

Networking Events – Checklist

Planning

1. Obtain a guest list, in advance if possible, and identify:
 - Who you would like to meet specifically (selection criteria)
 - Anyone you already know, who could potentially make an introduction to the above people
 - Which of your competitors will be there
 - Who else is going from your own group
2. Ensure you have business cards, diary etc.
3. Prepare your personal thumbnail:
 - Who you are, what you do (ie. what you help other people to do)
 - What will you answer to the questions: “what’s different about what you do?/ why should someone come to you?”
4. Be clear about your objectives – to target those you wish to meet, to establish initial rapport & to gain commitment to a follow up 1-2-1 meeting

The Event

1. Access states of confidence and passionate curiosity before you enter (see what you saw, hear what you heard and feel how good that felt – anchor it!)
2. Upon arrival, check the name badges on the desk to see who is already in the room (and who has not yet arrived) – ask the host to point you in the direction of those people you really want to meet (they will often take you over and introduce you!)
3. Put your name badge on your right lapel (easier for people to see it when you shake hands)
4. Avoid eating - you’re there for business and chewing a chicken wing while talking doesn’t create the best first impression!
5. Remember, smile, eye contact, open handshake
6. Start with easy, open questions eg. “What brought you here today?”, “who do you know (from the host)?”, “what do you do?”, “what made you go into that?”, “what do you like about it?”, “what’s different about the way you do it?”, “who are you up against in your market?”, “what kind of contacts are you looking for from this event?”

7. Passionate curiosity – really listen and show you’re interested, give them your 100% undivided attention
8. When asked, deliver your thumbnail and, if appropriate, a value statement (how what you do helps others ie. the value you bring to your clients)
9. Close off the discussion with agreement to follow up:
 - a. “I’d really like to take this further, how about we get together sometime in the next couple of weeks?”
 - b. “It’s been interesting talking to you, I’d like to take our conversation further but this is clearly not the time - what if I give you a call on Tuesday so we can arrange an exploratory chat sometime in the next few weeks?”
10. Swap cards, write the date and time you agreed you’d call them on the back of their card and exit

Follow-up

1. Review your objectives for the event – mission accomplished? What would you change next time?
2. Call/e-mail the targeted individuals as agreed at the event – keep your promises in relation to timings.