

All About Networking

By Donna Messer

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The Money Game

Link, Think, Grow Rich

When you talk about networking and relationship building, you do not often think in terms of money. But you should. What is the return on your investment when it comes to the organizations to which you belong? Do they have a “networking component”? Have you ever tried to measure or monitor your ROI? This article is about exactly that—what is the return on your investment of time and money? How do you measure it? What do you give in order to get? First, according to statistics it is easier to attract money if you have the right attitude. So boycott books that show the poor being victimized and the rich being mean and nasty. A perfect example of this type of book is one written by Charles Dickens called “A Christmas Carol”. We have all either read the book or seen the movie and we know that the characters are stereotypical. The poor are downtrodden and abused and the rich are arrogant and uncaring. This is just not true. Ethical, effective networks do not look at the bank accounts of the people in their organizations or associations; they look at who they are, what they care about and how they treat their fellow man. I am reading a book by Steve Chandler and Sam Beckford called “100 Ways to Create Wealth”. In the book, the authors suggest that we make money a game. Since people bring more energy to a game than they do to anything else, what is needed is a shift in the paradigm from real life to a game. We know that people will play board games like Monopoly and Scrabble for hours on end. They are creative and play with spirit and inventiveness. Similarly, with video and computer games, we see dedication and creativity with plenty of time spent on the challenges presented. A pick-up game of basketball in the park after work will wake a person up like nothing else! The joy of playing gives us that extra push we need to succeed. How can we put that joy into our networks and our careers? Contrast playing to working—does the adrenaline pump you up in your job? Does the networking you do exhilarate you? If not, it’s time to make that paradigm shift—wealth happens to us fastest when we can play it into existence. It is hard to associate money with play. The richest man in America is probably Bill Gates and he said, “At Microsoft the product is human imagination”. Wealth comes from imagination, from playful thoughts and tireless energy. So either quit working, or turn it into play and make it something you love! At IBM, the original motto was one word: “THINK!” Many believe it was the reason for the amazing success story in the early days. Use your imagination and think outside the box—it’s fun and profitable! **George Bernard Shaw** said, “We don’t stop playing because we grow old. We grow old because we stop playing.” Money flows to the young at heart. What that means is we need a mind shift. Make what you do fun. If you work in a factory and you do piece work, make a game out of what you do. Set up contests between you and your co-workers. Challenge them! Perhaps you have read the book “Fish” or seen the video; who would have thought selling fish could be fun? If you want to network and be able to measure your results, turn that tedious, repetitious networking event into a game. Challenge your fellow attendees to pay it forward. To see how much they can give away to others



in attendance. That give away should not be a product or service, but simply a measurable referral. Give each person a scorecard and a time limit and with directions on how to play the game. The winner will not only have given the most away, I guarantee he will get the biggest return! True wealth is not what you cling to; it is something that you share.

According to Winston Churchill, “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” Giving before you get, sets you up to win. We need to become more creative, to have fun, and to win at our own lottery of life. People were created to create. So put a little creativity into both your job and your networking! Take a little time and determine if you want to have more fun, and learn to play the networking game. According to Zig Ziglar, “You can have anything you want in life, if you help enough other people get what they want.” “Networking Connections” is a game created to help put the fun back into referrals and lead generation. It is using what Napoleon Hill taught us—to link, think, and grow rich. Will you succeed at creating wealth in your life? If you want to, and you choose to, you will!



Just Fishing

*Like fishing, business is all about the 4 R's—
“The Right Equipment,
Right Place,
Right Time,
Right People!”*

Fishing—think about what you need to do in order to catch fish. First, you have to decide on all the equipment you need. Then you have to settle on where you are going to go to catch fish. Next you have to think about using a boat, fishing off a dock, or in a stream using waders. There are fish everywhere! How can you determine where the ones you want are going to be?

You get to the spot you've chosen, you bait your hook using a favourite lure. You cast, you wind it in, you cast again and suddenly there's a nibble, the rod dips, and you know you've hooked something. You reel it in and it's a Sun fish! It's too small, you can't keep it, no one wants to eat it—it's cute, the kids love to catch them—but for you it's too small and not the kind of fish you are looking for. The hook is lodged in its throat, you have to work on it, you're careful, and you don't want to lose that lure! That lure cost you a pretty penny and it's always been a favourite. You've caught a lot of good sized fish using this one. You work the fish off the hook and let it go, sending it back to bring their big brothers and sisters to the area.

You re-bait your hook and you begin again. For the next couple of hours, every few minutes, you get a bite and you reel in another Sun fish! What can you do? Can you move to a different spot, use a different lure? What's wrong—why do you keep catching the same fish over and over again? Fishing is not much of a science; it's a skill that anyone can learn. Once learned, you should be able to go after the kind of fish you want and catch them! Perhaps you need to identify the size of fish you want, do some research to find out where those fish are—in deeper water, around the shore, hiding in the rocks? You know that they are close, you've heard about them from other fishermen. Maybe you should look at the type of rod you're using, or maybe you need to change lures, or use natural bait on a plain old hook.

You ponder for awhile and decide that it makes sense to get into shore and ask some of the locals for their insight— where are the fish, what should you use to catch them, and is there any advice that they



would like to share with you? The locals love sharing; each has a bigger and better fish story than the last person you asked! But you keep hearing that the big ones are all in the same major area of the lake, and that they are being caught on natural bait, not that lure you love so much!

You reassess your findings and decide to put aside your own gut feelings and listen to the locals—they're experts; they've been fishing these waters for years. You pick up some worms, you fill your tank with gas, and you head the boat out to the spot where the big guys are supposed to be!

You throw out the anchor, cast and let the current move the bait through the water. Suddenly, there's a tug on your line, the rod dips and you know you've caught something big! You reel it in, the line plays out, there's a fight between you and whatever is on the end of that line. You play it for awhile and then it's yours—that big one you've heard about; the one that always gets away!

Now you've got him; what are you going to do with him? Take a picture, to prove you caught him? Put him on tonight's menu? Stuff him, and place him over the mantel in your den so that you can always remember today, whenever you doubt your ability to catch a big one?

Fishing and learning how to catch a big one is quite an analogy isn't it? Think about what fishing can teach us. Anyone can go fishing, but in order to catch what you really want you have to buy the right equipment, be in the right place at the right time, and ask the right people for a little advice, based on their own experience.

FOUR R'S? SOUNDS LIKE IT! RIGHT EQUIPMENT, RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PEOPLE

It's really very simple, when you think about it. No matter what you set out to do, you need to know that you have the right equipment to do the job. You need to be in the right place, you can't sell what isn't needed. You have to be timely, the product or service that you have chosen to market, has got to fill a need—now!

And you have to know the right people, those who have the experience and resources that are willing to share with you. Perhaps it's time to get an expert to take you fishing, to help you find the right equipment, and determine just where the right place might be for you. You might need help with your timing, perhaps even a little research that will help you decide if that product or service is needed. Finally you need to know the right people.

Message: Give a man a fish and he eats for a day, teach him to fish, and he has food for a lifetime.



The Power of Leverage

It's all you need to achieve your goals



The dictionary defines leverage as the power or ability to act or to influence people, events, and decisions. According to Archimedes, all you need is a lever long enough and a place to stand and you can move the world. Well, the more I think about what he says, the more I agree with him. Effective networking is all about using leverage. It is whom you know, and whom they know and how you use them that will get whatever it is you need achieved.

I have been thinking a great deal about what I am able to accomplish, and no matter how I look at it, there is without a doubt only one tangible thing that I use time and again—leverage. I continually leverage my contacts to accomplish what others may say is impossible. And, in using that leverage, I make sure that it is always beneficial for both sides of the equation. For me, networking must be like a child's teeter-totter—balanced, so both sides enjoy the ride!

In the book *One Minute Millionaire* by Mark Victor Hansen and Robert Allen, they provide a formula—"Leverage = Speed = Goals". The book came out a few years ago and was a huge success. Then, like most overnight success stories, it just seemed to go by the wayside. I picked the book up a few days ago and re-read it. It's packed full of basic ways to use leverage to achieve success. In this book, the authors concentrate on using leverage to create wealth, but the rules they give you will work for any goals you set for yourself that will benefit from the leverage as well. It should not just be the applicable goal, subject, or concept at the other side of the lever that gets everything. Here is the strategy of "The Power of Leverage". On one side of the lever, you have all of the people in your network with you—people you can count on to share their resources, their contacts, and their knowledge. You have the tools you need to get you where you want to go. You have the systems in place that you know will work and you have the team who believe in your ideas, concepts, and vision. They are all on one side of the lever. Then you have the fulcrum—the pivotal point that the lever is balanced on—and you have your ideas, your dreams, or your vision on the other end of the lever. Recognize that all of the weight you have on the lever should be weight that will benefit from the leverage as well. It should not just be the applicable goal, subject, or concept at the other side of the lever that gets everything. It is by using the leverage on that one side truly weighted, that you can lift an incredible load



without any struggle. Ethical leverage works in networking, providing that you use your contacts and resources wisely to accomplish what could be deemed impossible. Ethics are very important and if you use leverage without thought of a return for everyone's investment of time and talent, you might lift the load, but the strategy will fail.

The power of leverage is really just using your network wisely. It's everyone pulling together to achieve a common goal. It's one of the reasons that Master Mind and Success Teams work so well—they use their combined knowledge, skills and resources to help each other in the group. Leverage can be used to exert a large force over a small distance at one end by exerting only a small force over a greater distance at the other.

Two rules of leveraging when it comes to networking and achieving your goals:

- ✓ 'Pay it forward' by being of assistance to at least another three people, and, in return for what you do for them, ask each of them to keep the promise to help still three others. That's leverage.
- ✓ Share the rewards of your leverage, prosperity should be for all involved. Using all of these contacts and resources as your leverage, there is no doubt that you will be able to move whatever you want to a place where you can reach it. Agreeing to help others, using that same leverage is not only fair, it's a prerequisite when it comes to the rules of leverage in networking.



It's Networking That Gets Results

Ever wondered why some people seem to have all the luck? Why some people always seem to be at the right place at the right time? Is it Luck? No. It's effective networking!

- Networking is knowing the right people, and using not abusing the connection
- Networking is giving not just getting; it's helping others help themselves
- Networking is asking for what you want, but offering to share what you have
- Networking is really listening, while trying to find a link that will benefit both sides
- Networking is lateral thinking, trying to find a fit in every situation
- Networking is being a creative thinker, finding a way to make a profitable connection
- Networking is like being a marriage broker, making the introduction after checking the credentials
- Networking is learning to build strategic with others whose strength is your weakness
- Networking is joint venturing with others who can add value to you or your products
- Networking is being willing to share.

I have been networking all my life. I just didn't know what it was called. I always knew what I was good at, and it only made sense to find others who could provide me with what lacked.

As a student, I was always the leader, I never could understand why, until one day, I realized that when I was in charge, everyone had the opportunity to "shine." I always formed committees, using the strengths of everyone who participated. We always won, came first, and had the most fun! Why? Because we were a team! Everyone pulling in the same direction, no one any better than anyone else.

As I got older, I formed new relationships, started new friendships, and got involved in a variety of activities. A repetition of my student days, I again took the lead. As time passed I found myself keeping in touch with many of the people I worked with, collecting their business cards, and dropping them a line just to say hello. Quite often asking them if they needed anything. I was amazed at how many times someone would say, "as a matter of fact I am looking for something..." and I would be able to "connect" them to someone who could provide them with what they needed. I enjoyed the challenge of finding solutions for people. I would stretch my imagination, and try and find someone in my list of contacts that might be able to help.

