

POWER NETWORKING

How to build strong business and professional relationships through networking.



Yvonne A Jones

INTRODUCTION TO POWER NETWORKING

Welcome to Power Networking: How to Use Networking to Build Strong Business and Professional Relationships.

Most successful business owners will tell you that there are three critical assets in their business:

1. Their customers
2. Their product or services
3. Their business relationships



All of these take hard work to develop, but business relationships are the one that often gets neglected. Relationships are difficult to build at the best of times. But, when you're busy with all the other "stuff" of life, they're often the part that gets neglected – whether they're personal or business relationships.

The question thus arises, "Who can benefit from building these business relationships?"

Just about every business owner can. It does not matter whether your business is online or offline.

The truth is that in today's economy many entrepreneurs work exclusively online. One of the most common mistakes that Internet marketers make is to assume that everything they do must be online.

Offline networking can be a very helpful resource for building your online empire. Even if you operate your business completely online, you still need to interact with people offline. This means spending time at events where business people gather.

In this course, we're going to go through the essentials of building relationships through a focused process of networking with others. We call it "Power Networking" because you're going to **approach the process with a specific goal in mind.**

Here's what you're going to come away with after this course:

- A defined purpose for your networking
- An evaluation of your skill set
- 3 versions of your "story" to use when networking
- A list of target networking prospects
- A sample script to use during your networking conversations
- A template for following-up after meeting new people
- A game plan for moving forward
- Specific metrics for evaluating your results

You'll also learn tips for keeping yourself motivated and in the right mindset for networking.

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Keep your **Course Workbook** handy to take notes and complete the activities at the end of each chapter, along with the other tools accompanying this course.

Now, put all your networking fears and procrastination aside and invest a little of your time cultivating one of the most important keys to your success.

POWER NETWORKING – WHAT IS IT?

There is an African Proverb that beautifully describes the true essence and spirit of power networking. “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go with others.”

Your goal as a business owner should be to go far by building a strong business and professional relationships; something that networking allows you to do with ease.

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go with others.”

Power Networking Defined



According to Merriam-Webster.com, networking is defined as “the exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions.”

Power networking, therefore, implies that you take this up a notch. It involves the frequency and rigor with which the exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions take place.

As a business owner, you will need to acquire many skills. Eventually, you’ll find that you achieve greater results when you outsource the things in your business that you’re not good at, or you prefer not to do.

However, power networking is a life skill and lifestyle habit. It involves being creative and systematic in the way you meet new people in order to build contacts and long-term, mutually beneficial business and professional relationships.

While larger organizations often send their staff to networking events, as a Solopreneur, small business owner, or even a mid-size business, you want to take charge of that responsibility to develop those relationships with a well-structured plan.

It’s important to note here that while this course will be focused on power networking for business, many people use networking to achieve personal goals or simply to make new friends.

For example, there may be a group for mothers of multiple births (twins, triplets, etc.). In most cases, these mothers are not usually going to be meeting for business purposes. They’re more likely to meet to share tips and exchange information on how to deal with challenges in having multiple children the same age.

Another group may be about hobbies and passions of one kind or the other. The goal of this type of networking event is for each individual to build a network of like-minded people who support each other.

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The Basics of Power Networking

Power networking is based on two fundamental concepts – **abundance** and **reciprocity**.

- **Abundance** means that there is plenty of everything to go around. When you have a good contact or a helpful skill, you don't keep it to yourself. You hook other people up, they hook you up, and there's no sense of competition. Instead, there is simple co-opetition.
- **Reciprocity** is a fancy word for a simple concept – when you do something good for others, it comes back to you many times over. You help others with no expectations or obligations and their natural response is to help you back. This is the 'power' of power networking.

In addition to the above, there are some foundational concepts you must embrace in order to be successful at power networking.

Becoming a Resource for others means that you are someone others can come to, or contact to solve their problems with your knowledge and expertise.

Of course, as a business owner, you have your goals as well. However, with time you'll find that people highly appreciate the value you bring to them and as a result will seek to do likewise.



