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BREAKTHROUGH NETWORKING: Build Your LinkedIn Video Clip On Your Verbal Business Card



**Breakthrough Networking
with Lillian Bjorseth**

The latest craze on LinkedIn is to post your elevator speech as a video clip. Just this week I talked with two people who have added that feature to their consultancy offerings. Trade shows and networking events are offering the opportunity to do it right on the spot (make sure you have rehearsed it!)

It's a perfect time to discuss a helpful tool I created: the Verbal Business Card (VBC), those all-important first words you say when you meet someone or reconnect. As the **front end** of your elevator pitch, it has multiple uses including in your LinkedIn video message.

Your first words set the stage for the rest of the encounter and are equally important for college students, entrepreneurs and employees up through CEOs. Everyone needs to be able to succinctly articulate what he or she does to encourage people to hire them, do business with them or at least hold a conversation.

You want your VBC to inform, intrigue, inspire, interest and educate others so that they are eager to find out more. It leads to more meaningful conversations that leave you more memorable in the minds of those you meet i.e., you are **the** interior designer, website developer or financial planner someone easily remembers even if they have met others in the same profession.

While the words themselves are minimum, their value in your relationship-building activities has maximum impact. It takes a lot of concentration and effort to create the right compelling combination.

The Front End

Think of your VBC as the front end of your elevator pitch like the tines of a fork or the baited hook on a fishing line. It's what connects you with your food or entices the fish to bite so you can reel it in. Your opening words should also entice the other person into a conversation with you.

Length

It's short – a sentence or two – and lasts for about 10-15 seconds. That's all the time you have to grab someone's initial attention ... and that's also the time it is proper for you to talk before giving the other person a chance to speak.

Content

It is laden with benefits, not features. When people meet you, they care much more about what you can do for them or people they know than just what you do.

Variety

It's wise to develop several VBCs, one a generic version for people who are not necessarily familiar with your type of business or career interests (chamber, civic or business referral groups; LinkedIn), one for intra-company use and one for use within your industry. People hire me to help them with the generic one; the other two are far easier as you can use company and industry jargon, which is verboten in the generic version.

Here's an example to help you better understand the principle. The goal is to make yours the most productive for your audience.

John Smith (not real name) is one of my clients who is a psychologist interested in working with people in transition. This is the VBC he was using:

"I'm John, and I'm a psychologist. I do stress management programs to help you get over the stress in your career, especially when you lose your job."

Before you read further, write down the number one word that my research showed turned off people in transition when they met him. Some actually tuned him out.

The answer is "psychologist." People shared that it was a downer to be out of work ... they didn't want to have to work with a psychologist to find another job. It left a negative connotation, as if something was psychologically wrong with them.

John was so proud he had earned a PhD that he wanted to tout it right off the bat. Mistake. John needed to realize that, first of all, psychologist is a label (a no-no in his VBC) and also that he was feeding his ego, not starting a win-win conversation. He accepted my advice that he use his degree in psychology to help people *after* they became clients ... not frighten them away up front.

We changed his VBC to:

"I'm John, and I have a developed a three-point program to help you take your career to a new level."

John is delighted with how positively people, both in transition **and** employed, respond to his new VBC. And, of course, he proudly displays his PhD on his printed business card so people immediately know his qualifications.

The "How"

The one question you want others to ask is, "**How** do you xxx?" Then you can launch into the information you wanted to share anyway and that you know better than anyone ... because it's your livelihood. That's the information that comprises the rest of your elevator pitch.

I'll share more next month about what to include ... and not ... in your VBC. If you want much more information in the interim, you

can find it in *Breakthrough Networking: Building Relationships That Last*, third edition , and my online 5-part series, "Building Relationships for Business and Career Success."

A final thought: your video clip doesn't have to be your elevator pitch. It can be a video you already have ... I use an "enthusiastic, rousing" 15 seconds from one of my keynotes and another 15 seconds from a green screen shooting on my LinkedIn profile.

For more information, please visit [Lillian's TNNW Bio](#).

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