My list of contacts began to grow and was soon alphabetized and placed in binders. Comments were placed on the back of each card so that I could remember why I had kept the card. I was becoming an expert at "connecting." Almost every time I met someone, I would ask if I could help them



Word spread, and the phone began to ring. People were calling, they wanted to connect with others who could help them find a solution or achieve a goal. I decided that I would bring these people together and see if I couldn't help everyone at the same time. Wednesday night was designated as the night to "connect." The first night there were about a dozen people. I facilitated the meeting and asked people to identify themselves and explain what they needed. I kept notes asked everyone attending to think about who they knew that could help the others get closer to their goal. The room was electrifying; everyone was concentrating on helping the person speaking. Trying to find a connection that could help that person achieve their goal! By the time the last person had identified their needs, everyone in the room was contributing their resources. It was amazing!

Within a few weeks, the original 12 had talked to friends and associates and suddenly there were 60 people all wanting to be part of the Wednesday night program. I knew I had to structure the program so that everyone could have a chance to identify themselves and ask for what they needed. I decided to keep everyone to a one-minute introduction, and I volunteered to help them perfect it. Using a little creativity, I came up with "Smile & Ask," and effective one-minute "infomercial" was born.

Smile & Ask

Start by giving a smile; make eye contact; introduce yourself; let people know what you do; explain what you need; ask how you can help them; say thank you; keep in touch.

There needed to be some guidelines so that no one would take advantage of anyone else. "Ten Rules for Good Networking" was the results

- be prepared
- be open minded
- don't be afraid to ask
- treat everyone as equals
- build on information, not status
- say thank you
- don't waste your resources
- give without expectation
- be committed and determined
- Set realistic and achievable goals

What began as a way to help a few people achieve their goals has become my way of life. From the original 12, there are now more than 10,000 people in my network. My card system has changed; I now use a computer, and a program that scans business cards. I use the same principals today as when I started. I now meet more people with bigger needs and the results have been gratifying.

ConnectUs International Inc. is the official company name. I still work with individuals, but



concentrate on major corporations whose employees need to learn the effective art of networking. My clients include major banks, trust companies, accounting and legal firms, government agencies and education. I still hold those workshops.

My name is Donna Messer, How Can I Help You?



Networking Skills

Creative Visualization

This is the process of day dreaming about your future, and turning that dream into reality by using your own skills, tools, and strategies. You can use this process to help create a wish list, set goals, and find ways to achieve them.

For right-brained people, creative visualization and lateral thinking are fairly easy skills to use. Don't type-cast your- self in one hemisphere. Let yourself imagine. Making things happen is within your power. When you dream, write down a description of those dreams.

What do you see when you look in the mirror? You don't always see the whole picture. When you visualize with mind's eye you tend to look at the big picture, where there aren't barriers of color, oceans, or languages. Often a little sign flashes in your head "You can't do that." The subtle message automatically raises barriers to realizing our visualizations. Refuse to listen to that sort of message. Positive thinking plays a big part in the process. With a little effort you can reject your own negatives.

During this process ignore all the reasons, financial or personal, that will prohibit you from doing something. Eliminate all self-imposed barriers to wishes. These words are not to be used in this exercise— *I can't, but, and if.*

There are several steps to the process.

Imagining your life path is only part of the exercise. The challenge is to express, in writing, where you really want to go. With the written description of a mental vision, you develop a target, a goal. It is tangible; you can really make it happen. Try targeting some bite-sized achievements that you can accomplish in a specific time frame long the way to the big goal.

Lateral Thinking

Lateral thinking is a term developed you are listening to, Dr. Edward DeBono in 1967 and is now defined in the dictionary as "seeking to and feelings can be expressed freely solve problems by unorthodox or apparently illogical methods." You can use pictures to move your thoughts to other levels until you come up with an image you can use. In computer lingo, they call it "fuzzy logic" where there are no limits of right/wrong. Lateral thinking stretches your imagination to see a win in every situation. In life and in business when some- thing happens, try to think of a way to turn it around. How can you turn a negative into a positive? By listening



to what people tell you, you can make connections that result in mutually beneficial business arrangements. Suggesting that two people contact one another may seem a mismatch to those involved because they don't see the common link. Lateral thinkers broaden the possibilities by looking beyond the obvious and leaping to un-thought of opportunities. Allow yourself to think in pictures. Images will help you to find new ventures. This is an encompassing process.

Focus on one thing. It could be a business issue that needs a resolution, a product for which you are seeking a market, a service that needs a new market or method of delivery. Close your eyes and think. Words pop into your mind and then the pictures appear and the process goes from there. You build up layers of images. This process of lateral thinking gives us imaginative choices. Using images to spark a thought can make it easier for you to make a connection.

Artful Listening

Listening is an art form. At networking sessions, it is important to use the creative art of listening. You need to be able to really hear what fellow networkers are saying if you want to make connections with and for them. Artful listening helps you make the connections in your own mind that help you to remember the person and the message. This essential creative skill helps you to encourage speakers and lateral thinkers. It is important to create an environment atmosphere between you and the people you are listening to, that is safe and caring. This creates a situation where ideas and feelings can be expressed freely.

How to Be an Artful Listener

- Prepare to listen. Focus your attention on the speaker. Tune out your surroundings.
- Avoid distraction. Ignore what is going on beside you or outside the window.
- Concentrate on what is being said rather than on what you will say when it is your turn.
- Listen for the tone of voice. What is the person really saying to you?
- Sit or stand properly. Use body language to let the speaker know that you are attentive. Nod, smile, and make eye contact to let the speaker know that you are listening.
- Take notes. You know the adage about strong memories and pale ink!
- Ask questions.
- Limit your talking. Show respect for the other's right to speak and be heard. Refrain from talking to your neighbor during a presentation.
- Don't jump to conclusions.
- Listen for ideas and facts.
- React to ideas professionally not personally



Lateral Thinking

Building Business & Relationships

You want more business—you've got a dynamite product or service—but business isn't what it should be. You've tried many conventional marketing techniques, but nothing seems to work. What can you do? It's time to think later-ally! If conventional methods don't work, then try a little lateral thinking—the methods work! Here are some of the methods that I have seen used with success for many clients.

If you have spent your time soliciting testimonials, how about the reverse—find out what clients are looking for. Just because you're not getting complaints doesn't mean that you are meeting their needs and expectations. Wouldn't you like to know how they really feel so that you can make improvements? Customers rarely speak up, even when they have valid complaints, so make it easy for them to do so. Draft a "You're opinion is important to us" complaint form. Add a line that reads: "Customer suggestions are welcomed and considered." Offer a "special". Do business for free, instead of a fee. Identify a company you want to work with, perhaps responsible for hiring; tell them that you would like the chance to work with them. But because this is a new developing relationship, they might want to see you in action first. Volunteer your time for a day or two. Share your knowledge and your experiences. What do you gain? If they liked what they saw, you have the chance to do business in the future. And immediately afterward, you will be able to legitimately say that you worked with this company.

Call potential clients and *don't* talk about business. Devote three or four hours each month to calling people who could be good referrals or prospects for your business. . Don't ask for business. This is a call about them, not about your business. Build the relationship. Find something or someone you know that you can give to them as your "gift". Canadians have a cultural distinction: we are usually polite, warm, friendly and non-aggressive. Take a lesson from our neighbors from the south—don't hint for referrals, ask for them! Be direct in your request. Sometimes clients need to hear the message. They generally assume that because you are so good, you must be very busy already. If you don't ask, you don't get!

You can use an introduction that could start with: "I would like to work with more clients like you you, do you have any business contacts who you feel could benefit from my services? If so, would you give them a call or arrange for us to meet?"

Don't always offer discounts or sales. If you have discounts and sales all the time, people will only buy from you during those times. Don't always market to a customer's good feelings; market to their stresses and worries. Position yourself as solving problems for customers and clients. Cross



merchandise your products and services—market to someone else's customers. If another organization in your town is able to effortlessly get business in their field, get together and share clients—you have the same market. By partnering with them you decrease costs and increase sales.

Help your customer to think laterally about your product or service. Help them see ways to promote a product or service without additional costs.

Let's say you sell peanuts and the store (your customer) doesn't need more nuts, bring in a collection of elephants that you found at a gift show. Leave them with the customer for a month, inviting customers to "feed the elephants". A portion of each sale of peanuts goes to a "Save the elephants fund". You have stimulated your client's lateral thinking process and he may now come up with other ways to sell the peanuts. He knows you care about him and his account.

Instead of trying to win awards, give them instead. Bestowing an award, such as a gift certificate, a scholarship, or a shopping spree not only builds goodwill and customer loyalty, it generally lands you free publicity in the paper too. Get as much mileage out of the publicity as you can. For annual nominee search, the announcement of the semi-finalists, and the search for judges, the presentation ceremony, on and on

Barter brings business

Sometimes you can market your products or services for barter instead of business. You may come across someone with whom you can exchange services, favors or business. This is a cost-effective way to build relationships. Relationship building is key to growing any business, by using lateral thinking you will find more ways to build the relationships. For more information on how to use the Lateral Thinking process connect with the writer.

example, if you offer the right type of award, you can secure publicity during the announcement of the continuous opportunities for press.



New Challenge for the Effective Art of Networking

The booming economy is causing a recruiting squeeze. Canadian manufacturers, distributors, and retailers are all hollering for help as they realize the world of human resources is changing. Gone are the days of just finding a good employee. Today we have to not only find them, we have to offer them better benefits than the competition! The effective art of networking has taken on a new challenge: finding and keeping good employees! I was amazed that companies are now in a position where they have to use their network to compete for good employees. Our world is changing! How do we use networking to attract and retain talent in any industry? We know that organizations are changing and are now looking for a different type of employee. In the 40s and 50s, we were looking for employees with production capabilities. As we moved forward into the 60s and 70s, we entered the world of marketing. Continuing into the 80s, education was very important, and we hired MBAs and others with a quality university degree. The 90s saw a move towards the information age, with technology a major factor in the hiring practice. Being Y2K compliant was extremely important.

Where are we going in this century? What kind of employees are we looking for, and how can we find and keep them. Our declining birthrate is causing labor shortages. Our workforce is better educated and unemployment rate is down to 5.6%. We have a strong economy and see many new booming industries. Employers have to be able to attract and retain talent. There is a new buzz phrase out there: "Sustainable Competitive Advantage". Companies are using networking to bring this information to the advantages of employment to potential employees

Sustainable Competitive Advantage-How To Use Networking To Find The Perfect Employee

Internally: spread the word-it's a good place to work!

- Start an employee referral program
- Create a new hire marketing kit
- Advertise internally. Use newsletters, pay stubs, email, and intranet

Externally: spread the word-advertise!

- Community newspapers;
- Industry publications;
- Your website and industry websites;
- Open house at your location;
- Through suppliers and customers;
- Alliances with special interest groups;



- Alliances within the local community, schools, churches, community centers.

How do you keep that perfect employee?

- Create a corporate culture where employees feel valued;
- Add value to society;
- Become an exceptional place to work;
- Profit share;
- Employee stock options;
- Medical coverage;
- Pension plans;
- Telecommuting or telework;
- Sabbaticals;

According to Carolyn Starshuk, CHRP of the *Human Resource Professional Association of Ontario*, "Finding and keeping good employees starts with senior management and their commitment to people. They must lead by example, be consistent, and integrate people processes with business. They need to know what the competition is doing, set goals annually, review performance to goals, give salary reviews based on performance; and communicate, communicate, communicate!" "Companies are hiring for talent, not skills and knowledge. Skills can be taught, talent is something that shines through," says Valerie Oberle, former vice-president of Florida's *Walt Disney*. According to Carolyn Clark, *Fairmont Hotels & Resorts (Canadian Pacific Ltd.)* "People want to work for the best. Talent attracts talent."

Did you know....