A case in point is a lady who was one of the seven people who attended my first networking event in 2012. Over the years she has become a valuable resource for dozens of people. I'm not sure how she does it, but if you want to reach someone and no time to check if they're in the networking directory, just send her a text and you have your answer in 5-10 minutes. Looking for a Service Provider, she can give you a referral. It's no surprise she was crowned, "Queen of Networking." How can you strive to become a valuable resource for others?

The Know, Like, and Trust Factor is essential in building strong professional and business relationships.

It takes time for people to get to know, like, and trust you. However, it will also take time for you to get to know people in your networking group/s build rapport, and establish good communication with them.

Remember you're in it for the long-term, so it's important to allow these areas to develop naturally before you start asking people for favors.

How do you feel when someone you don't know or met for the first time comes up to you and starts asking for various personal favors? Your initial reaction (at least in your mind) is, "Who are you? I don't know you." Be careful that you do not do it to others.

Six Degrees of Separation. A major benefit of networking is referrals. This means connecting people within your network who have the skills or knowledge that others need. It's one of the best things you can do for another person. Likewise, people in your network will introduce you to other people you can help or who can help you. In this way, a network grows exponentially.

Becoming a Great Networker

Becoming a great networker is not hard. Just like any other skill you're seeking to excel at, it does take time to develop the required skills. It also takes practice.

DEFINING YOUR PURPOSE – A KEY TO POWER NETWORKING

In order for your networking to be truly powerful, you need to have a clear purpose in mind. When you have a specific purpose in mind, you'll have a more focused network and see much better results.

"The successful networkers I know, the ones receiving tons of referrals and feeling truly happy about themselves, continually put the other person's needs ahead of their own." -Bob Burg

What's Your Passion?



Start by identifying your passion. This passion is the driving force behind your networking. If it's strong, your enthusiasm and positivity will draw others to you and provide the inner motivation you need to keep going out there and meeting people.

If this is a little challenging at first, try making a list of things you're passionate about or interested in. What are the things you're thinking about in your free time? What are the goals that keep you awake at night? Make a list and then ask yourself, 'If I had to choose only one, which would it be?'

While you can be passionate about a number of things, at the beginning of your networking journey it would be better to focus on just one. Once you've achieved that outcome to your satisfaction, you can add more.

Passion Paired with Goals for Greater Results

Write down a few goals related to your passion. If you're passionate about your music, your goal may be to play a live show once a month. If you have an online business, a good goal might be to identify potential partners who can help you build

that business. If it's fitness you're passionate about, your goal may be to organize a weekly group hike or a Zumba group.

You should keep in mind that your goals should be specific and measurable. Vague goals are challenging, if not impossible, to identify and test whether they're working or not.

Even though you're not making your personal goals the focus of your activities, you should keep them in mind so that you clearly identify the people you need to connect with the most, as well as the groups and events that are likely to be most compatible with your goals.

Activity:

1. Make a list of your passions and narrow them down to the one that's most important to you.
2. List goals you want to achieve in that area and narrow it down to the one you'll start working toward right now.

SELF-ASSESSMENT OF YOUR SKILLS

Are you attending networking events on a regular basis? If yes, great! Take a moment to do the next steps. If the next meeting you attend is going to be your first, realistically evaluate the skills you have and the skills you'll need. Through this evaluation, you can create a roadmap that will help guide your networking efforts.

Your Networking Skills

There is a whole range of people skills needed in order to network effectively. It helps if you're direct, honest, gregarious, and if you have the ability to find a connection with virtually anyone. These skills you meet others and build relationships. They include –

- **The ability to approach others** – Is it easy for you or is it challenging to strike up a conversation with strangers or introduce yourself?
- **Non-verbal communication** – This includes eye contact and a firm handshake. How well do your posture and facial expressions match what you're saying verbally?
- **Conversation skills** – Knowing when to interject, maintaining a balance between talking and listening, and keeping the conversation going.
- **Listening** – Listening is probably the most important skill in power networking. You need to pay attention to what others are saying in order to find commonalities.
- **Self-confidence** – You need to be able to communicate to others your expertise, knowledge, skills, and other benefits you offer them.
- **Positivity** – A big smile, plenty of enthusiasm and a positive feeling that inspires others.

