

Keep in Touch | Module #8

Networking

Networking can be *a lot* of fun! Approach it that way. And be patient with networking. As with this entire program, networking is about creating relationships with people. Depending on who you talk to it takes anywhere from three to six months to see results from regularly attending a networking event.

Why? Because it can take that long for people to feel like they know you, especially if they only see you once a month (this is why being proactive and meeting people outside these events is so helpful!). And once you're a regular of the group, you automatically have a trust factor with people new to the group.

The point? All relationships take time and effort and they're usually totally worth it.

1. Before Networking

As with most things, we're diving a bit deeper than the obvious. Take your time with these questions.

1. Where to network

Remember the very first worksheet you did? The one with identifying your ideal client? It's time to pull that out again. Print another copy if needed and fill it out again. The question to pay particular attention to: *where do your ideal clients gather?*

Yes, this might seem like a fairly obvious question, but I remember a story about a lawyer who said she didn't network anymore because it was a waste of time. Well, it turned out she was networking only at places other lawyers were, at various associations and groups for lawyers. But other lawyers were *not* her ideal client. She was networking at the wrong places!

Spending time with other people in the same business as you and learning with them is great, but if you're going with the intention of meeting people that might one day be your client, that's the wrong place.

So, where do your ideal clients hang out? What events, workshops or conferences do they attend? What associations or groups do they belong to?

Can you attend those too? Can you belong to the associations or groups they belong to?

Answer the questions below. It might be helpful to research online too. You can also interview a couple of your ideal clients to find out from them where they hang out.

What are three events, workshops or conferences that my ideal client attends?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

What are three associations they belong to?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

What are three organizations or networking groups they belong to?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Now, where will you network and how often?

How often will you attend networking events? Once a month? Once a week? Or something else?

Which events will you regularly attend?

2. What to wear

This is the same advice as from last week. Have at least three outfits for networking and/or in person meetings. This doesn't have to be fancy, it can be the same pair or two of pants with three different tops (6 outfits!).

Try them on beforehand, especially if you haven't worn them in a while to make sure they fit correctly and that they portray you the way you want *(there's nothing like realizing there's a big hole in the elbow of your sweater when you're in the car...)*.

3. What to share

You probably will have less time to talk with someone in a networking setting then when you're meeting with them. So, prepare *three things* to share about your business. And one of them can be about you personally if you'd like, or make the personal one your fourth.

Again, these can be:

- What you do for your clients
- A recent client success story
- Something new that's happening in your business
- Something new happening in your life
- An opportunity or event they might be interested in

What else can you share?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

4. Conversation starters

These are similar to the “What to ask” section from Module #6. In some cases, they are the same. However, the focus is *mostly* on learning about other person professionally.

And like before, be prepared to have your own answers to these questions.

Some examples are:

- What is it you do?
- What do you like most about it?
- How did you get started?
- What do you like best about what you do?
- What resources or support are you looking for right now?
- What are you excited about right now?
- Have you been attending these meetings long?

Also, it doesn't hurt to have a more personal or in depth question in the mix. This way you have something to ask the people you already know the basics about. My favorite go to question is “What's new or exciting in your business or life?” Generally, it makes people think for a minute.

One other thing you can do here is ask very basic questions that help you determine if you can help them with your services/product. For example, I might ask someone where else they network or how they find their clients.

I want to be clear here – you're asking questions because you want to *help* people, not because you're simply looking for a new client. I'm pretty sure that helping people is your primary concern because you're here. However, I also know that sometimes we can feel like we're simply following a script and it might feel icky. One way to keep the *help* and *service* feeling top of mind is to think about when you were completely in that *help* and *service* feeling with a client or potential client. Use your intention bonus sheet to pull that feeling forward into the way you want your current interactions to feel and be.

Practice these questions aloud to see if they sound natural to you.

What are some other questions you could ask?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

5. Set your intention

Yep, it's important! Print out the bonus sheet and set your intention for your networking event.

2. During Networking**1. How to start conversations**

You have your conversation starters ready! Now how do you approach someone to actually start a conversation?

Yes, some people have *no* problem in this area. If you're one of those people, feel free to skip this part.

For some of us though, walking into a room full of people we don't know is downright intimidating! I still remember the feeling of terror I felt in the car on my way to my first few networking events. I didn't know *anyone* and it was a *huge* step out of my comfort zone.

There will be a kind soul that will come and talk to you and help you feel at home. Generally, there is at least one person like this in each group. At some groups I attend, there are only one or two people *not* like that. And the great thing about networking regularly is one day you walk in and realize you know more people in the room than you don't know.

And if you're networking at a few different places, you'll find that even when you're networking somewhere new, there are a couple of friendly faces from other places.

So, back to the topic, how do you start a conversation? How do you approach someone?

Eye contact. Just start looking around the room and make eye contact with someone and smile, then walk over and introduce yourself. You already know a couple of questions you want to ask, so you're set!

Also, don't feel like you have to do a lot of the talking. Most people feel like they had a really great conversation with someone when they've done all the talking and were just listened to!

Just be genuinely interested in what they're saying and make eye contact.

And when the conversation has run its course, tell them it was great meeting them and exchange business cards, if you haven't already.

2. Exchanging business cards

This is pretty straight forward. The script goes like this: "I've enjoyed meeting you. Why don't we keep in touch? Do you have a business card?"

If you promised to send them something or introduce them to someone in your conversation be sure to write that on their card so you don't forget!