- Industry Canada estimates that 200,000 more jobs available than people qualified to fill them
- Canada's service-related businesses are outpacing economic growth and job creation in all other sectors
- The cost of hiring the wrong person for a job can be \$10,000- \$30,000 according to a survey by U.S based Thomas Magnum Company
- Knowledge-based companies (KBI's) highly dependent on employees to create innovative products such as software and biotechnology are the fastest growing small businesses with revenues increasing 16-33 percent per year
- Nine percent of working Canadians did part of their jobs at home in 1995-the average was 12.4 hours weekly. Those aged 45-53 were more likely to work at home, probably because they're more likely to be self employed.
- In 1995, 171,000 working Canadians were job-sharing, many of them in the 45-55 age group. Job sharing is most common occupation requiring a higher level of education
- More than half of self-employed Canadians work from their homes and 40 percent hire others to work for them

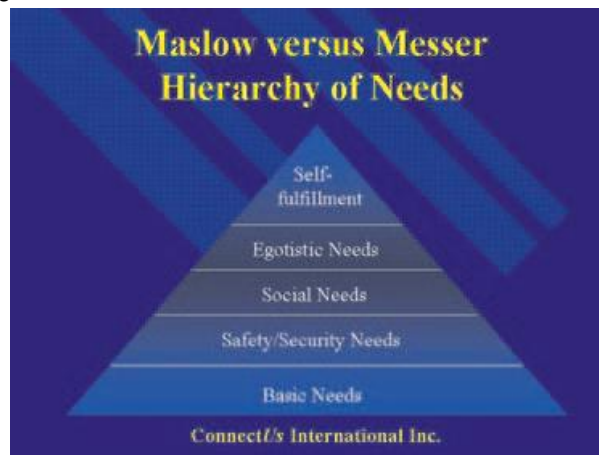
Statistics from the The Definitive Guide to Managing Human Resources for Small Business Owners



Maslow's vs. Messer's Hierarchy of Needs

Our Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow contends that man's needs are arranged in a hierarchy. Those at the lower level, if unsatisfied, take precedence over those at higher levels. He states that man is a wanting animal. As soon as one of his needs are met and satisfied, another appears in its place. This process, according to Maslow, never ends. It continues from birth to death. Man continually puts forth effort or work to satisfy his needs



If we were to look at Maslow's Hierarchy today, with the challenges we are all facing because of the September 11 terrorist attack, we will find that our "hierarchy of needs" has made a dramatic shift. This shift has brought many of us back to our basic needs. If we are to survive and thrive in this new world, we need to identify and modify our thinking and our strategies for maintaining and growing our business.

Basic Needs—At the lowest level are the *Basic Needs*, the needs of the body. These cover the needs for food, water, air, rest, exercise, shelter, etc. If these needs are not met, then these needs will assume a priority in the motivation of our behavior. A starving man can only think of food. Similarly, a frightened citizen of this new world can only think of the needs of his family and their safety. Here in Canada, most of us eat regularly, and have our basic needs met. The crisis in New York was a rude awakening for all of us and we stopped taking those basic needs for granted. All of a sudden, we had a primary motivation for our basic needs to be met: food, water, air, rest, exercise, and shelter have become more important to us. As small business owners, we need to refocus our products and services, and rise to meet the basic needs of our potential client base. In our



workshops, we suggest you use lateral thinking as a creativity tool. How can we take Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and use it to increase our business potential? The following are examples of approaching our basic needs with a little lateral thinking: When the Towers were hit, many of those in the Towers used their cell phones to assure their family that they were okay. Immediately following the tragedy, sales of cellular phones went up—not as a luxury item, but as a basic need. Lateral thinking—basic need: safety! When the Towers were hit and so many were lost, families mourned their losses and wished they had spent more time together. Family traditions suddenly become more important, there was a return to worship and to family ties. Sales of family-related products have increased. Flags have been purchased to show solidarity for the “global family.” People have come together with common needs. Stress and panic-attacks have run rampant. Therapists, coaches, and guides are needed to help us cope with our basic needs. The sale of candy and soup has risen dramatically— comfort foods, meeting our basic needs. Lateral thinking—basic needs: tradition, family!

Safety and Security—The next level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. This is the protection against danger and the threat of being deprived of things. The need is for the “fairest possible break.” If men are afraid, it is a basic motivator to look for products and services that will help conquer that fear. Think laterally—what will we need to look at differently in order to capitalize on the second level of Maslow's Hierarchy? Sales have increased for security systems. We have seen an increase in sales for home alarms. Insurance policies have been investigated and realigned. Financial plans have been reconsidered and repositioned. Travel plans have been adjusted, with more conference calls. Video conferencing is on the rise. People are using a variety of transportation modes—sales have increased dramatically on passenger trains. Safety and Security have become more important and more saleable. What is your product or service? How can you position yourself and your business to move with the trend?

Social Needs—Once the first two levels of Maslow's Hierarchy have been met, we will once again see a rise in sales for our *Social Needs*. For the next few years we will see more cocooning, more time spent as a family. Our spending will be within a comfort level, which says we want to be with family, friends, and people we know. People like people who are like themselves, and they will buy from those people! There will be more relationship building; more time spent getting to know neighbors and colleagues. Social Needs will be home based, local and family orientated. Games that are more traditional will be sold, more family dinners, with more holiday awareness, sales or products and services will be targeted towards the family and friends.

Egotistic Needs—The fourth level of Maslow's Hierarchy is *Egotistic Needs*. This level satisfied the need to drive the big car, own the big house, and take the big vacation. With the tragedy of September 11, our ego took a big nosedive, and we determined that “big” is not necessarily better. We began to rethink our needs: sales of cars, houses, and vacations changed. We returned to many of our basic needs where safety, dependability, and family values played an important role in our purchasing. Divorces are down. Marriages are up. Mediation is a growing industry. We've seen a



rush to move to the country, to a smaller, more friendly and safe community. We want to know who we know, and who they know.

Self-Fulfilment—The fifth level of Maslow’s Hierarchy is *Self-Fulfilment*—the need to realize one’s potential, for continued self-development and for being creative in the broadest sense of the term. Today, many of us are too busy trying to satisfy the needs we have at the lower level and will not be spending our time or money on this level of development, unless it will provide us with the return we have to basic needs. We see spirituality on the rise, more self-improvement courses, increased customer service training, with networking and relationship building as a key component. We are getting to know ourselves and our colleagues on a more intimate level and it will be part of our Self-Fulfilment. In today’s world, identifying the need that motivates our customers and our clients is most important and by providing the right incentive consistent with their needs, we will be successful. With a little lateral thinking, we can look after their Hierarchy of Needs, according to Messer!



The E-Revolution— Will Networking Change?

THE NEXT WAVE IS COMING and if we want to succeed in the 21st Century we better be able to ride that wave! Ecommerce is the topic on everyone's lips—what does it mean when it comes to building more profitable connections using networking?

According to Andersen Consulting in a special marketing supplement for the Toronto *Globe and Mail* the best strategy for companies to remain competitive is to think big, start smart, and scale fast! Statistics show that Canada is in last place with only a 4.05% share of the global economy compared to the United States with 36.2%. How can we implement the strategies suggested? The following suggestions will help readers “ride the wave”:

Know your market! Select your market (country) based on the need you perceive for your product or service. To find out if there is a need, connect with your embassy or consulate in the countries you are targeting. They have the knowledge and they will happily share—building your business is why they are there! Go to your local library or World Trade Centre— check out the *National Trade Data Base*—this is updated monthly and will be a wealth of information. You can subscribe and receive information on line.

Know your competition! Find out who your competitors are both domestically and internationally—who do they sell and export to? They probably have a web page. Check it out. Do they list their products and services? Do they have a catalogue? Is there an opportunity to joint venture? Connect with the *Chamber of Commerce* in the country you are targeting; ask for the membership directory. Use your resources—do you have colleagues from that country in your existing network? Who do they know?

Virtual Trade Events—Governments are moving towards specialized events that provide on-line trade shows that participants can log on, meet potential strategic alliances and joint ventures without having to leave the country. The problem being encountered by many is how to build the relationship, when there is no actual face to face meeting with the contacts. The first and most important ingredient for anyone who is part of one of these events is to have an easy-to-navigate web site that provides not only a business profile, but also insight into the corporate policy of the management. Companies and individuals need to find common denominators in order to build a relationship that will eventually build business.



Learn Virtual Etiquette—Have an attractive front-end for all virtual contacts. Get an attractive fax cover sheet designed which conveys who you are and adds credibility even before the contact reads the contents. Record a warm, friendly, and highly professional greeting on your voicemail. Speak slowly and distinctly— your international colleagues may not have English as a first language. Get a professional sounding email address that says who you are and what you do.

Become an articulate communicator—The fact is, you have to show your style by using words that provide the picture of a successful business person. Strengthen your vocabulary, improve the tone and quality of your voice. Get a better on-line personality, attitude is everything! Do whatever it takes to provide the expressive words, exclamation points, asterisks, and underlining techniques that interest and excite your potential client, customer, or partner. Don't use CAPS when emailing, recipients will think you are yelling and will simply push delete! You will have lost your chance to build the relationship because virtually, you no longer exist.

Be "Ultra Sensitive" to the recipient—Imagine that the person receiving your email/fax/ call has had a bad day, often there are very few clues, but be aware, sometimes it is better to assume the worst and communicate from there. Be friendly—misunderstandings occur more often in virtual communications than they do during an in-person communication. Wait 24 hours before replying if you find yourself upset by the communication.

Virtually touch the other person—use their name at least twice in your communication. You don't have the opportunity to shake hands, smile or make eye contact—repeating their name is one way to bridge the gap.

Be succinct and absolutely accurate—Value the other person's time even more than you do your own. When communicating virtually, you're likely to be in touch far more often. Try to make your point in four sentences. Check your email for spelling, grammar— double check for accuracy of phone and fax numbers, and email addresses and instructions. Don't gossip—virtual privacy is becoming an oxymoron.

Adopt an end of business day reply policy—

For every hour that you don't respond to a virtual communication, you'll lose 1% of whatever the opportunity was, whether it's new business, the chance to retain an unhappy customer, or helping an employee do their job well. After four days, you don't have much left. Reply promptly for the best results and the greatest credibility. The electronic revolution will change the way we do business—we will need to become more aware of our entire network, tapping into the resources and skills of our neighbors, friends, and business associates. No longer will we be able to connect face-to-face. Virtual referrals will become more important as we grow. On-line referral clubs, official matchmaking associations, relationship building experts, and introductions services will become the next "fast" product.



Link& Think™

The New Technology of Communications



Imagine that everyone in the endless chain of connections. That the best way to build business is to be part of that chain. It might be easy to connect, but does that connection actually link into other profitable connections? The Link and Think™ theory shows everyone how to be aware of their missing links and to use the theory to build their own chain of connections. I am a firm believer in networking and the power that effective networking has on business potential.

What I have begun to realize is that my networking technique is based on several hard and fast rules. In this article I am going to share the rules and reveal the theory of Link and Think™.

First, ask yourself the following questions:

- Who am I and what is my strength?
- What are my hobbies and interests?
- Who do I know?
- What do they know?
- What special skills do I have?
- What charity or volunteer organization do I care about?
- What is my wildest dream?

Once you have identified and answered truthfully all of the above you are ready to proceed to the next step. This information will become part of your infomercial—people don't always want to know just what you do, without knowing who you really are. How comfortable am I with the networking process? Answer the following questions:

- What is my comfort level when it comes to networking? Where am I in the networking chain? The fact is that each of us has a “networking style”. One that is most comfortable for us. If we can recognize that style, we can then “link” with others and form a complimentary chain and maximize our networking potential. Sounds difficult? Not at all! Do I enjoy being part of a large crowd and is it fun to work the room?
- Do I feel more comfortable one on one, and would really prefer not to “work the room”.
- Do I do my homework and make sure that I know who I want to meet?
- Do I make a direct contact whenever I network?



If you feel comfortable in a crowd, can work a room without hesitation, carry on a conversation, jumping from one topic to another. Chances are you are an **Orange Link**.
 If you feel comfortable talking to people one on one, and like to hear all the details about someone before moving to the next person. Chances are you are a **Red Link**.
 If you do your homework, know what you expect from the event and make a beeline for your target. Chances are you are **Green Link**.

