

## **Business Cards - Small but Mighty Warriors!**

**by Lillian D. Bjorseth, President  
Duoforce Enterprises, Inc.**

They measure about 2" x 3 1/2".

They weigh less than 1/4 of an ounce.

They cost about a nickel or a dime.

And they pack a powerful punch!

*They* are business cards, and they are your most effective, least expensive form of advertising. You can (and should!) carry them with you daily, on the ground and in the air. They are your omnipresent marketing tools.

Because business cards frequently create your first impression when handed out, mailed or shared by someone you met. Because they also have permanence, your business cards need to be designed with as much detail as you give to your personal image. After all, they represent your corporate image.

The initial image people consciously and unconsciously conjure up about your business card is based on design, color and stock type and weight. Even though you may currently work for someone else, you undoubtedly will have the opportunity some time in your career to design your own card or help a family member or friend.

Use the following guidelines:

**1. Make it attractive and pleasing to the eye.** While computers and software packages can make desktop publishers out of almost anybody, there's real merit in hiring an experienced graphic designer to give your card a professional, coordinated look. It can become your winning edge!

**2. Include the necessary information.** Today that translates into a lot of verbiage. It means your name, company name, title, phone, fax and cell numbers, email and web addresses (at least!). This alone calls for professional talent since so much information has to be arranged in an easily read and understandable manner. Most people call the first number you have listed; therefore, make sure it is the number where you most want to be reached.

**3. Use a heavy card stock.** Unless you are using parchment paper, stay away from lightweight stock, especially the kind that will easily run through your printer. My



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research has shown that people say lightweight cards leave an impression of a business that is temporary and cheap ... certainly not building blocks for your business!

**4. Understand the role of color.** Dark colors such as black and navy blue “say” authority, power and knowledge. Brown says dependability and stability, but not power. Pastels can be used to add interest rather than for the meat of your card.

**5. Use additional information if you company name is not descriptive of your business.** Since Duoforce Enterprises, Inc., for example, does not describe my training and speaking business, I added “Rapport Builders” under my logo and “Author. Coach. Speaker. Trainer.” on the bottom of my card.

**6. Make your business card perform multiple marketing functions by using both sides.** A doctor, dentist or therapist may want to use it for appointment listings. A motivational speaker can print an inspirational message. A health club can use it as an invitation for a free visit. Anyone can use it as a calendar or as a discount on products or services. I use it to list my products. Don’t, however, put information there that is vital to your business like your web address or email, which I have seen done ... ineffectively.

**7. Use the front as an enhanced marketing tool.** A photographer friend of mine turns his originals creations into four-color business cards. A gift-basket owner does the same with baskets she has created. Professional speakers and Realtors often include their photos to increase recognition.

**8. Stick to the standard size.** Cylinder desktop business card holders are passé. Avoid fancy cutouts. Spend the extra money on design.

In my workshops, I ask people to exchange cards and then answer the following questions. Try the exercise now with several of your (honest!) associates and acquaintances.

- Does your card make a positive first impression?
- Does it tell the nature of your business?
- Does it clearly tell them how to reach you?
- Does it pack a wallop?

And always remember business card etiquette. If you want someone to have your card, ask for her/his card first. If the other person doesn’t ask for yours in return,



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don't offer it. Silence is an important part of the communication/relationship-building process. Tune in to what people say nonverbally as well as through their words.

**Lillian Bjorseth shares much more information about creating effective printed and verbal business cards in the new third edition of *Breakthrough Networking: Building Relationships That Last*. She is an internationally known networking and communication skills speaker/trainer/coach/author. [lilianspeaks@duoforce.com](mailto:lilianspeaks@duoforce.com), [www.duoforce.com](http://www.duoforce.com), [www.greaterchicagonetworking.com](http://www.greaterchicagonetworking.com).**

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