.

In this way, networking is not only about referrals... it is about building relationships. It is about how we deepen our own personal, social and spiritual lives. How we add depths to the personal, social and spiritual lives of others while simultaneously finding a solution for any wants, needs and desires they have and offering solutions for health challenges, providing incredible healing opportunities.

Networking provides us the opportunity to serve others, not only in their health needs, but in many areas of their lives. We have opportunities oftentimes to share an idea that may change and impact their life, offer a solution to a challenge or problem they are presented with. We may be able to give them contacts, provide a referral to them that will be beneficial and helpful. We may have knowledge, skills or resources other than our health knowledge, skills and resources that may be beneficial. Ultimately, we are endeavouring to assist others to find success... not only success in their health, but success in every element of life.

The real philosophy of networking is service to others.

## 11. Traits of successful networkers

We spoke previously about the key traits of a successful networker, here are a few more:

- i. Positive attitude.
- ii. Enthusiasm and motivation.
- iii. Trustworthiness.
- iv. Good listening skills.
- v. Empathy.
- vi. Genuine concern for others.
- vii. An interest in other people.
- viii. Effective verbal communication.
- ix. The ability to read others.
- x. Self-confidence.
- xi. Comfortable speaking in a group.
- xii. Effective public speaking skills.
- xiii. Personal discipline, exemplified by the ability to follow up.
- xiv. Willingness to write handwritten thank you notes.
- xv. Appreciation and gratitude.
- xvi. Diplomacy skills.
- xvii. Flexibility.
- xviii. Problem-solving skills.
- xix. Resourcefulness.
- xx. Time management skills.
- xxi. Organisational skills.
- xxii. Patience.
- xxiii. A good memory.
- xxiv. A good memory for faces and names.
- xxv. Curiosity.
- xxvi. Knowledgeable.
- xxvii. Understanding of value of your profession.
- xxviii. Understanding the philosophy of wellness care.
- xxix. Believing in the principles of wellness care.
- xxx. Living in integrity with the principles of wellness care.

How do these character traits influence your networking ability? By living in a way that these character traits are reflected in your life, you inspire confidence in others.

The absence of them creates not only uncertainty in the minds of the people that you network with, but are counterproductive in creating a relationship.

If you are not confident in your communications, how can a person you are networking with feel confident?

If you do not believe in what it is that you do as a career, how can anyone else believe that you can help them?

If you are not polite, courteous and genuinely service-oriented, why would anyone want to help you?

If you are arrogant and disrespectful, the majority of people will avoid you. If you lack discipline and follow-through, you will lose opportunities and people will feel uninclined to work with you.

On the contrary, when you live these character traits, people are drawn to you and success is the inevitable outcome.

## **12. Networking does something powerful**

Yes, it is true that networking can grow your business, build relationships and provide you the opportunity to be of service to others and have others serve you. However, it does something even more powerful.

Networking causes you to stop!

When you have stopped, you take time to reflect and review your business, to understand it and how it influences others. It causes you to think about what you will say in your networking opportunities with others.

Will you just talk about whatever comes to mind, shoot the breeze and have no structure to your dialogue? Or will you have a definitive, planned and powerful communication? Will you have your USP, your Unique Selling Proposition... an effective 30 or 60 second commercial that defines exactly what it is that you do and how it represents a solution to many people's problems?

Yes, networking stops you and reminds you to think about what it is that you do, how you do it and the outcomes and benefits that you want as a result.

Not only that, it forces you to get out into the public, to communicate the benefits and advantages of the service you provide. It takes you out of your comfort zone and grows you as a person. All of these things make you a better person, a more professional business person and a greater success.

### **13. What networking is not**

We have a clearer picture of what networking is, however, it is also important to recognise what networking is not.

Networking is not selling others.

Networking is not manipulation.

Networking is not getting referrals for the sake of doing a marketing activity.

Networking is not trying to close a sale on the first meeting.

Networking is not about you.

Networking is about others, it is about service and contribution and it is about relationships.

Ivan Misner in the book, *Masters Of Networking*, summarises three rules of networking:

1. Be curious, ask questions and listen to answers. People love a good listener who is interested in what they do.
2. Learn from everybody. Talk with people at all levels, because everyone can teach you something.
3. Cultivate contacts with people in power who can bring you ideas, support and opportunities, people who enjoy making money and whose hearts and interests are like your own.