Using my theory of the links, it makes sense to “Sell your Strength and Buy your Weakness”. Partner up with others who have the strengths you lack. If you are an **Orange Link**, you need the follow through of the Red Link and the bottom line results produced through the **Green Link** in order to maximize your participation at any event. By forming this type of chain when networking each person gets to maximize their own personal comfort level while adding value to the others who are part of their chain of connections.

Working a room as a team using the Link and Think™ theory is simple. The **Orange Link** is the ice breaker, the person who is most comfortable making first impressions. The Red Link pays attention to details and will make sure there is follow up. The **Green Link** is sequential, and will summarize the results. The Link and Think™ theory work not only for networking events, but to help you recognize how to communicate with the people you meet anywhere. Imagine you are speaking to a **Red Link** and you are a **Green Link**—you won’t give enough detail to satisfy the **Red Link**. They need details! Here is another scenario you are an **Orange Link** and you are communicating with a **Green Link**—you talk in pods, he needs sequence. You lose him. A few more characteristics of the Link and Think™ Theory

OrangeLink

**Big picture thinkers. Starters. Don’t like Criticism. Bore easily. Work best under pressure.
 They learn by hearing their own voice.
 They are usually auditory, using words like “I hear what you say.”**

RedLink

**Like to know the full story, all the details.
 Pays attention to detail. Likes Status Quo.
 Doesn’t work well under pressure. They are usually empathetic and will use phrases like “I understand how you feel.”**

GreenLink

Sequential thinking, list maker, summarize bottom line facts. Quick wit. Don’t like wasting time. They are usually visual and use words like “I see what you mean.”



Learn From Another's Success

I wrote a book a few years back that included a number of sales and marketing tools that I thought might be worth sharing. I have found over time that there is nothing new; merely an old idea shifted a little to compliment the generation, the demographic, or the current situation. September 11 changed the way many of us are doing business—in my mind the ultimate sales techniques are those that are tried and true. We merely do a little R & D—in this case, it's not "research and development," it's "rob and duplicate." I don't suggest you steal the ideas, merely transform what has already been done, so that it will work for you and your products or services. Enjoy the stories and use them if they can work for you. The stories below are from my book "Effective Networking Strategies.

Taxi cabs—they're all the same!

No way! Here is a story that guarantees food for thought. Everyone knows that you cannot improve or change the cab industry. A cab driver in New York decided to improve his service. He looked at his client base and decided he wanted to upgrade. Here is what he did. He did a little "R & D." He asked his passengers a series of questions. What he wanted to know was what they felt were the attributes of a good cab driver. When he had their list, he studied the results and determined that he would put into effect all that were possible.

He had his "mission statement" printed on a plastic coated business card. When he arrived to pick up a customer, he handed his card first, then asked if the passenger was ready to allow him to be his driver.

When the passenger got into the car, he found several "new" marketing concepts: the driver offered a choice of newspaper, a bottle of water, choice of radio station—all at no extra charge! According to the story, this cab driver has increased his business by over 500%, and now has people making reservations!

Can you improve your product or service and generate this type of business increase? Do a little research; find out what people want and give it to them. Don't try to sell, find out what people want to buy.

Ethnic challenges—an excellent marketing opportunity

Canada is a melting pot, we are a diverse society, and we tend to try to support each other. A Spanish gentleman started a computer repair company. He wanted to help people buy both



computers and software. His problem was that he had a heavy Spanish accent, and at times was difficult to understand. Unfortunately, when people called for information on his products and services, many hung up, not taking time to listen to his message that was prerecorded on his voice-mail. He was not getting the business, yet his products and services were excellent. What could he do to turn a negative into a positive?

What he did was to take advantage of his ethnic background. He changed the name of his company to Computador, (like matador) and developed brochures and a Web site that showed the Computador waving the computer (instead of a bull) through the cape. On the bottom of his brochures and on his Web site, was the statement “Computer service guaranteed— no bull!” His business increased dramatically by using the ethnic “hook” humorously. When people called, they expected to hear an accent and took the time to listen carefully to someone who promised to deliver without any problems.

Can you apply this marketing strategy to your business or service? Who you are, where you come from, is a plus. Turning negatives into positives requires creativity.

Word processing services are all the same

A young woman named Irene, wanted to start a computer/data processing/ desktop publishing business from her home. She wanted to do all the computer jobs that no one ever has time for. Her problem? She had lots of competition. She decided that she would market her services through the mail and she had a promotional piece made that listed “jobs to be done.” She had the marketing tool laminated and at the bottom

of the page read, “Wipe the slate clean, call Irene!” She found that many people need the alliances of others in their own field for those bits and pieces they never find time for. It was a good marketing strategy where everyone wins. Her business is flourishing. By using her name in the brochure along with a slogan, she made it easier to remember and find her when needed. Can you develop a marketing strategy that will work for you using this idea?

Strategic alliances are a valuable source of increased business. Look at the competition as an added resource, a new source of business potential.

Soup kitchens—can you challenge Campbells?

If you have a story, a product, a service that can be connected to a cause, a concept, or a particular group, you may get free publicity. For instance, if your product or service is geared to seniors, you can use the senior citizen centers, involve them in a research project, a product launch or a testing, and let them get the article written for you. Local papers are always looking for articles on seniors and their interests. Many seniors’ groups have columns in weekly newspaper. A friend of mine was a good cook and was famous, as far as her family was concerned, for the soup she could make! The soup was low fat, high flavor and oh, so good... With the encouragement of her husband, an accountant, and her advisor, she decided she would



start a business, using her talent for soup making. Her target market? Selling soup to seniors. Her research told her that seniors like soup; it's good, nourishing, and easy to digest. She held soup parties at senior citizen's apartment buildings in her neighbourhood. She used friends of her grandmother as her first contacts. Soon she was delivering twice a week and had more business than she could handle. Word spread through the senior network that she had a good product, an excellent price, and she delivered!

Does your product or service help seniors, kids, special needs—what's your target market? If it's kids, involve the daycare centres, the schools, single parents. Go any- "Learn..." where that your target market can get the publicity and your product or service will get more exposure.

Can you use these types of sales and marketing ideas? Lateral thinking, winning combinations, and a little creativity will generate and maintain sales targets! For more sales and marketing stories visit the website www.connectuscanada.com and purchase the book "Effective Networking Strategies". Networking is not just exchanging business cards, its building relationship that builds business for everyone.



Maximizing Participation at Conferences and Tradeshows

There's no avoiding the "N" word these days. We all know the benefits of networking –but how well do we practice it?

You are going to be part of a conference or trade show and you want to maximize your opportunities while participating. Good networking is trying to help everyone you meet connect with someone who will benefit from that introduction.

Networking isn't selling your product or service, it's selling you, and who you know!

Networking is linking resources

Think of networking as a chain, and each link you add gives you another connection, and that connection can provide another, and another and another. You need to become part of that chain – a networking resource that can help you reach anyone.

Sometimes you have to become a detective, looking into your past. Who do you know that might be a positive connection for someone you know now? You have to become a lateral thinker, defined in the dictionary as seeking to solve problems by unorthodox or illogical methods. Lateral thinking stretches your imagination and you learn to see a win/ win scenario in every situation. To network effectively, you must be prepared and that means doing your homework! Before you come to any conference or trade show, make a list of who you know and what areas of expertise they have.

Order a new supply of business cards, make sure they have a complete address and if possible, a dedicated fax line, and an email address. People you meet will want to connect with you in the quickest most economical way possible. Fax machines and email are fast becoming the chosen methods of business communication. Business letters delivered by mail are important, but to make the immediate connection after a networking event, fax or email is most efficient. The following check list will help you maximize your participation at this conference:

- ✓ Have a plentiful supply of business cards;
- ✓ Work on your handshake, it says a great deal;
- ✓ Perfect your infomercial; take no more than one minute to introduce yourself;
- ✓ Arm yourself with several "good" questions that will lead to a connection;
- ✓ Set networking goals for yourself, exchange cards with at least 25 delegates;
- ✓ Make notes on the back of each card for follow-up.



Who makes up your network?

Everyone in your life is part of your network, and it's probably bigger than you think. They can all help you and you can help them. You must learn what you can about each individual. Their skills, experiences, talents, and needs. The people you know are "warm" leads. It's much easier to build on that warmth by expanding your knowledge of these people, than it is to pursue "cold" leads.

- *Family.* Look at each family member as a well-rounded individual with skills and backgrounds. You can tap into their knowledge and their networks.
- *Friends.* Your friends have skills you may not be aware of. Ask. They have their own networks. Ask to be introduced.
- *Neighbors.* Your physical proximity gives you a unique chance to develop closer ties. Find out who your neighbours are. You know you already have one thing in common – your choice of residence.
- *Professionals in your field.* You may not work directly with them, but you share the same career choice. You can advise and support each other over common issues.
- *Suppliers.* You do business with them anyway. Find out more about them. They might need your services.
- *Clients.* You serve them and you have built up a relationship of trust. Ask them to serve you in various ways, as suppliers, supporters, and referrals.
- *Co-workers.* You likely spend more waking hours with these people than you do with your family or friends. How well to you really know them? Find out more. You may be able to help each other.



The “I Think I Can” *Canadian Tour*

I originally wrote the program for businesswomen, but there are so many businessmen out there that have asked to be included in the journey, that I have rewritten the tour to include both genders.

Remember the little engine that could? Well, just like that little engine, “I think I can” ... I think I can connect businessmen and women across the country.

As a professional speaker and trainer, I have spoken to thousands of businessmen and women in every province, throughout North America, and around the world. I travel across Canada on a regular basis and my audience is most often men and women in small business. In 2003, I will connect everyone I meet during my journey.

We ask that each person go online and register. Everyone must provide us with their W3—Who are you? What do you need to succeed? What are you willing to share that will help others? We will provide a section on the Forum for their potential success story. Each story will begin with “I Think I Can,” but I need the following...

We have set up the Forum to allow registered participants to connect, and learn about each other. We will provide the tools required to build the rapport that will build business. We will teach men and women in small business, how to help each other and to use the available resources, both from government and industry. We are strong supporters of Industry Canada and use www.infoexport.gc.ca for all our international trade information needs. We source financial information for small business from our Canadian banks and share what we find.

If you want to get on board the “I Think I Can” Tour, you will be connected to everyone I meet as I move across the country. My training programs and keynotes are all about building rapport, the power of positive linking, and knowing how to create effective teams. Each of the people in my audience will have already identified their needs and will be ready to join me on the journey.

The journey begins in January; we will be making stops in Toronto, Mississauga, Ottawa, Montreal, and Halifax. All of the business people we meet during this tour will be connected once the journey has been completed. We will post a map of our travels on our Web site and let everyone know where we will be each month. This is a journey of discovery for me, and for the businessmen and women I meet as I travel. I will write about the journey, about the people I meet and about the tools available in each province to help small business succeed.

We have invited associations and Chambers of Commerce in every province to join us, to get on board the “I Think I Can” Tour. We are looking for businessmen and women from across Canada



that not only think they can—they did! We want their stories, and with the help of a team of advisors, we will edit their stories and include the winners in upcoming issues of Businesswoman Canada and Small Business Canada Magazines.

The “I Think I Can” Tour is all about success; about believing that you can achieve. We want to share your secrets to success with our readers. As a broadcast journalist, I want to write and record the experiences of the people I meet as I cross the country. I was featured in the program 2nd Chance that has aired on Global Television across the country—I believe this is an opportunity to provide another program about the women I meet during the journey.

We know we will have the support of associations in every province. The governments in each province will also be on side, for we will share what we learn as we cross Canada. Federally, the government is determined to “brand Canada” and using the strengths of the businessmen and women I meet and the interviews I record, we will create an incredible vehicle that will document just what those strengths are. I will be taping, writing, and photographing businessmen and women and documenting their stories in each province.

