



Silver-Robins Consulting

## Prospecting Strategies Networking

One of the best prospecting strategies is networking. Networking means connecting with a selected group of people who may be able to use your products/services; help you with resources or referrals; and who you may be able to help with resources or referrals.

### Why network?

- To meet people and turn them into customers/clients.
- To build and nurture long-term relationships.
- To know people who can help you with resources and referrals.

When networking properly, no one feels pressured, used, or put on the spot. You may get direct business from people you meet or you may get indirect business from them through referrals. Networking is a process whereby overtime you develop trust with the people you meet. Networking takes time (generally 5 hours weekly preparing for and attending events) and is measurable (number of expected prospects to meet weekly or monthly).

Networking starts with a Networking Plan. Develop your Networking Plan by answering these questions.

1. What are your networking goals (number of monthly events to attend; number of prospects expected to meet; amount of marketing dollars to be used for networking activities; etc.)?

2. How well defined is your 30-second introduction?

You need a 30-second introduction you can break down to 15-seconds. The 15-second introduction will be used most often when meeting someone in person or calling someone on the phone. The 30-second introduction will be used most often when you stand up in front of a group at networking events.

Your introduction is a very important tool. It describes:

- What you do
  - Who you do it for
  - How you do it
- (A few details about the products/services you provide. Try to word it as benefits or results to your client rather than a list of what you provide.)

### 3. Keeping in Touch

It is important to have a system for handling all the business cards you collect at each networking event you attend. How will you organize your networking contacts to make it easy for you to use your contacts strategically?

Options:

- \* Use a Rolodex System.
- \* Alphabetize your business cards.
- \* Use technology. Buy contact management software such as ACT; Goldmine; or Outlook

### 4. Following -up

If you take the time to attend networking events and do not immediately follow-up several things can happen:

1. You can't remember why you asked for someone's business card  
(Always carry a pen and write on each business card the date, place, organization and any note to prompt you to follow-up.)
2. You run the risk of the other person not remembering who you are.

There are numerous ways to follow-up with contacts:

- \* Send a "nice to meet you" message to a new contact.
- \* Invite a contact for coffee or lunch.
- \* Read the newspaper watching for publicity about your contacts. Clip out the article(s) and send them a copy with a sticky note message.
- \* Call with a referral.



...Soar Like a Bird

For more information on building an effective Networking Plan contact: Gail Zelitzky, Silver-Robins Consulting, 773-665-2340 or email me at [gail@silver-robins.com](mailto:gail@silver-robins.com). Silver-Robins Consulting offers both individual and group business performance coaching.