

## **Networking Checklist**

- ✓ Identify Networking opportunities, make a list and decide which events you will attend. Think about how much time you plan to invest each month, quarter, year. There may be a Fee to attend some events, so remember to consider this in your Budget. Go at least twice and get a better feel for the group before deciding to join, as you may be nervous the first time, all members may not be at every event, relationships take time.
- ✓ Decide what your goal / outcome is for the Networking event, ie. meet 3-5 new business contacts / potential new Clients.
- ✓ Dress appropriately. Keep in mind that 'perception is projection', so project the image you want people to see.
- ✓ Arrive early. This allows you the opportunity to meet and greet people as they arrive, as people may have limited time after the event for Networking.
- ✓ Be yourself. Be authentic, genuine and sincere. Be polite, courteous and diplomatic. People buy people.
- ✓ Have your tools of trade with you. A Business Card is mandatory. Carry these with you at **ALL** times. Also think about whether you take your diary with you. An opportunity may present itself to make an appointment on the spot. Be ready!!
- ✓ Prepare conversation starters. Communication is key in relationships, so have 2-3 opening questions in mind when meeting people. 'Ice breakers' tend to relax the atmosphere. Many people do not want to talk about their job. Find out what puts a sparkle in their eyes and talk about this. What are their interests outside of work? How do they spend their weekends? Focus on the other person, ask open questions and listen, listen, listen!!
- ✓ The purpose is to build relationships, NOT make a sale. NEVER ask for a sale.
- ✓ Exchange Business Cards if appropriate. This gives you permission to contact the person again and vice versa.
- ✓ Follow up!! This is crucial. Make a phone call or email the person within 7 days after the event. You might like to thank them for their time, say how much you enjoyed speaking with them, show interest in their business, share information you discussed or promised to send, suggest a time to meet.
- ✓ Maintain accurate and up-to-date records. Record important details such as where / when you met the person, who referred you, family names, birthdays, pets, favourite sports / hobbies / interests, the person may have told you they just bought a new boat or had their first child. This information provides you with a conversation starter when you next contact the person. An opener might be, "So, how's the new boat?"
- ✓ Keep in regular contact and stay top of mind. Some people have a convincer of 3 before they buy, ie. they need 3 contacts with you before they'll buy from you. This may be meeting at a Networking event, a follow up phone call / email / personal note from you, scheduling a meeting, inviting them to an event as your guest, sending through an article of interest, asking for advice, referring a potential new Client to them.
- ✓ Have FUN!! Relax, enjoy yourself, keep smiling and learn from the experts.