We will be holding events in every province—many of these events will be held in hotels that were once connected by the railroad, we will showcase how they were part of the growth of Canada. It was our idea is to make this a journey, and to began it with the story of the “little engine that could.” Remember, the little engine spent most of her life, going nowhere, shunting back and forth in the railroad yard, it was only when given the chance to help someone in need, that she recognized that she had the skills to take the train over the mountain—it was the little engine who said, “I think I can, I think I can...”

“I Think I Can” is a book, about the men and women I meet, the country I love, and the journey I make. We will photograph and profile men and women in business from every province and at the end of the journey we will have the book, complete with photographs, plus a database of all the Canadian businessmen and women who not only think they can, they will succeed, by sharing their knowledge, contacts and resources and it will all be done because... I think I can!

Join me on the journey!



Branding-In Most Cases, *You Are The Product!*

In the 21st century, everyone's a freelancer. Your value in the marketplace is going to be based entirely on what a prospective employer or client perceives as the value you bring to the table. The best and most productive way to bring perceived value to the table is to brand yourself—to be as distinct and as memorable as McDonald's golden arches. If you follow the directions below, you will watch your income rise along with a demand for your services.

Have a great Web site

The first and most important way to brand yourself is to have a really fabulous Web site. It is mandatory. At the very least, you need a personal page where you post your resume and interests. Show the world you're with the program. And there are ways to make your Web site more valuable— have a message board and/or a discussion list that keeps people coming back to the Web site to discuss relevant issues and to get resources that you are willing to share. Write articles, become an "expert." Share d effort. My Web site gets over 6,000 hits a week and it generates additional income for me.

Have an effective network

The second must is having a strong network. It doesn't matter how distinctive you are as a person or a professional if no one knows you. Meet new people every chance you get. Become known for something that sets you apart from your competition. Visit my Web site and fill in a Mind Map—this will tell you what makes you special and will give you a little insight into what you can add to your Web site. Do your homework—check out the types of networking events that will add value to you and your company. Find out your communication style; look for associations and organizations that have common interests. It is easier to build a profitable network when you have something in common.

Know who you are and what you stand for

The third point is to have a "You, Inc." attitude. Think of yourself as the CEO of your own personal services company. If you're employed, think of your employer as your biggest client (for now). Run your professional life as if it's a business you own— because it is. Become aware of what "You" stand for. With all of the mergers, acquisitions, and downsizing, chances are you will become self-employed sometime in your life. Get ready; make a list of what you stand for personally and professionally. Spend some time on this. Fill a couple of pages in a journal.



Narrow down what you stand for—highlight items that you’re excited about. I use my W3 as a way to find out who I am and where my value to others may be: Who am I? What do I need? What am I willing to share? I find that my brand, like my infomercial, changes with my audience. We need to become valuable to the people we meet—often times we should listen first and speak later. It makes us more valuable when we can find a way to have a common interest or goal.

Be the best at what you do

Become an expert. Don’t just be competent; the world is full of unemployed and unemployable competent people. As the white-collar revolution rages on around us, it will soon have many more to compete with. Instead of being competent, be an expert. Invent something new in your field. Do something no one else does. Create a new career field. Experts always make more money, and experts never lack work.

Enjoy what you do

Have work that matters. If the work you’re doing now doesn’t matter to you, quit. Or, change your attitude about what you do so that it does matter. Or, make dramatic, drastic changes in what you do and how you do it until it does matter. Be someone who can afford to be unbelievably picky about whom you work for. Your brand is only as innovative and exciting as your clients are. Get connected to those innovative and exciting clients and employers. A good rule for success in any business is to under promise and over deliver. You’ll never stand out if you over-promise and under-deliver—everyone else is already doing that. Why not make it easy on yourself to impress others? If you always deliver twice what you promised you would, then your reputation will grow and flourish.

Get out of that rut!

If you cannot find out who you are - you might be in a rut—do something to get out of that rut. No one is interested in a stale, tired brand. Change your tactics, read as many magazines this month as you can, magazines that you never would have considered reading before. Go somewhere on vacation that you’ve never been before. Learn to dance, sing, juggle, play a musical instrument. Do anything and everything to break out of that rut. Find yourself, learn to identify your expertise, become that brand people want to identify with. Once you have done it—watch your business grow!



Leadership and Canada

I AM A Canadian Leader! What does that statement really mean? What is a Canadian and how do we maximize being not only Canadian, but also a leader? To lead, according to the dictionary is to direct, to guide by persuasion, to provide access, to be first. Again, according to the dictionary, a leader is a person who leads, performs, and is an influential person.

Are you a Canadian Leader? If I am a Canadian and I am a leader, and if I want to share what I believe is truly important to my fellow Canadians, how can I do this? Last month, Heritage Minister Sheila Copps and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pierre Pettigrew introduced a federal initiative called *Trade Routes*. This is Canada's first multi-sectoral and market-driven strategy designed specifically to help the arts and cultural sectors take full advantage of rapidly expanding international business opportunities. As both ministers are leaders of our country, they, according to the dictionary, will provide us with access—access to federal funding to “brand Canada” and to help us become recognized as world class leaders in the sectors identified.

It has been determined by our government leaders that no one really knows who we are, or even what we have to offer as Canadians to the rest of the world. Trade Routes offer us, as Canadians, the opportunity to tap into federal resources and finally figure out whom we are and what we have to offer the world! As a Canadian, I welcome the chance finally to tell everyone what Canada is all about and who we really are!

I spent a great deal of time trying to figure out how I would position this article, because I really care about my country and I care about the people I connect with on a daily basis. How could I take advantage of the opportunity being offered to me through Trade Routes? It quickly dawned on me that it is all about “Who I know!” In order to lead any initiative, you have to be able to understand where your strengths are and recognize where you need help. Once you've made that assessment, you can gather the team that will make your leadership more effective. In this case—branding Canada, means knowing who I know, what they know, and how I can use those people and their knowledge. It sounds like another case for good networking skills!

Let me show how my leadership skills will not only benefit me, but how they will benefit everyone I know. Let me take you on a walk through the chain of connections that inevitably will be part of my business plan for Trade Routes and my participation in the initiative.

Trade Routes is a \$23 million dollar initiative to be spread over three years, that will enhance cultural trade and develop a “brand” recognition for Canada and its cultural products internationally. The program will involve training, market studies, counseling, trade shows,



conferences, and events. It will introduce export ready Canadian artists, performers, directors, designers and publishers, plus any other Canadian businesses that will meet the criteria for this initiative.

Who do I know?

As a Chair of *NEXPRO*—a Business Development Bank of Canada program— I know what BDC has to offer companies interested in becoming export ready, and I will tap into them and their products. As the Managing Editor of *Business- Woman Canada Magazine*, I consistently profile government programs and initiatives in each issue. I can tap into those contacts and make sure they are linked into the chain of connections that will showcase Canada and its products and services. As a member of a number of industry associations who have members in the defined categories, I will connect with them and offer to provide training for their members who want to be part of this program. I can encourage them to participate in the branding of Canada. As a member of a number of Chambers of Commerce, I can share the initiative and ask for the opportunity to spread the business opportunities to their members. This will increase the value of membership in the Chamber and will create more brand awareness for the program. As a mentor for many of the government initiatives involving men and women who are unemployed, I will share with them the opportunities they may have by becoming involved in this initiative. Many are new Canadians, with incredible contacts in foreign countries— they can be invaluable in helping us brand Canada. They can share with us their perspective of Canada and what we can offer to enhance brand awareness. As a mentor with youth, Aboriginals, and women in business, I can share this information with educators and specific diversity programs, and I can ask for their help and their support. This will create more brand awareness and an opportunity to tap into the initiative from their perspective.

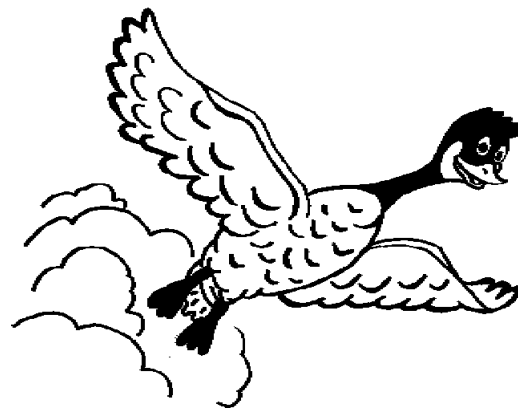
Women in business, young entrepreneurs, and Aboriginals are all target markets for Trade Routes. As a good leader I share my resources, I find the team, and I fill the needs. I am always willing to see a win for both sides of every equation. In this case, I will re-establish my contacts with the BDC, and redefine the program for companies interested exporting their products and services specifically for the Trade Routes initiative. I will apply for funding through Heritage Canada to provide the training, market research, and the counseling needed to make the initiative successful. We will make sure that the team in place can provide the results needed to justify approval. Strategic alliances will be an important part of the success of the program. I will tap into my resources at HRDC to find out if the Trade Routes initiative can work together with some of the programs already in place for downsized Canadians.

Bringing the initiative to the attention of participants and graduates from The Self Employment Benefits Programs, could create stronger brand awareness. It will also show Canadians that there is a link between federal agencies.



I will connect with many of my colleagues that are part of my database, who are trainers, market researchers, and counselors and share the opportunity. A good leader does not have to lead all of the time, a good leader gains strength by working with other leaders. Many of my colleagues will add tremendous value to the program by sharing their resources and expertise. In the last issue of BusinessWoman Canada, we included an article that was based on a story that was sent to me years ago. The article written by Janice Cockburn, was entitled *Women as Geese—Geese as Today's Leaders*. The adaptation below is from my book *Effective Networking Strategies* and is not gender specific.

The Canada Goose—an example of good leadership



When you see geese heading south for the winter, flying in “V” formation, you might consider what science has discovered...

Why do they fly this way? As each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in V formation, the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range, than if each bird flew on its own. People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily if they travel on the thrust of one another. Trade Routes and the desire to “brand” Canada will happen more quickly and efficiently with all of us travelling in the same direction, working together, instead of each of us working on our own initiative.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the birds in front. If we had as much sense as the goose we would stay in formation, travelling with those who are headed in the same direction. By working together, we get farther, faster.

When the head goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing, taking advantage of the lift from the rest in formation. Another goose flies point taking a turn at leading the way.



It makes sense to take turns doing demanding jobs. By sharing the responsibilities, no one gets over-tired. No one has to lead all of the time. Perhaps that is Canada's strength and the brand we can share with our colleagues in other countries. We are Canadians, and we can all take a share of the leadership responsibilities. Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. What do we do when we hear a honk from behind? Maybe it is time to start blowing our own horn, to start encouraging Canadians to shout out, "We are proud Canadians!" Perhaps like the goose, we should look at the sounds as encouragement and not as criticism. Trade Routes can provide us with the tools we need to work together, to travel information, and to encourage each other keep up our speed as we move into the international market. Finally, and this is important, when a goose gets sick, or is wounded and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with the injured goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly and return to formation or until it dies. Only then do the geese launch out on their own rejoining their flock or looking for another formation to join.

If we had the sense of a goose, we would stand by each other in the same way. September 11 is not a date we will soon forget, we are Canadians, we care about our country and our citizens—let's take a lesson for the Canada Goose—fly together, share our resources and show everyone around the world what Canada is really all about!



Acronym Soup

The Dictionary defines *Acronym* as a word formed from the initial letters of a name, such as *WAC* for *Women's Army Corps*, or by combining initial letters or parts of a series of words, such as *radar* for *radio detecting and ranging*; Acronym, a word formed from the initial letters of a multiword name.

The Dictionary defines *Soup* as a liquid rich in organic compounds and providing favourable conditions for the emergence and growth of life forms. The slang is to modify, to increase capacity to perform or satisfy, as in to soup up an engine; to add horsepower for greater speed potential.