The Skills You Have to Offer



The central idea behind power networking is that you pay it forward by offering to help others. Thus knowing the unique abilities and skills that you bring to the table will enhance your value to others.

It's often hard to recognize these skills by yourself. Check in with yourself to examine how you help others in your work or daily life? How have you helped others in the past? What have been your most outstanding achievements? These will reveal to you your true strengths.

On the other hand, there are skills you'll need.

The Skills You Need

Be objective about your self-evaluation. For example, if you are a Financial Planner, you may have great knowledge and be a valuable resource for your networking partners. You may, however, not be great at converting prospects to clients. That's an area you'd need to work on in order to achieve your networking goals.

Your Strengths and Weaknesses

Each of us has our own strengths and weaknesses, and it's important to recognize what these are so that we can play to our natural strengths and not get caught up in magnifying our weaknesses while down-playing our strengths.

Use your strengths to accelerate your results, and take the time to hone in on working on or improving weaknesses you detect.

Activity:

Make four lists:

1. The skills you have to offer
2. The skills you're seeking from others
3. Your natural strengths
4. The weaknesses you need to work on

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

You'll not get away from it. It's going to happen.

People are going to make assumptions whether you like it or not. The problem is that you want to be the one to create the positioning on which those assumptions are based. Otherwise, they may be the wrong ones.

How you present yourself to others is vitally important in power networking. A major part of this is your 'story.' This is the story you tell about yourself when you meet new people, and it contains everything you need them to know about you. What you're doing is condensing the usual 'get to know you' conversation so that it's quick and easy for other people to understand in a short time.

Who Are You? – Identifying Your Role

Start by deciding how you want to appear to others. When people first meet you, who do you want them to see you as? This is the basis of your story. Examples would be a young online entrepreneur with a passion for marketing; a friendly mom on the fast track to better fitness; a passionate crusader for the environment, and so on.

A good way to decide this is to refer to the stated goal of your networking. What is your passion and what is the end result you want to get out of building your network?

My recommendation to you is to create three different stories. The main reason is that you can use distinctly different stories to convey your passion, your goals, your strength and weaknesses in different settings.

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I can almost hear you saying you cannot think of anything in your life you'd want to create stories around. You may have to pause and allow.

Pause and reflect of moments in your life that may not have been particularly significant to you at the time, but on reflection, show up some of the qualities that you want to convey.

The Elements of a Good Story



As mentioned earlier, your story should communicate your passion and the value that you have to offer others. It also shouldn't be negative or potentially alienating to those you meet.

Your story should be authentic and personal so ask yourself, "What do I want people to know about me? What qualities about me do I want them to take away from our conversation? You're not a salesperson trying to make a quick sale. You're trying to establish a deep personal relationship and long-term connection. Your story should be honest and show who you truly are.

People love stories, and if you can tell your story in a way that is memorable for your listener to repeat to someone else accurately, then you would have done an excellent job.

Ideally, your story should lead to a back and forth conversation. It should end with you passing the other person your business card and an opportunity to follow up with them.

Different Stories for Different Situations

After drafting your initial story, create several variations for different situations. You may create alternate versions for different types of people you meet or different goals that you have in your networking. As you network, you'll also learn how to improvise somewhat and alter your story to match the situation.

As you're reading this information, make the decision to create a collection of stories based on moments in your life and business which you may have taken for granted and not given particular attention to before.

It may seem like a huge challenge to find multiple stories yet with a little forethought and focus you can develop these mini stories that allow you to deliver your message and show your strengths.

For example, here's a story from my life.

A few months ago my husband was driving and I was in the passenger seat. We'd stopped to pick up a quick lunch at Wendy's and we were both eating while he drove. Suddenly he began to cough very hard, and as I glanced from him to the light, I realized the light had turned to red but his foot was not on the brake pedal. The truck was gradually creeping up on a little Fiat stopped in front of us. I began shouting at him, "Put your foot on the brakes" when I realized his head was down and his chin was almost touching his chest. It appeared he'd passed out. Of course, our bumper bumped into the car in front and would have kept pushing forward if the light had not changed.