## **MORE ON ATTENDING A NETWORKING EVENT**

Cindy Mount and Jeremy Allen in the book, *Masters Of Networking*, provide the following 6-step system for what to do when attending a networking event:

1. Purpose...be clear on your reason for attending the event.
2. Goal...what do you need to accomplish at the event?
3. Plan...what is your plan to get the most out of the event?
4. Execution...do what needs to be done when it needs to be done.
5. Evaluation...evaluate your results. Did you find what you expected?
6. Follow-up...create a well-organised contact management system and ensure ongoing communication for your networking success.

It is important to realise that networking is not a matter of merely showing up, shaking hands and passing out business cards. It is a science. It requires preparation, planning and execution!

Mel Kaufmann, also in the book *The Masters Of Networking*, emphasises the following key points to maximise your networking opportunities:

1. Get to the convention (networking event) early... often the speakers, organisers and leaders are at the events early... *get there early* too!
2. Wear a smile... nothing says as much as a smile.
3. Volunteer to help... participation leads to relationships.
4. Introduce yourself to speakers... begin early building relationships.
5. Participate in the sessions... ask questions... sitting passively won't get you remembered.
6. Sit with strangers... don't sit with people you already know. Use the time to meet someone new.
7. Look for excuses to introduce people to each other... listen for commonalities, then be a great connector.
8. Consult the list... find out who is attending and look for people you would like to meet. Take every opportunity to start conversations.
9. Give feedback... offer suggestions to the meeting planner and [event] committee. Make positive suggestions. Offer to help so that you will stand out as a creative contributor.
10. Be prepared to job-hunt — even if you don't think you are looking for a job... take every opportunity to find out whether or not your networking can lead to other business opportunities.

And though it does not need saying (but I will), follow up after you get home.

To the extent that you were concise and compelling with your language, memorable in the minds of those that you met, or the extent to which you follow up, will yield effective results.

## THE CONTACT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

You will have noticed in each of the steps in successful networking that there is an emphasis on contact management.

Contact management: Recording the names and details of contact networks and the people they refer as well as ensuring that there is a follow-up system with those communications.

I would like to take this point a little further by giving you a checklist to structure the contact management process:

Ensure that you have a method for retaining the contacts and contact details of people you meet at a networking event. If you can get their business card, ensure that you do. If you

cannot get their business card, make certain that you get their name and that, as soon as your communication with them is complete, write down their name and any specific details on a piece of paper or within your mobile phone or PDA. In either case, immediately record any information that is relevant or pertinent. This includes writing on the back of the business card. The key here is to remember everything that is relevant and pertinent immediately so that it can be recalled for later communications.

1. Categorise your contacts... have a filing system for your networking processes at home or in the office, and organise those in a logical manner by which you can have convenient and quick access. This may either be an electronic or paper system.
2. Insert personal details in your contact management system... once you open a new file, that same day or evening, insert contact details and information about that contact. Details should include full name, business, interests, hobbies, information you received about their business (see scenario example for questions later in this program), what opportunities you perceive may exist with them, how you may serve and benefit them, ideas, knowledge and resources that may be helpful for them, and your general feeling or view of the relationship.
3. Immediate follow-up... follow up with the person, thanking them for their time, insight, and expressing genuine appreciation for the communications that you had. Do not do more than this on the initial communication. Remember, you are not looking for business on the first contact, you are looking to deepen the relationship. A handwritten note to this effect is the best option, however, a phone call or email will also suffice.
4. Reply to any return communications... invariably, the person will reply to your communication, either with a letter, by calling or replying via what they say on the call if you phone them, or they may even phone back, or, alternatively, they may email back. In either case, reply further to that communication with the intent of finding out if there is anything more that can be done.
5. Update your contact management system... any information that comes from the previous communication may now be updated in your system. You may be gaining further ideas on how you can serve them, help them or add value to the experience.
6. Take further action as necessary... now, you may contact them again with an idea, some benefit or advantage you can provide them or a way of helping them. Find a way to help or serve them.
7. Create a networking alliance... look at all of the networks that you have in your contact management system. Can any of them help each other, is there any way that there is an interaction between any of them that may be mutually beneficial or

serving of the group? Introduce those people, finding a way to demonstrate that there may be some benefit.

