

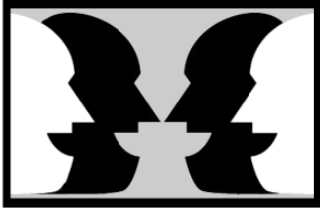
Connection Pros

Please answer this question for me. What is the main reason why people don't network? Is it because they don't know where to go? NO! Is it because they never know what to say when they get to a networking event? No, but you're getting warmer. Could it be that they have some level of fear or discomfort about networking? THAT'S IT!! WE HAVE A WINNER!!

In all the years I have been inspiring people to become better and more comfortable networking professionals, the number one reason why people don't network is FEAR! Over 95% of people who network have some level of fear. The amazing part is that some of the people don't look like the type of people who would be nervous.

I would like to offer three simple tips on how to overcome your fears of networking. If you embrace this information, you will become more comfortable while networking and you will help others become more comfortable too.

TIP # 1. The best way to start feeling more comfortable talking to new people is to go out and start talking to people EVERYWHERE!! When I say everywhere, I mean everywhere. I'm talking grocery store lines, bank lines, while you're waiting to board an airplane, inside elevators and anywhere else. It isn't difficult to do. All you need to do is make a friendly comment about almost anything. In an elevator, ask how the person's day is going. In an airplane line, make light of the lengthy security process you just went through. By talking to strangers, you are giving them permission to do the same with you. What you say doesn't really matter. What matters is that by practicing talking to anyone, not only are you helping yourself feel more comfortable, but you are making the other person feel more comfortable too. I also suggest that you start carrying on conversations with what I like to call Non-threatening individuals. Some examples would be your UPS person, your bank teller, your next door neighbor. I used to use your postal carrier as an example of a non-threatening individual but over the past few years, some of them have become a bit more threatening than others, but still most postal people are very kind, very peaceful people. The reason these people are so easy to talk to is that they no impact on the success or failure of your life. These are people that you can have easy comfortable conversations with and it gives you the opportunity to practice talking with people in general.



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TIP #2. For those of you that need a little extra push to get started, I want suggest that you motivate yourself into being a great networker. Think about the last time that you had to really pump yourself up to do something. It might have been a difficult golf shot, or a presentation to a huge client, or a first date with that special girl. You said things to yourself like “Yes, I can do this.” I know I’m going do good at this,” “I will succeed.” It’s the same thing in networking. As you walk into a function, say to yourself, “OK I’m going to go in here, I’m going meet people, I’m going see how I can help these individuals, I’m going do this, I can do this,” and keep saying this to yourself. Say, “I can do this, I can do this, I can do this.”

Brian Tracy once said, “Fake it until you make it.” because by convincing yourself that you are a great networker, the better networker you will be. Just keep saying to yourself, “I’m a fearless networker, I’m a fearless networker. Get yourself pumped up and ready to go and you’ll see just how fearless you can really be.

TIP #3. When people ask you what you do for a living, how do you answer? Do you babble out the first thing that comes to your mind? Are you constantly searching for the right way to answer this question? This is one of the greatest creators of discomfort at a networking event. The best way to overcome this fear is to know your material better. When you go to a function and you know that people will want to know what you do for a living, make sure you have a well-prepared introduction to respond with. Make sure you practice your introduction many times as it will make your response more conversational and it will make you more comfortable too. Please excuse this shameless plug but I have another program called Promoting Yourself in 10 seconds or less. It explains the importance of developing a powerful 10-second introduction and how to create a line that works best for you. This is not an easy process by any means but, if done properly, a good 10 second intro can make your listener say the three most beautiful words in the world; TELL ME MORE!!!

I hope these tips help you become a great networker. Networking can be fun and easy once you know how to do it fearlessly. See you next month!