I have always loved words and it has been one of my favourite exercises in life to use existing words, to make them acronyms to describe and help my audience remember some of my “words of wisdom”. In each issue of the magazine, I will come up with new recipes for success. This issue will cover *International Business Opportunities*. *Acronym Soup* is a rich compound that provides growth of new life forms—words with new meanings. It is my goal to increase your capacity to remember the words and the importance of their message. These acronyms have been designed to help you in your business development. This article is directed towards the international market.

Achieve is the first offering

Achieve—to carry out successfully, to accomplish, to reach a higher level of skill; to become successful. *Enjoy your soup. Savour the flavour.* We all set goals and provide ourselves with an action plan to achieve those goals. The following is the first acronym in your soup mix! When considering international trade as a career option or part of your business plan, consider what you hope to achieve.

Ability to fit in; to be like the people you are with and to meet their standards. This is an important part of your action plan. Particularly when dealing with companies from another culture. Doing your homework, making sure that you understand their diversity will go a long way when selling your products or services internationally.

Clearly able to understand the importance of those around us. It's often difficult to put ourselves in another's position. Often taking courses in cultural diversity will go a long way to cementing a relationship that will result in business development between your company and the international one.



Hear what people say; learn to really listen. It is incredibly important to tune into the nuances of your potential business partner or client. They may perceive that you understand, simply by a nod, or a smile.

Be “in tune”, learn from the experts. What is said is often not what is really meant.

Intuitive; sensing what is important to those you are with? Business develops more often than not, through intuition; we sense that there is a fit between our companies or our cultures. It is wise to listen to that “gut” feeling—finding common interests and skills can be the bond you need to make that deal come to fruition.



Empathic; understanding the needs of others, helping them as you help yourself. We hear from everyone that it is better to give than to receive. The twist on this proverb is that it is more profitable to listen carefully, take the time to understand the needs of your potential client or partner, and help fill those needs. Once you have helped someone, they are more than willing to return the flavour—and that develops business!

Valuable; always find ways to add value to yourself and what you are doing. It is important that your potential client understands what you bring to the table in the relationship. It isn't just the products and services, it is all about the relationship and you are an important part of that equation. If you have a bio that includes the awards you have received, the honours bestowed on you through organizations, find a way to let your potential client know that you are valuable on several fronts—what you know, whom you know, and those that want to be connected with you and your company.

Entertaining; make life fun, and be happy as you learn. It's easier to get what you want when you give something away first. It's much easier to build business with a friend—find out what the company enjoys. Build a relaxing, entertaining first-impression where everyone will have the chance to relax and get to know each other.

Achieve your desired goals through an active and well thought-out action plan. International trade is an exciting field, building relationships with experts in cultural diversity is one of the first steps to take. Using our federal government and the studies they provide online is another excellent way to guarantee success. I recommend using www.infoexport.gc.ca. It is always my first stop when I begin any new relationship with a new country or culture. The government resources are up to date, the contacts in the country are knowledgeable, and I know that by using the information wisely, I will be able to achieve my goals. For any female interested in an international opportunity with Australia, consider tapping into the virtual trade mission sponsored by *Industry Canada* and *Women in International Trade, Ontario*—go to www.wito.ca for all the details.



Challenges of Change

For years, I have been experiencing the challenges of change and I have always welcomed these challenges. It never dawned on me that not everyone feels as I do when those challenges are thrust upon them.

Challenge as defined in the dictionary –is to query, to question, to confront – yet when we look at the word “challenging,” the definition is inspiring, stimulating, thought provoking, worthwhile. It appears that perception could be the winner of this battle with words and how to cope with those Challenges of Change could be based on our perception.

I speak to audiences across the country and many in my audience are in transition. Some are experiencing the challenges of Mergers and Acquisitions. Some are being downsized, given an early retirement package, or choosing to move to another field of endeavor. Some are students, considering career choices, some are new graduates seeking gainful employment. All are in the challenges of change.

When I challenge my audience, I ask them for three things; it’s what I call our W3:

W1 – Who are you? W2 – What do you need? W3 – What are you willing to share?

By giving some thought to your W3, your perception will change and all of a sudden you not only have a need, you have a gift that can be incredibly valuable to someone in your network. The challenge you have is to become excited about the changes and not to become fixated on your own needs. The challenges of change can be the most exciting and exhilarating time in your life. It gives you the chance to sit back, examine and reflect on what is important to you and to draft a plan that will lead you to your ultimate destination.

The journey is one you need not take alone. There are many coaches, trainers, and facilitators who can help you determine your needs and act as a guide as you move forward. But first you must determine that you are ready to take that first step – the one that says, “I am inspired, stimulated and I look forward to the challenging journey before me.”

My clients must not only be inspired, they must be willing to work as I guide them along their path to a successful change in their situation. Somehow, I have become what I call a Corporate Guidance Counselor. My clients, many of whom have been in my audiences around the world, are now seeking guidance for many of their challenges. Because of my methods of handling those challenges, the changes are positive, profitable and profound.



We have developed a process that not only provides us with the information we need, but also provides the client with the insight they need about themselves to move forward, to focus on their challenges and to find the best path to take them on their journey of discovery. While it might sound rather difficult to believe, we all know what we want in life. It just takes a little time to put it into words that can generate a plan of action. As a guide, a mentor if you like; my role is to help you design that action plan and avoid the pitfalls that might otherwise stop you from reaching your destination.

The tools we use include mind-mapping, and determining your communication style. We uncover the skills and talents that many of you take for granted. Our first session is taped so that you can refer to it when you begin your follow through on your action plan. We ask you to fill out a Mind Map, which is available on our Web site in advance.

This helps us, help you. The questions on the AHA Mind Map include:

- 1. What do I like to do?*
- 2. What am I good at?*
- 3. What are my strengths?*
- 4. What are my weaknesses?*
- 5. What are my hobbies/interests?*
- 6. What associations do I belong to?*
- 7. Who do I know – my friends associates, neighbors; who do they know?*
- 8. What special skills do I have?*
- 9. Am I a volunteer, do I have a charity of choice?*
- 10. What is my wildest dream, if money, time, and talent had no bearing on my dream?*

If you are experiencing the challenges of change, and want to focus on the journey of self-discovery that will take to get to your next destination, do your W3 and fill out a Mind Map. You will be amazed at what you learn about yourself. On your journey, learn to think laterally.

There is more than one way to get to your destination. For those who find it difficult to determine just what lateral thinking is all about, imagine that you have locked yourself out of your house. What do you do? Ask friends and neighbors what they would do in a similar situation. You will be amazed at the number of answers that differ from what you would do. That, my friends, is a simple definition of lateral thinking. There is always more than one way to get in!

To accept the challenges and make the necessary changes, the following are the steps to take: Develop a plan. Whatever your needs, they are best satisfied by developing a strategy. Your plan should include what you want to accomplish, and what organizations or associations would best satisfy the plan's execution. Remember W3 – what are you willing to share?



Research the people you hope to contact. Who do you know? Who do they know? What do you have in common? People like people who are like themselves. Remember your W3! Learn to listen. Don't dominate the conversation. Find out the needs of others. Don't try to sell – find out what people want to buy. It's easier to fill a need, than to create one. Share your resources.

Learn to network effectively. Determine your communication style. Use that knowledge wisely; team up with others who have the strengths that you need to network effectively. Remember your W3!

Follow up. Find out the best way to communicate with those you meet and follow up promptly. Try to find your common denominator, use caution when following up, and make sure you have a gift of someone or something that will be valuable to the receiver. Make sure your meeting is memorable and that follow-up solidifies that meeting.

Success in the challenges of change is when preparedness meets opportunity. Being prepared is the single most important part of your challenge. Where you go and who you work with is up to you. Don't try to do everything yourself. Join a support group, take a refresher course, and ask for help – trade talents. It's okay to sell your strengths and buy your weaknesses.



Women of the World

Beyond 2000 – August 20-24, 2000

In May '98 in England, a summit of women entrepreneurs included a delegation of 23 Canadians. The opportunity to network and forge business relationships was invaluable. The cohesiveness of the Canadian contingent that was fostered by ConnectUs Communications Canada prior and during the event reflected well on Canada and the participants. Delegates from other countries were keenly interested in pursuing opportunities in Canada and encouraged ConnectUs Communications Canada to co-ordinate a similar event in Canada. Women of the World Beyond 2000 will be an international forum for business people to exchange ideas, share achievements and explore the challenges of entrepreneurship in the new millennium. Canada is reflective of the rising tide of entrepreneurship among women around the world, with leaders in almost every industry sector. Women business owners in Canada represent more than one quarter of the business population and the number of women-owned enterprises is growing faster than the economy at large.

Everywhere, women contribute to job creation and to the generation of new opportunities in our society, but they face obstacles and sometimes have difficulty getting information. In order for women-owned businesses to grow, bridges must be built internationally. The exchange of experience and information which will evolve from this networking conference is a major step towards securing trade relations and ensuring a better future for women entrepreneurs in Canada and abroad.

While cultures may be different, women business owners around the world share the same dreams of entrepreneurship as well as the rewards and frustrations of business ownership regardless of ethnicity. *The Goals – Alliances, Joint Ventures and Friendship.* The goal of “Women of the World - Beyond 2000” is to enable business women to expand their knowledge and horizons by identifying opportunities, tapping into resources and building effective business relationships and alliances with other businesswomen in the global marketplace. To assist them to capitalize on the challenges of the new millennium and build stronger, more economically viable businesses in the year 2000 and beyond. The focus of this conference will be to profile delegates, expand their individual horizons, promote developing business with entrepreneurs in Canada; to provide networking opportunities for Canadian partnerships and to build long-term economic relationships. An equally important focus will be to encourage the growth of entrepreneurial business by addressing the business woman of tomorrow – the youth of today. An international mentoring program will be an exciting facet of this conference



Corporate and community endorsement has been very positive with the following associations indicating their support:

Women Business Owners of Canada;
Canadian Association of Women Executives and Entrepreneurs Business & Professional Women's Association; Women in Communications; Women in Advertising; Women in Food Industry Management; Women's Automotive Association; The Ontario Women's Directorate; The National Association of Women Business Owners (US); Professional Women's Association (Europe); The Centre for International Private Enterprise; The African Federation of Women's Enterprises; The Women's Commission of Ghana.

This conference will target primarily women entrepreneurs and corporate leaders. With over 700,000 women-led firms in Canada, we are confident that this conference will not only showcase the incredible talent in this country, but will also attract and encourage women around the world to follow in our footsteps. This initiative will incorporate events and speakers to cover future economic trends in the following key sectors: business and industry, science and technology, medicine and healthcare, sports and communications. Canadian women will be well represented as we showcase our innovation in these areas. Women from around the world have indicated their interest in learning from Canada – our experiences with respect to marketing to a vast culturally diverse country, as well as how we support cultural expression, while progressing as a leading economy. According to *The National Foundation of Women Business Owners* this is an issue of keen interest among women entrepreneurs in Africa, South America and Asia – where Canada is heralded as a leader. The conference will offer businesswomen a forum to connect with women business owners and entrepreneurs from around the world.

The conference will not end on August 24th, 2000 – The web site and directory will continue to provide a resource for business dialogue and exchange. Conference presenters will be on video and audio and a conference package will be available for those unable to attend. A documentary will be produced which will feature award winning women of the world along the award winning young women's mentor program. The documentary will be promoted as a resource to women's business associations and educational institutions.

A *trade show* is also part of the conference; all sponsors will have the opportunity to set up an interactive exhibit. The focus of the conference is on the future and the economic trends women of the world can tap into.

An *Events Shoppe* will be set up at the conference featuring "Uniquely Canadian" products. The products will be juried by a panel of advisors.

A *competition* will be set up through the secondary school boards throughout Canada. An essay contest with one theme, judged by prominent women from each province will



determine a “winner” from each province and territory. The winners will be guests for the entire conference and will be participate in the “*Young Women of the World*” Mentor program. An award will be presented to each “Future Women of the World” winner. The essays will be published in a book targeted to youth



Inspiration-Is it Part of your Business Plan?



