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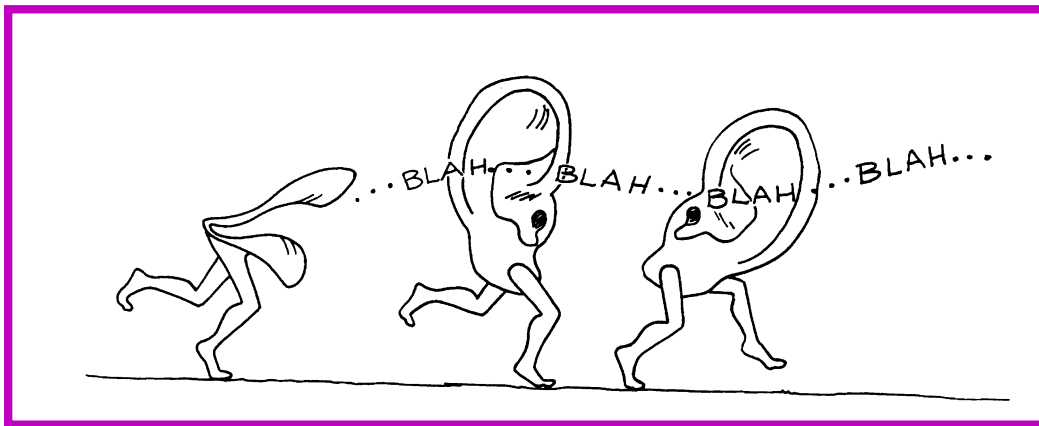
## Check Your Ego at the Door! by Lillian D. Bjorseth

If so many people agree that networking is more about the other person then why do so many people forget to check their ego at the door? It is disconcerting and sometimes downright irritating to talk with someone who uses a dozen "Is" in the first few minutes.

Over and over again, no matter the event, you hear "I" am doing this, "I" am enjoying this success, here's what "I" did when that happened to me. And for good measure, they throw in a few "my" book is outselling others in its genre, and "my" workshop was such a big hit.

Why do people do one thing when they profess to believe another? Here are four reasons/solutions when it comes to checking egos.

**Challenge:** The biggest block is inherent in being human. Listening for any length of time goes against the grain. Most people want to talk more than listen. They think what they have to say is more important. And what they have to say is frequently about them or their unsolicited opinions about your business.



**Solution:** Use this folk saying as your guide: "God gave us two ears and one mouth so we could listen twice as much as we talk."

**Challenge:** Some people's networking style is Dauntless, which means they naturally exhibit a powerful aura; use strong, forceful gestures; are impatient and, therefore, dislike small talk, get bored easily, finish others' sentences, interrupt and talk over others.

**Solution:** Accept and use networking etiquette and protocol even if you don't agree. Listen even if the outcome doesn't affect you. Refrain from trying to run the conversation, the event, the meeting or the project. Amazing what different results you will see!

**Challenge:** Over-inflated egos. Some people actually believe they are better than others, and their mission is to let the world know.

**Solution:** Pay attention to how others try to break away from conversations with you. Notice how they quit talking because it is useless to try to talk over you or top your stories. Make a pact with yourself to ask questions about those you engage in conversation and their businesses/interests. Be quiet, and let them answer. Then respond to what they said. If you are talking with good communicators, they will ask you questions as well. Another hint. Count to three after you think someone is finished speaking ... to make sure they are.

**Challenge:** The person is desperate because her/his business is hanging by a thread, and they need to "sell, sell, sell." The seasoned observer senses this desperation quickly and will try to move on to talk with people who appear more confident and relaxed and are probably better connections.

**Solution:** Be upbeat. Concentrate on the positives. Ask others what you can do to help them. The law of reciprocity will kick in. Perhaps you should have been networking like this from the start. Keep in mind that most networking events are band aids, and when your business is failing, you may need a cast. Double and triple your networking efforts and concentrate on others.

Here's to meeting more people who have checked their egos at the door and personify that networking is more about "you" than "me."

**Lillian Bjorseth helps you build a new kind of wealth – social capital – by improving your face-to-face and networking and communication skills. She's an acclaimed speaker, trainer, coach and prolific author and certified DiSC trainer. She was named 2009 Outstanding Chicago Speaker and 2010 Member of the Year by the National Speakers Association-IL Chapter. Contact her at [lillianspeaks@duoforce.com](mailto:lillianspeaks@duoforce.com); [www.duoforce.com](http://www.duoforce.com), [www.lilliancommunicates.com](http://www.lilliancommunicates.com); [www.greaterchicagonetworking.com](http://www.greaterchicagonetworking.com)**