8. Continue to find ways to deepen the relationship... any other ideas that you may provide to them, any other service you can render or any other method you can use to ensure that you are deepening the relationship and building the connection.
9. Ask for help... there is no doubt, at some time, your network will ask if there is anything that they can do for you. It may be early in the piece or it may be after you have rendered the continued service and support that you naturally and inherently provide as a genuine person.

Mark Sheer suggests that the most powerful and unequivocally important statement to ask when seeking referrals is, "I am expanding my business and I need your help. Who do you know who...?"

And then, complete the phrase with what it is that you are seeking to achieve.

"Who do you know who... is looking for a chiropractor/naturopath/massage therapist?"

"Who do you know who... may be able to help with organising all my bookkeeping for the practice?"

"Who do you know who... has arthritis/blood pressure problems /migraines?"

"Who do you know who... has mentioned that they have lower back pain?"

"Who do you know who... has complained about their health or energy levels?"

The key here is to be very specific. Reproduce the types of phrases that people say when complaining about their situations that you have an interest in offering solutions for.

10. Express your appreciation and gratitude... once they provide a recommendation, express your appreciation and gratitude. Another handwritten letter, phone call or email.
11. Keep in regular contact... make sure that the contact doesn't end after the first recommendation. Continue to find ways to help each other, to serve your network and build the relationships.
12. Constantly update your contact management system... every time there is more communication, build the information within your contact management system.

## THE CORNERSTONE OF NETWORKING

If there were to be a single, most important cornerstone to successful networking... it would be *trust*. A person will not make a recommendation of you to another... unless they trust you.

A person whose relationship deepens to a point of real connection... has a foundation in trust.

A person will not continue to make recommendations with you... unless you validate their trust.

Trust embodies the success of networking. And, at the core of trust, is *integrity*; doing what you say you will do; being the person you have represented yourself to be; speaking with honesty and acting with genuineness.

You are given trust... when you are trustworthy, worthy of the trust you receive.

A person becomes more inclined to trust you when you have demonstrated that your interest is in them as much, if not more so, than in yourself.

Most importantly, trust is built over time, with experience and that is why networking is a time-based process... giving you time to establish your trustworthiness and for the people in your network to trust you.

## DESTROYING TRUST... AND RELATIONSHIPS (AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES) AT THE SAME TIME

We have just explained how important trust is and how to win people's trust, however, many people do the exact opposite.

Here is a checklist of things to avoid doing if you don't want to destroy trust:

- Do not focus on yourself, your needs or what you are after... focus on them.
- Don't talk too much... it is far better to listen.
- Don't get bogged down in details... keep things simple early on.
- Don't show off... name dropping, bragging and arrogance are a real turnoff.
- Don't demand... if you want something, ask politely.
- Don't put pressure on others... the previous point emphasised not to demand things. Also, don't interrogate others or put them under pressure. Everything will unfold as it is meant to.
- Arrogance... be humble, don't insist on being better than others in your group.

- Don't take advantage of your network... don't try to get things out of your network for free, take advantage of others or make inappropriate gains. Rather, look to serve.
- Mind your language... don't be rude, interrupt or use inappropriate language. Even if others use coarse language, tell rude jokes or make inappropriate comments... don't buy into it!
- Don't be evangelical... don't try and preach or convert people to your cause... accept people as they are. If people have interest in what you are doing or what you are expressing, be concise and short in answering questions. There will be plenty of time later for in-depth conversations.
- Don't try and work miracles... you don't need to be the only solution, you don't need to be a rescue angel. Help where you can and where it is appropriate. If it needs more than a simple solution, contact them later.
- Don't give unsolicited advice... if people want your help, they will ask!

## **WHAT A LITTLE NETWORKING CAN DO**

Harvey Mackay in the book, *Masters Of Networking*, provides 10 benefits that define *why* networking is so important:

1. A network replaces the weakness of the individual with the strengths of the group.
2. Networking is a mirror that reflects the reality of your world.
3. Learn more about your competitors through thine network.
4. My network can help you expand your network.
5. A network can enrich your life anywhere in the world.
6. A network can provide you with new experiences and knowledge.
7. Networking can help you help others.
8. Job security? Don't rely on the corporation. Rely on your network.
9. A network can make you look good.
10. A network expands your financial reach infinitely.