This is not one of your usual business plan articles. This is taking the word inspiration and turning it into a valuable tool for the creation of profitable small business ventures. Many people are becoming self-employed, choosing to leave the corporate world and take charge of their own destiny. They are tired of the uncertainty, the stress, and the pace that life in the corporate world demands. They have chosen to become small business owners. While it sounds easy enough, just what do they have to do to become successful small business owners? Most believe in the beginning, that all they have to do is use their existing talents and set up shop.

If only it were that easy. What they soon find out is that they need a little something extra – they need inspiration. That inspiration can come from a company they hire, from a friend, from a support group or from a training program. But, they need that inspiration. While it sounds a little hard to believe, we achieve when others believe we can do it. This article is about the need to put inspiration into your business plan. When we make the decision, or it is made for us, that we need to change our way of life and become self employed – our first thoughts are of confusion, our next thoughts are the need to take action. What do we do and how do we make sure that we will be successful in becoming self-employed and small business owners? You need a little inspiration...



- I – investigate your market – is it saturated, does the world need another computer programmer, graphic designer, or IT engineer? Think laterally, how can your skills be used in another field?
- N – network, don't discount your hobbies, special interest and charities as potential networking opportunities. It's a great place to begin to grow that new business.
- S – streamline your data base, start re-connecting with everyone – who do you know? Don't abuse them, share positive opportunities for them with your new business. They are your best source of referrals.
- P – prepare your infomercial always begin your introduction with your name and "How can I help you?" Make sure the other person wants your card – offer them the gift of someone or something you know that will benefit them.
- I – improve your bio, bring it up to date – make it exciting! Pay attention to what's in the news and become an expert-get your name out there!
- R – revise your list of skills, ask your colleagues – are you missing something? We seem to take for granted the skills that are easiest for us and they never appear as potential business opportunities.
- A – analyse your needs. Ask for help, but make sure you offer your help first. Where are your strengths? What do you lack – and is it something you can trade off with another company or person?
- T – test the waters – volunteer for a project that will give your new company credibility. It's always easier to be involved with something we enjoy – make it a project that's fun!
- I – identify media opportunities-sponsor events that target your market. Read the papers and the newsletters in your identified market, become an expert. Write!–
- O-organize yourself – design an action plan for your new life. Make sure that life includes time for family, friends, and fun – not just work. Balance is important to your success.
- N – negotiate with colleagues. Buy their strengths and sell them yours. Barter, trade, form strategic alliances – together you can be stronger and you have a broader base of potential clients.

Use a little inspiration and become a profitable small business. Many people go through programs sponsored by HRDC.

These programs provide an amazing opportunity to learn all of the skills necessary for self-employment. For details on existing programs, go to your local Employment Insurance office. If self-employment is in your future – look for inspiration now...it's worth it!



Economic ***ROLLER COASTER***



More and more of us are turning to small business as a solution for unemployment. Whether we work for a start-up, a corporation or are a “free agent,” it’s important for us to take inventory – both personally and professionally; to take time to identify our aspirations and goals, our skills, our preferences and requirements. By doing this, we will greatly increase the odds that self-employment and becoming a small business owner might be a perfect fit for us.

In order to determine the fit for becoming a small business owner we need to assess what are our greatest talents and skills. The answers to this question might seem obvious at first glance. But, dig deeper and answer the question holistically. While technical skills are highly in demand, so too are people skills. Don’t neglect your personal attributes. Ask five people who know you in different capacities to write down what they see as your greatest talents. Ask



them not to hold back and to be honest in their replies. You may discover talents you previously took for granted. Listen to what others say, remember sell your strength and buy your weakness! Make a list of the functions from past positions that you've loved most. You might learn something about yourself by looking at the similar features and functions of previously held and enjoyed careers. List any criteria you consider important. For some people, it may be autonomy, for others, it may be working with a great team. The important thing to remember is that it's not only job function that brings satisfaction, it's also the relevant circumstances surrounding the position. Think about the positions you're been looking into, and then consider what circumstances bring out your best. Those circumstances could be the beginning of your own small business! Look around, listen to others, look to see the many possibilities available, but don't get lost in the possibilities. Sometimes seeing so many possibilities increases our confusion. Knowing what the options are is great, but it's important to be clear about what you most want, about what's most important to you in a position, career, or a company. Without this, it's easy to make bad choices, or make decisions for the wrong reasons.

Stay focused on the internal questions while exploring the possibilities. Opportunity isn't something that happens to you, it's something you create. There's an art to creating opportunity – it's an attitude and a skill set. It's a way of being in the world, and causing what you most want, to happen. Learn to create opportunity. Be open to the possibilities that exist on a moment-to-moment basis. Take initiative. Generate possibilities! Visualize your future. Picture your ideal workday one year from today. Describe what you're doing and where you're doing it. Compare the results of your visualized workday with your current situation. Is it a job or is it your new business? This will help you to identify the gap between where you are and where you want to be. Doing this exercise will help you to more clearly refine your vision of the future. Be prepared for the opportunities! Not all the opportunities in the world are going to open any doors for you if you're unable to act on them in a timely and professional manner. Learn to eliminate delay so you can respond immediately.

Tie up loose ends so you're able to respond quickly to situations that are ripe with opportunity. Sometimes timing is everything; be prepared. Become more knowledgeable about the industry you're interested in. The more you know about the industry, the marketplace, and the position, the more informed you'll be when it comes to making your decisions. Educate yourself and do research. Brainstorm creative ways to get the information that will answer your questions. Involve others in your research campaign. Create your own personal Board of Advisors. Consider what perspectives are missing in your view of the world. Identify what those perspectives are, and who might fill in the gaps and become a member of your "personal board of advisors." Too often, we limit the ways we allow others to contribute to us. Be open as to how a person might contribute to you. Remember always to express gratitude for their input. Schedule time-off for yourself. As focused as you might be on the transition, it's important to take time off. Enjoy life independent from your role of employee, manager, or leader. Develop yourself in ways that are unrelated to your roles in life. You'll be



more powerful and effective as a result of taking this time for yourself. Network, join a support group, and take time for yourself. If you are on that economic roller coaster and you aren't sure if owning a small business is really for you. Check out what's available through HRDC, you might be surprised at the resources that are offered through the Web site: www.hrdc-drhc.qc.ca

Employment or self-employment? With the challenges of transition the choice is yours. Take time to ride the roller coaster. It might be worth the ride!



The New Theory of Connecting

You do not have to imagine a world where we can “connect” with each other by just sitting down and talking, that world already exists via the Internet. However, do you know the demographics of that world? Do you know that our world consists of Africans, North and South Americans, Europeans and Asians? Do you understand the different cultures, and can you adapt your domestic business strategies to a global perspective? If you cannot, there are Web sites to help maximize your business opportunities internationally. One such Web site is www.infoexport.gc.ca Access the reports, resources and cultural overviews on this site there is a wealth of information ready and waiting for you.

As businessmen and businesswomen, you can access that wealth through technology, through training and by building the relationships needed to foster profitable business growth. Recognize that building business internationally depends dramatically on your communication style and your ability to adapt to the culture and customs of the country you deal with. Be aware of your common interests, as well as your differences.

We know the world is rapidly changing. Information technology accelerated the process of connecting dramatically. We saw a shift from agriculture to industry to information processing. Now, in the developed world, we have taken information technology to innovation. A shift that is most significant.

Innovative technology has provided us with contacts, information, trends, training, and methods that enable us to communicate and compete in a world economy. We no longer have to imagine a world where we can “connect” with businesspersons everywhere—we have it! Today, we can lead the way, using our creativity and innovation as the building blocks for our economic future. If International Trade is the door to the future of world economy, then we, as small business owners and entrepreneurs, can provide the keys that will unlock the potential globally. In order to maximize our business opportunities worldwide utilize the Top Ten 10 points listed below:

10 KEY POINTS TO BUILD BUSINESS INTERNATIONALLY



1. Be prepared. Have plenty of business cards, a professional picture for use in a directory if you are participating in a trade show or conference, and an accurate and informative profile. If you want to succeed, provide information on who you are, what you do, who you know, and what you need. Effective connections can only happen when both parties know what is required and who they are dealing with.

2. Be open-minded. Everyone you meet has the potential to help you towards a goal. Be friendly, listen carefully, and use a little lateral thinking to see where the fit might be between you and the other person. It's who they know, that could be the important international connection.

3. Don't be afraid to ask. When you are participating in international events, do your homework. What do you need? Who do you want to meet? What is a good connection for you? On the reverse, what do you have to offer? Who do you know? By being prepared with a list of your contacts, you might be a more welcome match internationally.

4. Give without expectation. If you are at an international event, introduce yourself to as many delegates as possible; ask how you can help them. By building relationships between yourself and other participants, you will find common interests and this usually results in business opportunities.

5. Set realistic and achievable goals. Make sure you plan ahead. If you are a member of an international organization, connect with a local chapter. If you are a member of a Chamber of Commerce or a Board of Trade, connect with them in advance; ask for introductions in the conference area. These associations can help you realize your goals if you put them in the picture.

6. Think laterally. Learn to look at each new person you meet as a possible business alliance. Maximize your participation in every event by listening carefully and acting on what you hear. Ask questions that will give you a more in-depth picture of everyone you meet. Use questions like: what makes your approach to the industry different? This is a great icebreaker and gives the speaker a chance to share a little information about themselves.

7. Promote yourself effectively. Understand your features and benefits (your strengths and how to use them) and learn how to express yourself. Perfect your infomercial. *Use the SMILE and ASK formula. Start with a Smile, Make eye contact, Introduce yourself, Let people know what you do, Explain what you need, Ask how you can help, Say thank you, Keep in touch.*

8. Communicate. Be articulate, concise, enthusiastic, honest, and open. Use language that is comfortable and acceptable for the event, and for the culture. Do not forget that the other side of communicating is listening. This is as important as speaking. Be aware of your body language.



9. Organize. Organize yourself thoroughly, your thoughts, your notes, your files, your time. This takes time in the short-run, but will save you tenfold in the end. Bring your database with you, organize it by category, and use codes to help you identify who you know and what they know.

10. Teamwork. Work hard for others and the rewards will come back to you ten times over. Each time you meet someone new; remember who they are and who they want to connect with. Try to be part of a team, where everyone is working together helping each other connect and build better international business relationships.



Women Entrepreneurs Build Business Through Networking

The Canada/USA Businesswomen's Summit started months ago for me. My role was to be the official match maker for approximately 300 women-owned businesses from throughout North America. Imagine the challenges, the opportunities and the networking that was involved in order to be able to make creative, effective matches that would benefit both sides of these introductions.

As a keynote speaker and facilitator, I have been building relationships for many years, working with financial institutions, governments, education systems and individuals. My role has been to show by example, how to "network to get work." My methods have been broken down into a simple system that gives everyone the tools needed to maximize participation in any event. Everyone needs to know how to break the ice, build the bridge, and cement the relationships that will result in successful joint ventures, strategic alliances or the sale of a product or service.

For this Summit, the challenge was to help everyone help each other. This was not just an opportunity to sell, it was the chance to find common interests and create partnerships where both sides of each match would be a winner. My team helped me research the delegates and their needs, then find interested companies and individuals who would be available to meet and discuss possible cross border business development.

I found myself repeating over and over again to the delegates and potential matches, who do you know, what do they know and how can we share that knowledge so that everyone will benefit? I was truly amazed with the response we had. Companies were not only willing to participate in this exercise, they were anxious to meet as many delegates as possible who had common interests.

In order for this monumental task to work, we needed to set up a data base that would allow us to get to know each potential match. We created a form that gave us the needed information. We learned about the company, the products, the people and who they wanted to meet. The matching was done based on that information. Using a little lateral thinking we began to find common denominators between our delegates and our potential matches. The results of the matches at the Summit are still being tabulated, our records show that each delegate received at least three matches; some delegates were able to meet with as many as twelve connections. We provided the tools and the delegates used them!