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As the driver of the Fiat made the right turn to go into a parking lot, I leaned over and grabbed the steering wheel to take the truck off the main road and down a side street where I was hoping to find something to stop the vehicle as I could not reach over to the brakes. My husband's head was still down.

As I banked the truck my husband lifted his head. It all happened in about 60 seconds but that was one of the longest 60 seconds time slot in my life. We spoke with the driver of the Fiat, which was a rented car and since there was no obvious damage he left with the advice that my husband should go to the hospital.

Because a tragedy was averted and all ended well, I can tell that story, if I choose. What qualities about me would that story convey? Based solely on what my husband told a mutual friend:

- I think fast
- I don't panic easily (Prior to this I would not have said that. I guess it depends)
- I take action in a crisis

If these were the qualities I wanted to highlight to someone, this story would be an appropriate one. Before I share this story, however, I'd make sure to remove any irrelevant points and keep it short and to the point.

Introducing Your Story

Getting into your story can be a little tricky at first, but eventually, it will become easier. A primary requirement is to listen. Listen for clues to bridge the gap so that you transition effortlessly into your story. Sometimes someone to whom you're speaking may share something and you can now enter with, "That point reminds me of something that happened recently....."

Or someone may ask you, "What's going on with you these days?" or simply, "What are you working on now?" Remember you can also begin the process by showing genuine interest in others and ask questions. From the answers given you may find an opening to share your story succinctly.

The key point to remember in story-telling at networking events is that it must be strategic and purposeful.

Activity:

Draft three possible stories that fit your goal.

Try out all three in practice with friends as well as at real networking opportunities and select the best one to start using.

IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET NETWORKING PROSPECTS



Power networking does not bring results if you're attending events without purposefully taking the time to identify who it is you need to meet and connect with.

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You need to identify key 'prospects' that can benefit you and find out where you have an opportunity to meet them. Who do you want to have in your network? You need to identify these individuals and go out and find them.

Keep in mind that while you're going with a 'giver's mentality' you should also be clear about your purpose and goals.

Who You Already Know

A good place to start is by listing the people who are already in your network. Even if you haven't purposely gone out to start networking, you surely know many people. Many of these are people who can help you. Perhaps you never thought of them in that light. Once you start writing down names, you may be surprised.

For each person, write down:

- How you know them
- What they've done for you in the past
- What you've done for them in the past
- How you will continue interacting with them and keep this connection alive

Who You Want to Know

Next, list the kinds of people you want to connect with. Start by looking at the skills you need in order to reach your goals. Who has these skills or can help you otherwise connect with what you need?

Like a marketer identifying her target market, you should include every detail possible and create individual profiles. These should include demographic information, skill sets, and psychological factors, such as how they feel about your common passion.

How to Connect

Connecting with the people you've identified is simple. Find the places your prospects hang out. These will be your networking venues where you'll meet people and tell your story.

When meeting people, focus on how meeting you can help them. Focus on the benefit or value you offer them. If you're networking for a charity, it's clear what you get out of it – funding. But focus on what the donor gets – a feeling that they're making a positive change in the world. If you're networking to land a job, focus on the value a manager gets when he or she hires you.

Finding Your Prospects

Look for the individuals you've identified both online and off. Where do they go to meet people and network? Where would they go to find you? What groups or organizations do they belong to? Where do they go to relax and just hang out?

Look for local industry-specific groups. You can find these groups by researching online. These can be formal networking events like conferences where like-minded people connect, or they can be informal gatherings where you have an opportunity to meet people.

10 Places to Find Networking Events

1. [Meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com)
2. Your local Chamber of Commerce or Rotary Club
3. U.S Small Business Administration ([SBA.gov](https://www.sba.gov))
4. [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)
5. Local Networking Clubs
6. LinkedIn (via the Groups you belong to)
7. [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com) Events
8. Twitter (such as setting up a Tweetup or participating in a TweetChat)
9. Local newspaper and Community newspapers
10. Professional and Industry Associations

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Once you locate your target prospects, make a networking opportunity happen. Decide on a day when you'll attend a networking event and put it on your calendar. Before you attend the actual event, do some research and find out who will be there. This helps you identify exactly who you're going to meet and prepare your story and questions.