In this way, networking creates a powerful support team of people who are mutually growing and expanding together, an infinitely large marketing team that perpetuates the success of any organisation and facilitates constantly deepening and expanding relationships.

## THE RIVER IS WIDE AND DEEP

As we have repeatedly stated (though it is worth mentioning again) you are always networking. Which means the scope of your networking communications is wide, emphasising the parallel between a wide river and the scope of your networking opportunities.

However, the river is also deep.

The depth relates to the depth of the relationship and the intricacy of the communications within that relationship.

Initial communications are quite superficial. There are introductions and general questioning that gives you an understanding of their needs and their interests. However, the initial communication as part of networking remains superficial as we are at the shore, and remains shallow until we go further into the water.

As we go further into the water, we can no longer touch the ground. We need to start swimming... in doing this, we need to have more trust and more confidence. This is where the relationship begins to deepen, where the opportunities begin to surface. This is where we can show our strengths and where true service comes in.

However, the conversation deepens further out at the centre of the river. Here, there is a complex and deep relationship that exists. There are high levels of service and trust.

Only the stronger swimmers get out to the deep waters... and you only go out to the deep waters when you have a high level of confidence and trust in those swimming with you.

The level of success you derive from networking is determined by how wide and deep your river is.

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRUST, CONFIDENCE AND REFERRING

As the river deepens, so too does the extent of the referral network.

What is taking place as you go deeper into the river is you are building the trust that exists within the relationship. With trust as the foundation of the relationship, the person can have confidence in you, your recommendations and your ability to meet the needs of their family, friends, colleagues and associates if they were to refer.

As time increases, so too does trust. In fact, it looks like a mathematical exponential curve. Trust starts at a very low level at the time of the initial relationship. It doesn't increase linearly over time rather, it increases more rapidly. Though, it still takes time for it to build. Then, when sufficient trust has been established, confidence exists for a person to be able to make a recommendation.

That critical level will differ from person to person, situation to situation. However, rarely will a person make a recommendation without the presence of trust or confidence.

## THE ROAD TO MASTERY

Lance Mead in the book, *Masters Of Networking*, provides the following nine keys to becoming a master networker:

1. Embrace the “givers gain” philosophy...the master networker’s first thought is, “What can I do to help?”
2. Work in a disciplined structure... you need a systematic way of developing contacts, keeping track of appointments and following up on obligations.
3. Attend networking events... commit to regular attendance, even when you are feeling tired or would rather be sailing.
4. Plan your networking... be prepared. Have a well-thought-out plan for working the room, networking with significant participants, or having meaningful conversations with key people.
5. Accept the teachings of a mentor... if you adopt the attitudes and behaviours of one of the best, one day you may become a mentor yourself.
6. Become a great storyteller... people like to hear a good yarn.
7. Have a database of resources to help other people... cultivate a reputation as a person who knows the people who can get things done.
8. Keep an open mind... the most important thing you can know is that you don’t know it all.
9. Make relationships a part of your life... people will not share contacts with you just because you are smart and nice. They will share information and contacts because they share a relationship with you.

## SUMMING UP

You now have a framework for becoming a master networker yourself. You also have the opportunity to tie in a network with your other marketing endeavours, such as referrals and strategic joint venture partnerships, as well as building relationships with anybody in the marketing arena.

However, as with each of the other power strategies, don’t stop here with having read the information. Develop part of your marketing plan to incorporate these strategies.

To help, as always, we have provided the appendix following to give specific examples of how this may be incorporated as part of your marketing strategy. In this appendix, with the Networking Power Strategy, we provide scripts that define the networking process, enabling

you to emulate that. We will also provide examples of what is taking place during the script to help you to understand the intricacies of the scripts and how they are not simply robotic words to be used. Rather, they are an insightful process in human relations.

We also provide a copy of a handwritten letter so that you can keep in mind what is done as part of networking and have a model for providing a handwritten letter yourself.