3. Other things

There are many books, blog posts and opinions that cover the topic of "working a room." Personally, I think there's a truth in a lot of it (although you want to be doing more than just collecting handshakes and business cards). The point is: different people network in different ways.

Some people are having great conversations while circling the room, while others are happier to stay on the edge of a room and invite people to come to them. Determine what works best for you.

3. After Networking

You have a stack of business cards, now what!

1. Processing the business cards

Enter everyone into your contact management system. And make a note about whether you want to meet them in person, have a phone conversation, send a quick "nice to meet you" email or do nothing right now. And put a date on when you'll do that if it's not the same day.

Also, make sure that you note if they expressed an interest in what you do! I honestly don't know how much business I lost because I didn't follow up with people who said, even jokingly, "I could *totally* use a productivity coach!"

Occasionally, you're probably going to meet someone that just rubs you the wrong way. That's okay. Hopefully it doesn't happen for a very long time. However, if it does, put them in your contact management system with a brief note. This way when you're going through your list later you won't wonder why you never sent John a quick email.

2. Contacting someone you want to learn more about

You've entered them into your contact management system and you want to reach out to them. Below are some scripts you can use. Modify them for your purpose (coffee, phone conversation or otherwise).

Also, refer back to Module 5, The Initial Phone Call. There's a lot of overlap here.

Phone script

One quick thing to note. You might want to suggest a place that's between the two of you. So, you might want to find out where they'll be coming from and suggest a location that's in the middle.

	Hello.	:Acquaintance
You:	Hi { <i>name</i> }, this is { <i>your name</i> }. We met on Tuesday at { <i>event</i> }. Is this a good time?	
	Sure	:Acquaintance
You:	I'd love to learn more about your business and your life and how I might be of service. Would you like to meet for coffee or setup a phone conversation?	
	I'd love to meet up with you! Let's have coffee.	:Acquaintance
You:	Does { <i>option 1</i> } or { <i>option 2</i> } work better for you at { <i>location</i> }.	
	{ <i>preferred option</i> } at { <i>location</i> } sounds good.	:Acquaintance
You:	Great! I look forward to seeing you on { <i>preferred option</i> } at { <i>location</i> }. I'll also send you an email with the information.	
	Wonderful! See you then.	:Acquaintance

Note 1: refer back to Module 5 for the follow-up email script.

Note 2: "how I might be of service" – This doesn't mean you're trying to sell them anything. Being of service also is sharing a resource or something else they would find helpful or need.

Voicemail script

Hi {name}, this is {your name}. We met on Tuesday at {event}. I'd love to learn more about what you do over coffee next week. My number is {your number}. That's {your number}. I know email is better for some people so I'll send you an email too.

Email script

Hi {name},

We met recently at {event} and exchanged business cards. It was great to get to know you a bit, those types of events are wonderful for that. I'd love to get to know a little more about your business and your life and how I might be of service.

We can do this a couple of different ways:

- 1) Coffee meeting – a nice excuse to get to know each other and have some coffee or tea.
- 2) Phone conversation – same great content from the comfort and convenience of our own desks.
- 3) Email exchange – you can just reply to this mail, letting me know what you're up to and what you're looking for. And with your permission, I'll do the same.

Please let me know if you are interested in any of the choices above. In the meantime, there are a few other ways to learn more about what I do that may be of service to people you know. Please check out my website and join my mailing list at {website address} or "like" my page on Facebook here: {Facebook page address}.

I look forward to hearing back from you!

With Gratitude,
{your name}

The above is a modified version of a follow-up email originally created by my friend and colleague Rebekah Beneteau. Rebekah is a Sex and Sensuality Coach and can be found at www.PleasureEvolution.com.

3. Contacting someone who expressed interest in learning more

Hi {name},

It was great meeting you this week at {event} and exchange business cards.

As a quick reminder (I know remembering someone through email can be difficult after attending an event where you've met lots of new people), I'm {name} and I help {share a little of your elevator pitch here}.

When we chatted you mentioned that {what they said that prompted the email}.

If you're interested in learning more about how I might be able to help you, we can have a Getting Acquainted call. It's a 30-minute call where {describe your Getting Acquainted call}. I'm available {option 1} or {option 2}.

I look forward to hearing from you!

With Gratitude,
{your name}

4. Contacting someone you want to reach out to, but doesn't fall into either of the above categories (optional)

Sometimes it's nice just to reach out and say nice to meet you.

Hi {name},

It was great meeting you this week at {event} and exchange business cards.

As a quick reminder (I know remembering someone through email can be difficult after attending an event where you've met lots of new people), I'm {name} and I help {share a little of your elevator pitch here}.

If you'd like to learn more about what I do check out my website and join my mailing list at {website address} or "like" my page on Facebook here: {Facebook page address}.

I hope you're having a fabulous week!
{your name}

As with everything else, change things up to reflect you. Also, you might notice that there's a little different feel and wording in some of the examples above. Mix and match them in a way that works for you!

Also, when you have the meeting, whether in person or otherwise, don't forget to refer back to "The First Meeting: Receiving Permission" (Module #6). Because you *are* having your first meeting.

Again, have fun with it. You'll meet lots of fun and interesting people through networking.

One last thing, on the next page is a checklist you can use before every networking event. Stick it in your purse or pocket if you need to. You can review it in the car beforehand.

Before networking checklist

- **Do I know where I'm going? Do I have directions?**
- **What am I wearing?**
- **What is my intention? *Fill out your intention worksheet!***
- **What are the 3-4 things I want to share about myself:**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

- **What are 3-4 things I can ask to start, or continue, a conversation?**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

- **What is my elevator speech?**