Activity

Make three lists:

1. Contacts you already have
2. Contacts you'd like to have
3. Power players that can help you reach your goals

Research the best places to connect to your market and create a schedule for visiting them.

YOUR NETWORKING SCRIPT

Once you know who you want to connect with, where to find them and what you're going to offer, you need to know what you're going to say. To make power networking as effective as possible, you need to draft actual hypothetical conversations and practice them. This way, you're going to go into your interactions fully prepared.



Write a Script

Imagine how a conversation might go with a prospect and actually write it out like a movie script. Of course, the real conversation isn't going to follow your script, but this helps you prepare and brainstorm things you might need to say.

You'll get ideas for how to keep the conversation going, what questions to ask, and what to tell the prospect about yourself.

When creating your script, keep in mind that you want it to be clear and free of industry jargon. You should also strive to keep it clear and succinct. You do not want to launch into a lengthy story that causes your listeners' eyes to glaze over.

Questions, Questions

Along with your script, prepare questions to ask the people you meet. These questions serve two purposes. First, they give you a way to learn about the people you meet. Second, they keep the conversation going. People love to talk about themselves and your questions give the people you meet a wonderful opportunity to do so. They also shift the focus off of you.

Opening and Closing

Draft an opening and closing. **The opening** is how you approach prospects and introduce yourself with a short spiel about who you are and what you do. Try to also work in something positive about the other person, but only if you can make it natural.

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The closing is equally important. Write a closing that ends the conversation on a high note. It should include you exchanging contact information (giving the prospect your card) and arranging to keep in touch or communicate at a specified later date, depending on the situation. If it's possible to arrange a follow up at the end of your conversation, do it.

Frequently Asked Questions

Along with your script, prepare answers to common questions. Prepare stock responses that answer your prospects' questions and also present key information about you and how you can help them. If you're prepared, you won't be taken off guard and all of your responses will be valuable in building a strong connection.

Practicing Your Conversation

After you've prepared your conversation and answers, practice with someone else. Role-play and imagine that they're a new person. Get their feedback on how the interaction went. Ask them if they understood well what you have to offer. Do they think you seem needy or inauthentic? Is there anything you could say that would be more effective? Ask them for the overall impression they get from meeting you.

Saying the Right Things to the Right People

You have a basic script and some prepared questions for anyone you meet. But you should also research each networking function and the people who are going to be there. You should know about the people to whom you're talking because it shows you're interested and you did your homework. It also gives you an idea of what questions to prepare.

Perfecting Your Routine

Even after considerable preparation and practice, it may be awkward at first to make connections. This is only natural. As you go out and meet more people, you'll get into a flow and it will become second nature.

Activity:

Draft a hypothetical conversation script.

1. Create a personal FAQ with answers to stock questions.
2. Prepare your own questions to ask, an opening and a closing.
3. Practice with a partner to get feedback.

YOUR FOLLOW-UP



You've probably heard, "The fortune is in the follow-up" many times. This is especially true with networking.

It does not matter how many people you meet at these events, if you're not following-up, it's almost as bad as not attending these networking events.

Power networking events must include follow-up. This is how your initial meeting grows into a relationship, and that's what you should be aiming for.

The Goal of Your Follow-up

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Think of your follow-up as a chance to get to know the person better, as well as an important step towards achieving your networking goals. The focus should be to deepen your mutual relationship and the connections. Benefits will come naturally.

Why We Don't Follow-up

There are several reasons why people don't follow up. You may assume that your story was so good and your value to the other person so obvious that the other person will eventually contact you. The new contact may have promised to contact you and they may have been genuine about it, but people forget. As time passes, that opportunity disappears.

Your Follow-up Schedule

Every time you make new contacts, make a note on your calendar to follow-up with them. It's best to follow up as soon as possible, preferably within 24 to 48 hours of meeting the new contact. Most people don't follow up for several days or even a week. When you follow up quickly, you stand out from the others.