## **NETWORKING... THE ART OF CREATING A COMMUNITY**

Guy Kawasaki highlights the value (and, in fact, need) in creating an ultra-loyal community around your business. He suggests the following steps:

1. Create something worth building a community around... it must be something people can get evangelic about.
2. Identify and recruit your “thunderlizards” — immediately... find the groups of people that love your services and products and ask them to build a community. Or, at least, ask them to help you to build a community.
3. Assign one person the task of building a community... find a team member willing to be an advocate for the community-building program.
4. Give people something concrete to chew on... don't just create a community, create a community that is meaningful, valuable and powerful. Create a community that changes things and adds value to people's lives.
5. Create an open system... use technology, software, forums or whatever is required to open up communication between all members of the community.
6. Welcome criticism... welcome, even celebrate, criticism to build stronger bonds within the community.
7. Foster discourse... create verbal exchange that allows everyone to participate in the exchange of ideas and opinions.
8. Publicise the existence of the community... don't hide it, get it out there!

I would add, make everyone you can part of this community: Staff, family of staff, clients, your strategic joint venture partners, vendors... make everyone and anyone part of this community, and make the community a movement.

Now you are really networking!

## THE MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF NETWORKING

Focusing your networking skills in the business arena is a considerable limitation to the benefits of the networking process.

If you needed help in the middle of the night, whether it was a loan of a few hundred or a few thousand dollars, whether it was a place to sleep after a difficult night or whether it was somebody to help with a medical emergency... how many people would you call on?

You could have one, two, maybe five or even ten people that you would be comfortable and confident that would be absolutely there for you in the middle of the night if you called, without reservation, without resentment or without being angry.

Genuine, loving and compassionate relationships allow you the opportunity to call on people when in need. However, it has to be a two-way relationship. You have to also be the type of person who, if somebody was to call on you in the middle of the night, would similarly respond without hesitation!

In this way, there are many dimensions to the networking process:

- The business dimension.
- The family dimension.
- Your personal dimension.
- The sporting dimension.
- The charitable dimension.

All of these areas are enhanced and improved on by networking.

Have you ever wanted to get a ticket to a sporting event... an impossibly hard sporting event to get tickets to? Genuine and real relationships conceived in a genuine and real networking process provide the opportunity.

Have you ever wanted to have a charitable impact upon your community? Networking makes it possible.

Have you ever wanted to stay with a friend or a relative in a distant city? Networking makes it possible.

However, the standard form of networking that most people think about is more like bludging. Networking on the other hand, provides an opportunity where people willingly and openly share their house, their resources and their contacts with generosity.

This is the purpose of this program... to give you the opportunity to know and develop the skills for networking so it influences every element of your life.

However, we have emphasised business throughout this program and, don't forget, there are many opportunities for developing your business through your network.

You may have an immense vision for your organisation, so large that you need counselling and advice from a person who has a multi-national company. You want to sit before young Packer or Murdoch to ask them questions about how to get your business to where it is that you would like it to be.

But that may seem impossible to you now. You don't know the Packer or Murdoch family, you don't have enough "pull" to be able to get them to come and talk to you about your business. That's because you have not invested fully in your network!

Develop your network and you will know somebody... who knows somebody... who knows somebody (you know where we are going with this, the six degrees of separation)... who knows somebody... who knows somebody who knows the Packers.

If there is enough trust within your network, if you have sufficient credibility within your network, and if you have a deep emotional bank account with your network, then it is only a matter of asking and you will be able to sit before the Packers and the Murdochs to get the business advice that you desire.

Understanding networking in this way begins to give you an understanding of how you can truly achieve all of your dreams through the networking process.

## **KEY REASONS FOR NETWORKING**

Here are a few key reasons you may not have thought of that validate the value of networking:

- There are certain weaknesses that you have or skills you are missing... your network may strengthen these weaknesses and teach you those skills.
- If you have a good relationship with your network, they will let you know of things that are happening that you need to know about, such as challenges that you may face, events that may have a negative impact upon you or things that you are doing that are having a negative influence that you are simply not aware of.
- Every time you network, you expand your network not by one but by an incremental amount. Every person you network with has their own network and therefore increases the resources available to you as a result.
- Your network knows things that you don't know. Expanding your network is like expanding your knowledge and skill base.

