Communicate and Network Your Way to More Success!

by Lillian D. Bjorseth

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Welcome to another issue of* Communicate and Network Your Way to Success. *My mission is to help you build social capital. I also keep you up-to-date on my public workshops, events and products to help you hone your skills and grow your network. Contact me for keynotes, workshops, in-house training or coaching in vital networking and communication skills or if you would like to reproduce any part of this newsletter. Enter lillianspeaks@duoforce.com or unmark as spam in your database to ensure you receive this newsletter. If you are can't view it here, read it online at http://www.duoforce.com/ldb/direct3-newsletter.htm.

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Building Relationships is a Continuous Process

Over the holidays I was interviewed for an upcoming e-book on relationship building. One of the questions I was asked is becoming a perennial favorite from clients, audiences and the media: How do you use networking to help you in these tougher economic times and especially when you are in transition?

The answer is simple: if you need to *start* to leverage networking when the times get tougher or when you are no longer employed, you are in for some rough sledding.

You should be networking continuously (so you have people who will gladly help you anytime) starting with pre-school and grade school. My grandsons call them play dates. They qualify as much as relationship-building events as do meetings and conferences or having coffee with someone. The challenge is that you tend not to stay in touch with the people on your Little League team or those you stayed up with all night cramming for exams … until you suddenly need them because your cradle to grave job leaves you looking at an early job "death."

Of course, some of you continue this pattern as you change jobs, leave professional organizations or move geographically. You keep breaking those links in your networking chain. (Some of them rust and can never be repaired.) Others of you network until you find a job and then fall back into your old ways. After all, you are busy at work and want a life

outside of it, too. Networking is an after thought until you get a pink slip or discover you're the only employee in your department not to get a raise.

Networking is a continuous activity because it is the number one way to build relationships, the key to business and career success. Relationships are built on trust, and trust develops over a period of time. It is also wise to weed the seeds you plant at networking events to make sure you are spending time on mutually beneficial relationships. Networking is as much about giving as it is getting.

Your network is also your number one business support source when you are in transition. Your family supports you in a different way. They are not the ones you commiserate with when you had three job interviews in one day, and none of them was positive. You need to talk with people who understand … who can remove themselves emotionally from the conversation because they don't depend on you to put bread on their tables.

Here are some key ways to build trust so you always have a pocketful of good business relationships no matter where you find yourself in your career. Keep in mind that people build trust at different rates; some people enter new situations as a doubting Thomas while others assume trust is a given. The suggestions below are ones you can control and generally speed up the relationship-building process.

- **Behave with integrity**. Be honest, reliable and truthful in all your dealings. No one undermines *you* like you when your actions and words do not mesh.
- **Be trustworthy**. I still remember the sage advice a human resources director gave me at one of my first jobs. To find out whom you can trust, share information with only one person at a time. If others learn the same information, you know from whence it came.
- **Listen with your eyes and ears**. Practice your people-reading skills until you know what others are really saying and then respond accordingly.
- **Listen in proportion to how you were born**. If you forget, look in a mirror and note you have two ears and one mouth.
- **Support those who work for you/with you**. Consensus doesn't mean you always get your way; it means you are a team player.
- **Share good news as well as bad,** particularly if you are in charge. It will stifle rumors and build rapport among the troops.
- **Meet you commitments**. Always do what you say you will do … else don't promise it. Over the years, I guestimate that at least 30-40 people have said to me they would send me a business card (they had run out, hmmm, wonder how that happened!) or email me their information. I've yet to receive one card in the mail and, sadly, have received only a few emails. They easily ruled themselves out of my network.

Lillian Announces New Relationship-building Book/Online Courses

Here's great news if you would like to increase the results of your continuous relationship-building efforts! The third edition of my best seller, *Breakthrough Networking: Building Relationships That Last,* is now available at **www.duoforce.com**. In fact, you can even read a sample chapter!

You'll want to get this edition even if you have my first or second because it is jam-packed with new information in a new format. I logically and easily guide you through what to do before an event, how to work it and how to follow up, three vital parts of the strategic networking process.

Plus, I integrate the powerful DISC behavioral assessment tool into the relationship-building process and also share how what you say before you speak (appearance and behavior) contribute greatly (positively or negatively) to the networking process. Priced at just $21.95, its value far exceeds its cost!

For those who want to work more methodically at improving networking skills, I have also created a comprehensive five-part online series of courses, "Building Relationships for Business and Career Success." Courses can be bought individually or for only $103.13 for the entire series. Visit **www.duoforce.com** and click on the icon on the lower right-hand side. Contact me at **lillianspeaks@duoforce.com** for bulk book or course prices.

Hope to hear from you soon as you invest in building your and your employees' relationship-building skills!