In addition, remember that people will forget you and the conversation you had if you do not follow up within 48 hours maximum.

Who Is This?

Start by reminding the person who you are. Give them your name and when and where they met you. Never assume that they'll remember you by your name alone. If following up by email, put your name and any other possible information in the subject line so they don't think it's spam. There's a good chance they won't recognize your email address.

And don't forget to connect to all your contacts on social media too!

Show That You Were Listening

Refer to something specific in the conversation you had with them. This shows that you remembered them and took an interest in them, which reaffirms the connection you made.

At a networking event you may meet dozens of people, so how do you remember these little details? Get into a routine of taking notes. Try to take notes during a quiet moment during the event or on your cell phone. Try not to be obvious about it.

When I meet someone with whom I had a great conversation, and would like to continue the conversation, I'll get their business card and fold over a corner of the card. That reminds me that this is someone I want to stay in contact with.

The Next Step

The final element of a follow-up is to continue the conversation. This leads the interaction to the next step. Otherwise, you're just saying 'hi.' Continuing the conversation may include asking for more information, sharing something you think they'd like, offering some kind of help, or arranging to meet again.

Follow-up Etiquette

In your follow-up, be real and authentic. Don't try to hide your true intentions and just like the initial meeting, strive to be positive and make a good impression. Be transparent and real, but don't sound needy.

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If you're following up by email, be extra polite and friendly. Over email, the person can't see your facial expression or hear the tone of your voice, so it's very important to make sure they don't misunderstand what you say. Email can seem cold, so make an extra effort to be warm and friendly.

Activity

Write a follow-up email template to use after each networking conversation.

1. Create an opening
2. Leave placeholders for filling in information about who you are, where you met and what you talked about
3. Write a closing

YOUR NETWORKING GAME PLAN

Nothing significant happens without a solid game plan.

Even though you should always be in the networking mindset and meet people everywhere you go, you'll get the best results if you're organized and you have a clear plan to follow.

“Networking is not about just connecting people. It's about connecting people with people, people with ideas, and people with opportunities.”
— Michele Jennae

Your Networking Schedule



First of all, you should decide how many networking functions you'll attend per week. These can be official industry-specific events or informal gatherings where you can build your contact list.

You should attend at least once per week, although two or three is even better if you have a time-sensitive goal. Don't attend more than you can comfortably manage. Three maximum is probably a good number.

Remember that in addition to meeting people, you also need to follow up with them.

Put your follow-ups on your schedule as well. For each networking function, you attend, plan to follow up the next day or two days after. Any plans to meet or contact the person again made during the follow-up should also be added to your calendar.

Making the Rounds

Plan to spend some time beforehand researching it and its participants before you attend any networking event. This way you know who you're going to talk with. Another preparation is to decide how many people you'll talk with at each event.

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Set a quota of new contacts for yourself and try to stick to it. This is important because it's the only way to build your contact list. Without a quota, you run the risk of not approaching people or spending the entire event talking to only one person or group of people.

Getting into the Right Mindset

You may want to create a pre-event ritual to help you get relaxed and into a sociable mood. You want to be at your best when you enter the event and approach people because first impressions matter. You should walk into each event confident, relaxed, and with a big smile on your face.

Your ritual might include deep breathing, visualization, meditation, or just listening to some upbeat music that puts you in a good mood.

Take Notes

During the event, you'll want to keep track of everyone you talk to and any pertinent details you'll want to recall later. Don't rely on your memory. After shaking ten or so hands you'll have trouble remembering who you've talked to and what about.

There are several ways to take notes during an event. Of course, you don't want to be jotting things down while you're talking to people. After each encounter, you may want to write down a few things in the quiet moment before you make your next approach. One option is to take notes on business cards. You can also take notes on your phone, which looks less obviously like you're taking notes.

Don't Stop Networking

Even when you have a busy schedule of following up and meeting your contacts, continue attending networking events. You may scale it back to once a week or so, but don't stop going. You need to continually build your contact list because you never know who you'll meet at your next event. Further, if one of your goals is to attract prospects and convert them to become customers or clients, this has to be an ongoing process.