- Your network is not just about you... people in your network can help other people, either people you meet or people in your network, or your network may be available to help others' networks. What goes around comes around, and in order for somebody to want to be an important part of your network, you need to be an important part of theirs.
- A network allows you the speed of transition, the speed of getting from where you are now to where it is that you would ideally like to be. You may not know the quickest route or you may not have all of the resources necessary to get to where you are wanting to go. However, if you build a network of people, they may be able to give you direction, advice, or even the lift that you need to get to where you are wanting to go.
- These reasons emphasise the importance of being genuine in the process of creating a network.

You don't get a network because it is useful to have and is a marketing tool or something that you can use to succeed.

The purpose of a network starts with your ability to serve and contribute to others. It is a benevolent process of wanting connection with others, to be part of other people's lives and to have people who care about you being part of your life.

These are the foundation principles for a network and when a network develops under these principles, it is then that you can call on these people and you will have people that are willing to help you.

Don't expect your network to help you if you have built a network for the purpose of using them for your own success.

## **BEFORE MEETING A NEW POTENTIAL PART OF YOUR NETWORK**

If you are going to expand your network, one of the things that you can do before meeting a person who may be potentially part of your new network, is find out everything you can about them.

Do your research about them, find out what their interests are, what their experiences are, and if there is anything they need or want.

If you can find a way to service that want or need, feel free to do so. Not because you expect anything in return. Not because it will impress them... simply because you can. And because it is the right thing to do. Because you want to serve and contribute to others.

It is said that Bill Clinton, former US president, would write on a 3x5 palm card all of the contacts he had met during that day, building his database of networks. This is a process you can apply in your own life.

On palm cards, write a space for the:

- Name.
- Contact numbers.
- Facts.
- Email.
- Websites.
- Business or company they work for.
- Their birth date.
- Members of their families.
- Important dates to that person.
- Any significant events in their life, career, sporting or otherwise.
- Any important accomplishments they have achieved.
- Any interests, hobbies or recreational activities.
- Any charities or organisations that they are a part of or feel are important.

**Note:**

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Don't only just put their details on the card, make sure you remember to calendar the important events of their life, and contact them at those times. Watch for important or up-and-coming events that may be of interest to them, that they may not be aware of and you have the opportunity to share with them.

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Look out for events that may have an influence on their career or their life. And if they need help... make sure that you are there for them.

Most importantly, if there are difficult or painful events taking place in their life, make sure to be there for them. People are always contacting their networks when they want things or to maintain the communication. However, when times are difficult, that's when it is most difficult to contact others. You feel uncomfortable, you feel as though they may need their space, their time and don't want people around.

I am not suggesting you impose yourself upon them, but let them know that you are there for them. And if they are reaching out, take the time to be there for them and with them. Equally, if there is an important event in their life... something wonderful, some celebration or something positive that they are enjoying... be there for those events, too.

While you can always send a courtesy card celebrating their success, there is nothing so powerful as being there, shaking their hand, giving them a hug and celebrating their successes with them.

People tend to remember those people who were there for them when they needed them and for the celebrations they had... and they also remember those who weren't!

It is important to keep the information about your network organised and manage that information, regularly updating it and providing information to these contacts on a regular basis.

So what can you do with this information?

First, let me start by saying... this means that you no longer have to send another business Christmas card.

Hang on, you said that we should stay in regular contact!

Yes. Regular contact... not contact that is irrelevant and seen as a necessary evil of business.

How many times do you get Christmas business cards from those people that you have met only once, or that don't mean very much to you and that you know you mean very little to them?

Well, at least from my perspective... I can say I get a number of Christmas cards each year that I would have no idea why they would even send them to me.

This card allows you to find out more about the people in your contact list and send them something meaningful and purposeful.

It lets you do something that is remembered, that will be valued and appreciated.

Hey, why not send a present to their kids or grandkids? Something that would be valuable, something that is meaningful.

You don't always have to do what is expected, or what is commonplace. Do something that is remembered, something that is valuable.

And it doesn't matter who you are networking with. You don't always have to network with the person who you think is most important in an organisation or who will be able to contribute most to your success. You would be surprised, every person has their place. Every person can contribute something valuable and every person is worthy of your attention, your service and your contribution to them.

