

Communicate and Network Your Way to More Success!

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Welcome to another issue of Communicate and Network Your Way to Success. My mission is to provide you with valuable information that you can use immediately in the office and at off-site meetings, conferences and other opportunities to build relation-ships. I'll also keep you up-to-date on public workshops, events and products I offer to help you hone your skills and grow your network.

Contact me directly for conference and meeting keynotes, workshops, in-house training or consulting in vital business networking, business development, communication and team-building skills ... or if you would like to reproduce any part of this newsletter in your organization's printed or electronic media.

If you are unable to view this newsletter, you may read it online at www.duoforce.com.

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Business Networking: The Top 10 Principles

1. **Make networking a part of your written strategic marketing plan.** Determine your business/career focus and your target market. Decide on where you can meet/interact with them. Then set timelines and allocate money to join organizations and attend business functions to carry out your relationship-building activities in a planned fashion.
2. **Work an event, not just a room.** Just as the Chicago Bulls didn't win six championships just by how they "worked the floor," you also won't get the full benefits of networking just by working a room. Learn what to do before the event, during the event and after an event. Develop a winning attitude (this is a worthwhile event for me to attend!) and continue to hone your communication skills so you can execute well throughout the process. A master networker is a master communicator.
3. **Make a professional first impression** through your appearance and demeanor. People decide 10 things about you within 10 seconds of meeting you. Decide what impression you want to make and then how to make it through the colors and styles you wear, your posture, handshakes, eye contact and facial expressions.

4. **Create a 10-15 second verbal business card** filled with benefits of doing business with you. It should inform others about what's in it for them and entice them to want to talk with you more. Save the "who you are" and "how you do it" for later in the conversation.
5. **Adapt your verbal business card to a short e-mail signature** to continue to establish your brand. Conduct your own ongoing public relations campaign by continually reinforcing your marketing strategies.
6. **Start conversations with open-ended questions** to avoid the "Yes" and "No" scenario that soon causes your conversation to run out of gas. If you want to start with a "yes or no" question, have several open-ended ones in your back pocket. Bonus: Ask questions that will carry the conversation and provide you with important information simultaneously.
7. **Be prepared with small talk** about your industry and timely topics. Men, move beyond your big three: sports, business and current events or, as some women would say: sports, sports and more sports. Women, prune your hundreds of topics to those most suitable for the occasion. Both sexes: Be willing to bend and flex, depending on the occasion.
8. **Follow my 10-minute rule for working a room.** Since networking is planting seeds, not sales (which is harvesting), keep your interactions to about 10 minutes per person. That's ample time to make a positive impression and decide if the person is someone with whom you would like to build a relationship. It's okay to plan endings just as you plan openers so that you can gracefully exit.
9. **Follow up** ... whether it is to acknowledge your initial encounter, set up a breakfast or luncheon meeting or share an article or a contact you promised. You will immediately stand out from the pack when you do what you promised you would do. Choose the vehicle (e-mail, telephone, handwritten note) that you think best fits the other person's behavioral style.
10. **Give without keeping track.** You will be rewarded ten-fold. People who understand this premise are the ones who truly benefit personally and professionally from the networking process.



Breakthrough Networking to be Reviewed Locally

Learn what tens of thousands of people already know as Career Strategies Coach Jerilyn Willin reviews Lillian's book, *Breakthrough Networking: Building Relationships That Lasts*, from 7-8 pm Jan. 31, 2006 in the Rasmussen North Room at the Schaumburg Library, 130 Roselle Rd. Phone number is 847-985-4000. Jerilyn, who has reviewed Lillian's book several times since the second edition was printed, will discuss how networking can help you grow a business or boost your career opportunities. Lillian will be on hand to autograph books.



Spring Date set for Fifth Great Chicago Networking Extravaganza

Get ready to grow your network and your networking skills at the fifth Great Chicago Networking Extravaganza (GCNE). Mark April 19, 2006 on your calendar and join us from 5:15 – 8:30 pm at the Lindner Conference Center, Lombard. All the details (and a new feature!) will soon be available at www.duoforce.com. All you will have to do is click on the GCNE logo. Contact me if you would like to help sponsor this popular networking event.



Want to Know What You Say Before You Speak?

The success of any interpersonal encounter starts before you speak. In fact, people may choose not to engage you in conversation because of how you look and how you act. Your clothes and/or your demeanor may not fit their definition of appropriateness for the occasion. Learn much more about the nuances of the colors you wear and your body language (and how to make a positive First Impression!) when Lillian speaks at the Downers Grove Chamber of Commerce Women in Business Roundtable Feb. 8, 2006 at Carlucci, 1801 Butterfield Rd., Downers Grove. The event, open to the public, begins with networking at 11:30 am, followed by lunch and the program. Cost is \$25 for members, \$30 for guests. You can RSVP to the chamber at 630-968-4050.



Lillian in the Media

Lillian was interviewed on “Know your target or networking misses the mark” by Jim Kendall in the Nov. 28, 2005 *Daily Herald*. You can read the article at www.duoforce.com/ldb/media.htm

Her article, “The 10-Minute Rule for Increasing Sales by Becoming Better Known and Trusted,” was featured in the January 2006 *Imaging Spectrum*, the national magazine of the International Imaging Technology Council. Check out the great layout (and words!) at www.duoforce.com/ldb/media.htm



Ask the Business Networking Authority

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

A new business acquaintance recently invited me to lunch to discuss potential referrals. I was surprised that she did not offer to pay for the meal. Rather, she suggested that we split the bill. Am I etiquette challenged?

A reader in Omaha

No, not at all. Basic etiquette stipulates that the person who does the inviting pays the bill. In fact, it would be in poor taste if you were to protest or even offer to pay. As the guest, though, you also have responsibilities.

- Accept/reject your invitation promptly.
- Arrive on time.
- Follow your host to be seated.
- Listen to your host's suggestions about the menu; the choice, however, remains yours. Don't select the most expensive items.
- Do not offer to leave the tip.
- Thank your host; send a formal note if fitting.
- Return the invitation as appropriate.

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