Your Networking Buddy

As part of their networking game plan, some people choose to have a 'networking buddy.' This is a person you attend events with. Many people find it more comfortable and enjoyable to attend with a friend or associate. If you go as a team, the two of you combined have more skills and strengths to bring to the table. You can play off each other and have livelier conversations.

Mix Up Your Game Plan

It's important to create a good game plan, but make it flexible. Sometimes it's good to mix things up a bit, adding new ideas or techniques to what you do. If your game plan is flexible, you can improve it over time or tailor it to changes in your goals or situation.

Activity:

Write out your game plan as specifically as possible, adding your next steps to your action plan and preferred calendar. Be sure to include:

- Events you want to attend
- People or companies you want to connect with
- Research about those prospects
- Dates for getting things done and following up

YOUR MINDSET



A positive mindset is essential to achieving success in power networking.

You need to be positive in order to motivate yourself to get out there and meet people.

It's frightening to walk into a room full of strangers who all know each other but don't know you.

If you radiate positivity, it attracts people to you.

Know Your Strengths

Focus on your personal strengths and the things you're offering the people you meet. If you focus on these, it will give you the confidence to meet people, knowing you have some value to give. When you know this value, it's easier to put yourself out there.

No Big Deal

Power networking may be vital to your business and success in life, but go into it imagining it's 'no big deal.' You may have a quota of contacts to meet and a rehearsed story to tell them, but don't make it a life or death situation. Imagine that you're just socializing and it doesn't matter if anything comes of it. Thinking this way removes the pressure and helps you relax.

Focus on Other People

Although you're introducing yourself and telling your story, listening and learning about other people is just as important. When in conversation, ask questions and get others to talk about themselves. This shifts the focus away from you while also showing that you're interested in others. And it's easy to do because most people love to talk about themselves.

Fake It

Positivity comes from a feeling of success. If you're just starting off toward your goal, you may not feel terribly successful. But even if you're not there yet, imagine that you are. Imagine that you've landed that job or you've met your fundraising quota already. This is a way to trick your mind and help you stay relaxed and positive.

Remember that even before you achieve something, you want to visualize your success at achieving the goal.

No Way to Lose

Keep in mind that there's no way you can massively mess up your power networking. Even if the event is disorganized and the people are rude and you walk away without a single business card, it empowers you to know what to look for in the next event you want to attend. You're not committed to any one event and there is no lasting negative effect if it doesn't go well.

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Prepare Well

Create a game plan, a good story, questions to ask others, and a good long-term goal. If you're well prepared and practiced, the confidence will come naturally. You'll know exactly what to say and it will be one less thing on your mind.

It Gets Better

When you first start networking, remember that it's perfectly alright to be nervous. Everyone is, even though they may not show it. As you attend more events, it gets easier partly because you have more experience and partly because you can improve your strategy and methods. Eventually, every step in the process, from finding events to following up, becomes second nature.

Activity:

1. Write down your motivating goal and post it where you can see it.
2. Write down 3 tips you find most effective for encouraging your own positive mindset.

MEASURE YOUR RESULTS



The only way to know whether your networking efforts are working or not is to measure your results.

You can't just assume that things are going well because you're attending lots of events and feel good. You need some kind of hard data that tells you whether or not your hard work is paying off.

Measuring results is also a good motivator that keeps you focused by showing the progress you've made.

Key Metrics

While you can't measure everything, you can measure a few key metrics that are most important to you. Start by considering your goal. What indicators would show that you're progressing toward this goal's attainment? Work backward from that. You don't need a complicated set of metrics, but you should at least have more than one indicator.

New Contacts

An easy way to measure results is to keep track of new contacts. You can easily see that, for instance, this week you're not getting out and meeting people because the number of new contacts has dropped. This is a good metric for measuring how well a particular networking event went, but it doesn't present a good long-term indication of whether or not these new contacts are benefitting you.

New Interactions

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A more accurate way to measure long-term progress is to keep track of your future interactions with your new contacts. Instead of measuring how many business cards you collect, measure the communications, meetings, or other interactions you have with these contacts. This shows that the cards you've collected are creating some value.