Do not limit your network only to people you perceive to be important. That says something about your character. Instead, express your character by recognising that everybody is important, and everybody is worthy to be one of your connections, and for you to connect to and serve.

Besides, oftentimes if you want to get to an important person, a decision-maker, knowing their gatekeeper gets you in. If the gatekeeper is one of your contacts, then you already have a foot in the door. If you think assistants are unimportant, then not only are you fooling yourself, you are preventing yourself from achieving many things that you otherwise would have by not acknowledging the importance that they have, both in their role as gatekeeper and as who they are as people.

## **THE EXPANDED NETWORKS**

As we come to the end of this program, there is another network you need to take into consideration...

Your family's network!

Your spouse, your children, your brothers and sisters and your parents... maybe even your cousins, uncles and aunties and grandparents... they all know people. They all have their own networks. The relationship that exists within family oftentimes gives you the opportunity to call on these networks, to leverage the relationship and have opportunities that you would otherwise not have had.

On this point... it is for this reason that it is imperative for you to treat your spouse's friends with respect. You may not always like your spouse's friends, however, if you always treat them with respect, are courteous and polite... if there comes a time when you need support from your spouse, and they reach out to their network, there is an increased likelihood of you being supported.

If, however, you have been antagonistic, expressed your disdain for your spouse's choice in friends, the likelihood is significantly reduced. Always treat others as you would like to be treated yourself. In fact, always treat others as best as you possibly can, whether you like them or not!

## **ONE FINAL WORD ON ASKING FOR HELP FROM YOUR NETWORK**

Firstly, it is important that you feel comfortable asking for help from your network.

You may not be sure a person will say yes, you may not even be comfortable asking.

Nonetheless, if there is a need, it is important that you give the other person the opportunity to say yes or no.

Too many people believe that when they ask people for help they are going to get a “no.” They feel as though they may be imposing on other people. However, they forget human nature. It is in our nature that we like to help others, that we like to do what we can for people. Do not be afraid to ask, you may be surprised at the willingness of people to help you. Equally, do not be unhappy if you receive a “no.” People still have the right to say no, however, it is important that you give them the opportunity to say yes.

Equally, when you ask... ask for something that you know or believe that they will be able to give.

If you ask too much from a person, you not only put them in an uncomfortable position, you make them feel as though what they would otherwise have given, if they could have, will be too little or insignificant or unimportant.

Be sensitive to what it is that you ask from people and recognise that there are limits to what people can give. Ensure that you are not going beyond their limits so that they are put in an uncomfortable position and prevented from giving when they otherwise would have.

## **YOUR NETWORKING REPORT CARD**

Harvey Mackay in his book, *Dig Your Well Before You Are Thirsty*, provides the following 12 questions as a networking report card which you should rate one to five, one being “not true” and five being “very true.” The answer to these questions advises the effectiveness of your networking and the reach of the network:

1. I have a large network of people I can call on when I need help, advice, information or a resource.
2. When I meet someone new, I record and file information about that person within 24 hours.
3. I add at least one new person to my network file at least once a week.
4. I follow up with new contacts immediately — writing a note, making a phone call or sending a clipping.
5. I keep track of special things — like their family, hobbies and achievements — that matter to my contacts.
6. I can easily find out when I was last in contact with someone by looking at my networking files.
7. When I mail something out — a resume, sales letter or change of address — I can count on having correct name spellings, titles, addresses, for everyone in my network.
8. I know about and acknowledge special dates like birthdays, anniversaries and holidays.
9. When I want to give a business gift, I can count on my networking file to give me an excellent idea on what the person might like.

10. I make it easy for others to add me to their networks by providing my business card, notifying them of address changes, and keeping them informed about my career progress.
11. When friends ask me for the name of a good resource on a particular subject, I am usually able to locate one from my network.
12. When the moment comes, I can usually tap into my network to wow a prospect, a boss or a potential employer with special information or an expert resource.

Finally, don't presume to ask something of a person that is not part of your formal network.

Also, don't burn your bridges... people that are a part of your network have been there for a reason and, while they may not have been in contact recently, that does not mean they are no longer part of your network.

Keeping your heart open to your network is like keeping your doors open, you will never know when the person is ready to walk though.

## NOTES

## NOTES

*Transforming **your** health care practice **your way***

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