Great Chicago Networking Extravaganza set for April 29, 2009

It's time again for Chicago's one-of-a-kind event, the Great Chicago Networking Extravaganza! The eighth one will be from 5:30 – 8:30 pm April 29 at Mid-America Club, Chicago.

We provide you an opportunity to mix and mingle and learn and mingle in the same venue. Our successful approach combines sponsors, exhibitors, veteran attendees, first timers and networking advice blended into a mix that results in new business leads and more career success for ***you***.

Want to join our growing list of sponsors? Mid-America Club will be promoting the event to its members, and *The National Networker* will be garnering us international attention. My co-host Jason Jacobsohn and I work with local print and electronic media. It all adds up to a lot of PR for our sponsors, too! Contact me at lillianspeaks@duoforce.com for more details.

Duoforce Adds "Facilitate Like a Pro" to Program Offerings

Anytime you are in the front facing the others in the room you are perceived as the one in charge. You may not be a professional speaker or trainer; yet, you are expected to engage others professionally and get results whether you are leading a meeting, conducting a strategic planning session or selling a product or service. This interactive, engaging program will help your employees/members sharpen facilitation skills, lead with decorum and garner innovative ideas to implement immediately.

Participants Will Learn To

- Establish a confident, professional presence.
- Increase your comfort level.
- Unobtrusively maintain control.
- Add "life" and fun to a boring meeting or topic, no matter the participants' levels.
- Use proven techniques to gather information.
- Get your audience to participate and interact.
- Read body language so you instinctively know what people are feeling.
- Deal with difficult behaviors, i.e. the bored one, the know-it-all, etc.

Contact Lillian now to determine her availability – lillianspeaks@duoforce.com, 630-983-5308.

Lillian to Teach Business Writing & Building Social Capital Classes

Once again, I am offering a couple of public programs through North Central College in Naperville IL. Both are from 9 am – 12 noon.

- "Business Writing Made Easy" - Monday, Jan. 26, 2009
- "Build a New Kind of Wealth: Social Capital" - Monday, Feb. 9, 2009

To get more details and to register, click on http://noctrl.edu/x19701.xml (business writing) and http://www.northcentralcollege.edu/x44928.xml (social capital) and follow the instructions.

Here's what former student Cathy Lou Pearson, said about the writing course: **"Lillian is a wonderful teacher. Her presentation skills are stellar. This class was extremely worthwhile."**

Our Readers Write Us

"This is my first time receiving your newsletter and it's great! Thank you much. I really like the "Improve Your Phone People-Reading Skills (part II)" piece below. I'd love to review this with my sales team and was wondering if I could get a hold of Part 1?"
Matt Rose, Director of Sales
Holiday Inn Select Indianapolis Airport

Ask the Networking Authority

Do you have questions about business networking protocol or how to network strategically? Send them to me at lillianspeaks@duoforce.com, and I'll answer as many as I can in this newsletter. Put "question for newsletter" in the subject line.

I attend several progressive networking breakfasts annually (you change tables several times, and each has a leader to oversee the process). Something bothers me, and I need your advice. When it's time to change, I notice people rushing to the next table to hand out their cards to people already there or as people arrive … rather than waiting their obvious turn. Is this proper networking etiquette?
Wondering in Naperville IL

No, it is not. In fact, I attend some of these same events with you and am continually amazed by this frantic behavior. People hand out their cards as if they are dealing blackjack instead of trying to establish business relationships. This causes other participants to shuffle distractingly through a pile of cards to determine who is speaking. Another fau paus many commit is handing out their cards ***after*** they have introduced themselves … rather than as they begin their introduction. Thus they "cut into" someone else's air time and again disrupt the process. Thanks for asking!

In the Media

Lillian was quoted in "The Art of Networking" in *Emirates Business 24/7,* Sept. 27, 2008 and "How to Make a Powerful First Impression" in *Entrepreneur.com,* Nov. 17, 2008

About Lillian Bjorseth

Lillian Bjorseth helps you build a new kind of wealth - social capital - by improving your networking, business development and communication skills. She's a Lisle IL–based internationally known speaker, trainer, coach, prolific author and certified, award-winning DISC trainer. lillianspeaks@duoforce.com, 630-983-5308, www.duoforce.com.

Did you know …

- Our "new look" matches our redesigned website, www.duoforce.com.
- Rubber bands last longer when refrigerated.
- The average person's left hand does 56 percent of the typing.

> > … until next time

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To unsubscribe from this newsletter and all information regarding Lillian's events, send an email to lillianspeaks@duoforce.com with the subject "unsubscribe." It is our ongoing commitment to communicate and network only with those who want to hear from us.