Opportunities, Ventures, and Sales

The best metric is something that's related directly to your long-term goal. If you're selling something, sales figures provide a good metric. If you're seeking funding for a non-profit, it's easy to see how much money you've raised through networking activities. You could also measure how many of your prospects have become customers or clients.

Other goals aren't as easy to measure, but you can take into account new ventures or new opportunities. You may measure the new projects that have come out of your contact list. Job prospects would be a good indicator if you're looking for work. You can measure referrals if that's the main purpose of your networking.

Favors Done for Others

A great way to measure progress is to look at the things you've done for your new contacts. You can set a goal of doing something for someone each day. It could be something as simple as providing them with helpful information or referring them to another contact who can help them. This is a great thing to measure because it shifts focus away from what others do for you and instead focuses on what you do for them. This usually pays off eventually.

Adjusting Your Game Plan

Your metrics will tell you when it's time to make changes to your game plan. If you're not seeing the numbers you'd like to see, think about what you can do to bring those numbers up.

Activity:

Choose 2-4 key metrics and set goals for them.

Conclusion

Are you ready to start building your relationships and see results? If you've completed all the activities in this course, you should now have:

- A specific reason for your networking
- A list of skills you can emphasize, and those to work on
- A rehearsed "story" to practice in your networking conversations
- A list of your current contacts and ones to target
- Questions and answers to use in conversations
- An email template to use in your next follow-ups
- Dates on your calendar for networking events and next steps
- Goals for your chosen metrics
- A statement that will keep you motivated during your networking efforts

You should have recorded most of this in your Course Workbook, but make sure to use your preferred calendar and method for keeping track of your networking contacts. Whether it's a simple spreadsheet or a fancy online address book tool, the contacts in your network are priceless. Back it up and make copies.

Now it's time to get out there and network. Have fun and make lots of meaningful connections!

About the Author

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Yvonne A Jones is a Personal Business Coach | Relationship Marketing Strategist | Amazon Best-Selling Author | International Speaker. She is the Founder of the 50 and Wiser Community on Facebook – a Group of women who want to DO more, GIVE more, and BE more.

As a certified Strategy and Accountability Coach, she helps Entrepreneurs, Coaches, Consultants, and Small Business Owners eliminate limiting beliefs, create a business they LOVE, and have FUN in their business by retaining their clients so they stop the constant customer chase.

Her favorite client is a highly-motivated woman 50 and Wiser who has been in business for approximately one year and is ready to empower herself and move to the next level.

Yvonne's background is in banking, Human Resources, administration, and Customer Service. At 52 years she handed in her resignation and walked away from Corporate America to start her own business full-time. After dissolving that corporation, she went online to find her space in the online world.

She would go on to train with some of the best coaches and mentors and continues to do that so she can keep her skills and knowledge current and bring about a transformation in the lives of her clients and customers.

She has experienced the joys and challenges of owning multiple businesses, getting over her quest for perfection, and now helps others to overcome this challenge.

Yvonne was listed on HuffingtonPost.com as one of the “Top 100 Most Social Customer Service Pros on Twitter” and on GetApp.com: “One of the Top 15 Most Influential Customer Service Experts to Follow on Twitter.”

Despite the recognition and promotions received while in corporate life in Jamaica and America, she now considers herself “unemployable” due to her love of being her own boss and inspiring others to pursue their passion and dreams.

Yvonne's mantra: “Focus on relationships; the money will follow.”

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<https://50andWiserCoaching.com/>
Email: Yvonne@YvonneAJones.com

Are we connected on social media?

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/YvonneAJones

Facebook: www.fb.com/50andwisermentoring

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/SocialMediaandCustomerService

Facebook Group:

www.facebook.com/groups/50andWiserCommunity

Twitter: www.twitter.com/YvonneAJones

Instagram: www.instagram.com/YvonneAJones

Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/YvonneAJones

YouTube: www.youtube.com/YvonneAJones

If you're a woman who is 50 and over, please join us on Facebook

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