



5 **Secret** Strategies

to Getting New **Clients**

at **Networking** Events

Christina Rowe

The dreaded networking meeting! Maybe you have a networking breakfast before work that you are rushing to, fearful that you may get stuck in morning rush hour traffic again.

Or maybe it is an evening meeting. Instead of unwinding at home after a long day, you are in a room with strangers listening to them ramble on, one by one, about their businesses.

You know you should be attending networking events on a regular basis but do you sometimes wonder if they really are a good avenue for getting new clients or just a waste of time?

Networking events require money, time, travel and your energy. If your efforts networking are not producing results than it may be time to rethink your networking strategy.

Gone are the days when it was acceptable to pass business cards and then randomly call strangers asking for business.

Not only does it not work but it sure to alienate potential leads. In this new age of networking a new approach is required.

Here are **5 sure fire ways to up your networking game** and easily acquire **new customers and clients**.

Connect on Social Media

Use those business cards differently. Make sure to get a business card from potential prospects but not for the purpose of soliciting them after the event.

Instead, do a google search and find them on social media. Send a short note with your connection request letting them know you met at the event.

You will now be able to stay on their radar once they accept you and you can like and comment on their posts.

This develops a relationship and trust and will greatly increase your chances of doing business together in the future.

Ask for a one on one

When conversing with someone of interest at a networking event, do not leave the conversation without first attempting to set up a future time for a one on one meeting.

Most people today are busy and meeting in person for coffee is not always ideal.

Offer a 15 minute quick “get to know you” call or virtual chat. When you do have your one on one, make sure to contribute ways you can help them.

But whatever you do, do not try to sell them on your own business.

Talk about their business not yours!

When you approach someone at a meeting, ask them to tell you more about themselves and their business.

Do not waste this time talking about yourself. Make them feel special by paying attention to them and expressing genuine interest.

Think about ways you may be able to help them. Do you know someone who can use their product or services?

Do you have any pointers or tips that could help them? Be of value and you will be remembered.

Be prepared to capture those leads

Come prepared with a free gift offer of value to giveaway and use your 30 second elevator speech to tell them about it.

Think ahead before you start attending networking meetings and create either a postcard or business card with a special free gift you can offer. It could be a free report, ebook, video etc.

Create a lead generator web page with your free gift offer and a place for them to put in their email address and first name.

If you are not tech savvy and do not have a system like this set up on your website, you could have your email address printed on the business card and ask them to email you directly to get the free gift offer.

You have now created a way to legitimately build a list of leads that you can share news, content and information with in the future.

Promote their businesses

Follow up by sharing your new connection's business on social media and tag them.

Also like and share their business page. Your new networking lead will be thrilled and your generosity and goodwill will further embed you in their good graces.

Sending a referral their way or actually using their service or product yourself will also go a long way.

Once you have established a relationship with a potential new prospect you met at a networking meeting do not be surprised if they start asking you about your business and become a client.

Remember, there are no shortcuts. People do business with people they know like and trust and in today's world building relationships is crucial to your success.

The good news is you can meet people offline at networking events and continue your relationship on social media and through email marketing.

This enable you to keep in touch on a regular basis and share your knowledge and expertise with them through the great content that you share.

The secret is provide as much value as possible so that it is only natural for them to want to do business with you.

It is akin to planting seeds, nurturing them with water and sunlight and then waiting until they are ripe and ready for harvest.

The biggest mistake most people make at networking events is believing the leads there are ready for harvest. They are only the seeds! Take time cultivating them and watch your garden of customers and clients grow!

Christina Rowe is the founder of **Stand Out! Media Group and the South Florida Business Owners Networking Groups**, with over 17,000 members across social media.

To find out about an upcoming ***South Florida Business Owners Networking Luncheon***, please visit:

www.standouteventservices.com