We intend to keep the match making going. We have contracts with several international events in the next few months and many of the companies we matched during the Summit,



will be part of our match making for these events. We encourage any company interested in cross border business to connect with us. Our data base is growing and we are regularly asked for our match making services.

We have a reputation for ethical introductions that benefit both sides of every match and we are always looking for companies that believe as we do, that effective networking builds business.



Creating RAPPORT— Building Relationships

Rapport as defined in the dictionary is
“A relationship marked by harmony, conformity, accord, or affinity”

Respect others, listen carefully, and take the time to learn about them. Relate to their cultural diversity, their interests, hobbies and volunteer activities, these are an important factor in building rapport. Remember whom you know. This might be a great connection for them; perhaps it's a colleague from the same country or a project you are working on through your volunteer organization. Build the bridges... friendship and relationships often happen when each side tries to find common interests.

Appreciate the ways in which you are alike. Find the common denominators and build on them. People like people who are like themselves. They buy from them, sell to them, and work with them on joint ventures and strategic alliances. Introduce yourself with information that you want to know about them. Begin your conversation with, “Hello, my name is... I am a Mechanical Engineer with ABC Company.” Chances are, they will tell you what level of education or degree they have attained and where they are employed. The reply could be, “My name is...I got my MBA from...and I worked with a group of engineers on a project in South America.” The rapport has begun; an affinity is developing.

Prioritize your needs and the reasons you want to build the rapport between you and your potential client, customer, or colleague. Make sure your priority is beneficial to the other person. Harmony is part of rapport building. Do your homework; find ways to offer insight and information that will be of importance to your colleague. By prioritizing, you are taking a targeted approach to building the rapport. Suggesting to your client or colleague that you both have the same interest in a volunteer area, an environmental issue, or an educational concern will create an accord between you.

Publicize your meeting and the results of your discussion; let others know that you have begun to relate to each other and that a rapport is developing. Keep your colleagues informed; rapport creates relationships that can benefit you and those you know. By building rapport, you offer a harmonious connection for others in your network that have similar interests, concerns, or issues.

Organize your efforts, maximize your opportunities, and find ways that you create a win/win for both parties. Rapport is about both sides benefiting from the relationship. Think about what you will bring to the meeting. Often it is advisable to go over your database in advance,



consider your contacts, and rate them on their overall value for this occasion. Think laterally. It isn't just the contacts you work with, it is also your friends, relatives, and associates that might have a common interest that should be included.

Recognize your resources; make a list of your key contacts and your special interests. Come to any event prepared to share those resources once the rapport has been established. When building a rapport, often the fact that you ski, scuba, or bike creates the initial interest. Create a brief bio on yourself that includes your education, special interests, hobbies, associations, and your career path—who you know is as important as what you know in some cases.

Take time really getting to know each other; make an effort to meet several times before making the decision to become a referral. Once you have established the initial rapport, begin the building of that relationship. Ask how best to connect with your new colleague. By e-mail? Ask how you can make sure that your new colleague will recognize your message as legitimate and not another piece of spam e-mail. By phone? Ask how you can get by the administrative assistant—the office gatekeeper who makes sure one is protected from all those unnecessary phone calls. Establish a method of communication that can work comfortably for both of you. Build the rapport so that each of you want to keep the relationship growing!



The *Flowing* *Point*

WHAT'S THE FLOWING POINT? Simply put, when an individual has reached their Flowing Point, they have maximized the number of contacts in their network who can provide information that leads to a solution. It's one thing for a person to have a large network, but if they are unable to tap into the information available, what good does it do to simply claim that you know many people. When you have reached your Flowing Point, it does not simply mean that you have a large network. Size in this case, does not necessarily matter. What's more important is that you know what information you can gather from your network and how you can utilize it to come to a solution.

Where do we begin? What's our Flowing Point? Statistics show that there is always a situation that marks the need for the flow of information and resources, what it is and where it starts is the Flowing Point.

As an author and motivational speaker, I've been encouraging my audiences to tell me what they need. I begin each speech with "Hello, my name is Donna Messer. How can I help you?" The phrase is on my business cards, on my Web site, in all my workshops, and it's the beginning of all of my relationships with people who ask for my help. It's The Flowing Point, and it helps me determine what's needed.

For the past 10 years, I have followed a process, always entering into the relationship with my clients at a point that I pre-determine by asking a series of questions. I recognized early in my practice that I couldn't effectively help my clients reach their goals without first knowing who they were, what they needed, and what they were willing to do in order to help themselves. My models were simple – each client needed to fill out two assessments, a W3 and an AHA Mind Map. These basic tools provided me with a starting point for all my coaching sessions.

We founded a company called ConnectUs to handle the processing of all of the information needed to help our clients. We found that our clients wanted to make changes in their lives, to find new careers, to move up the ladder, to find partners, to travel, to believe in themselves and their dreams. We quickly learned that in order to help them help themselves, we needed to know where to begin.



We learned very quickly that communication was a critical factor to success. We found we needed to understand how to “communicate with each other” to speak the same language. We developed a process that would help us understand our client’s communication style. The process is called the theory of “Link and Think”. It’s a simple model that helps us determine their method of processing information. The exercise quickly helps us determine their communication style. Once recognized, we work within that style using auditory, kinaesthetic, or visual methods of communication.

Once clients have been processed through the assessments, our research has proven that clients were not only able to determine what they needed, but also we were able to provide them with an acceptable method of follow through that made it easier for them to achieve their goals. We were able to take them from problem, to opportunity, to solution – efficiently. We found that clients liked to be monitored, to measure their progress. We set up a process that made monitoring and measuring an easy and acceptable part of our program.

It wasn’t until I sat down with Dr. John Paul Hatala that I realized that no matter who it was, or what the situation, there was always a pattern to the methods we used to help people help themselves. It was only a matter of time, until we recognized that we were in the flow. Where we were in the flow, was difficult to determine, until we could assess what was needed. Using our combined talents and tools, the light went on, and the river of information began to flow. We were at the point in our communication, where we understood that people need to know their own flowing point before they can actually get into the stream of connections they need to achieve.

Dr. Hatala and I had found our Flowing Point! We began to work together, pooling our resources and our energies. The results have been incredible. A book, jointly authored called *The Flowing Point: Reaching Network Capacity* is being written. The book is an easy to understand, roadmap of discovery. Taking the reader from where they are, to where they want to go. Describing the journey, complete with all the little side trips they will encounter along the way.

According to the book, life is very much like a river, with continuous flow over rocks, around bends, through turbulence, to a final destination. Like the river, we need to be aware of the flow, recognizing that whether we want to move forward or not – we will. Comparing life to a river helps the reader recognize that when change happens, they are often uncomfortable or afraid, they want to stay where they are, content at their chosen spot in the river.

The flowing point provides a series of self-assessments, analogies, and stories that will provide the reader with the desire to jump in and begin to go with the flow. The Flowing Point comes at the process of handling change from two perspectives – Dr. John Paul Hatala provides the assessment tools, the measurements and the models. We provide the network, the relationships and the communications skills. Together, we encourage the reader to recognize their fears and move forward. *The Flowing Point: Reaching Network Capacity* will



be a must read for everyone. The FlowWork program will be available on line and at workshops and seminars across the country. Ask yourself this question: Where do I want to go with my life? If you haven't found the answer – it's just possible that you haven't determined where you are in the flow.



Where Do You Draw The Line When It Comes To Business Relationships

Statistics show that people like people who are like themselves—they buy from them, sell to them, hire them, and refer them. How then can we be sure that people know what we are really like?

There is a new wave crashing over the business community that says, “it’s time to share a little of your personal self along with your professional profile.” Most of us are not sure that we really want to share more of ourselves and, in fact, we like the idea of keeping our professional and our personal life separate. Now, employers want to know more about the “real you”. They want to know—without asking for the information on your resume—what you are like outside the workplace.

So, in this article I’m going to encourage everyone to consider registering their own personal name as a domain. Yes, that’s right; I want you to register *www.yourname.com*

On that website, I want you to share information on the volunteer work you do, along with a picture of the team you were part of that raise all those funds for Girl Guides of Canada. I want to see a picture of you on horseback as you and your family take that vacation in Alberta. It doesn’t have to be you and your family, but a picture that denotes the fact that you are active, ride horses, and like the outdoors. There could be book reviews of some of your favourite authors, even a short story you published, perhaps a favourite quote. It’s time to let others know what makes you who you are.

There are companies that are encouraging employees to post a personal profile on their intranet. It is believed that when employees learn more about their colleagues, a stronger network develops. Blogs are cropping up everywhere and again there is an opportunity to learn more about each other. Team building is an important part of any business development and it is much easier when the company can see where some of your interests and talents lie, outside your position within the company.

We have been brought up to be modest, and it is difficult for many of us to “blow our own horn”. Publishing a blog, establishing a personal domain website, allows us the freedom to talk about ourselves. In effect, to show and tell.

Networking is still the most important part of business growth and by sharing our social capital, it allows a company to leverage our strengths and our common ground.



Companies are creating models that foster the power of networking by making it easier to get to know each other. Imagine being able to see who graduated from the same college or university as you, or who shares the same interest in music, the arts or a particular sport. Belonging and increasing your social networking has shown to add tremendous value to any company that fosters personal profiling.

In the current issue of *Learning Trends*, Elliot Masie discusses the place that blogs, personal domain websites, and social networking might have in the “social life” of an organization. Far from just being about corporate communication strategies, or even a way to recruit the “NetGens”, he suggests that the age of me-publishing and social networking is upon us and will be leveraged by every generation of our workforce. According to Masie, “we can create models that protect the company’s interests while deeply fostering the power of the network and the wisdom of crowds. The key here is that we want and need to work and learn together and for this—we need a space that is both personal and social.”

The Russian psychologist and learning theorist Lev Vygotsky, articulated this most clearly when he said that all learning and cognitive development takes place on two levels. First, on the social or inter-psychological level, and then on the personal or intra-psychological level. Much of the technology we use has not been very good at offering both the personal and the social side of ourselves. To be fair, very few developers ever really wanted to do this—they were more concerned with delivering content than connecting learners.

Social networking that connects people based on their needs and interests is beginning to reveal what Masie refers to as the “power of the network and the wisdom of crowds”. Perhaps what we are also beginning to see are the ways that these technologies foster and scaffold social and personal learning.

Social Networking Includes:

Hobbies

Special Interests

Talents

College or University

Favorite sport, pet or vacation spot

Books, authors you like to read

Volunteering and charity of choice

Sharing who you are outside the workplace is making inroads when comes to the power of positive linking inside the company



Business Meetings

Making Them Work For You

There is no avoiding Networking these days. We all know the benefits of Networking, but how well do we practice it, particularly when attending that business meeting involving staff from other sectors of the company? Or, those meetings we schedule to really get to know our clients?

Maximizing your time at these events takes careful planning. Implementing an action plan guarantees you a successful event. One of the most important items in your action plan is your appearance. You not only have to look good, you have to feel good. That means the clothes have to be comfortable, yet classy. For women, pockets are a must – your business cards are kept in the right pocket, cards you collect are in the left pocket. Do your homework before the meeting. Arm yourself with plenty of business cards and compile a list of key contacts that might be useful. Business networking is linking resources. Think of networking as a chain, and each link you add gives you another connection and that connection can provide another, and another, and another. Become part of that chain – it is a networking resource that can help you reach anyone in your company. To network effectively, you must be prepared and, as mentioned previously, that means doing your homework! Before you come to any business meeting, make a list of who you know and what they know. Think of ways to find common denominators – people like people who are like themselves – take the time to build the rapport between yourself and fellow employees.

7 steps to make that business meeting work for you

- ✓ Have lots of business cards
- ✓ Work on your handshake, it says a great deal
- ✓ Perfect your infomercial; make it brief, informative, and relevant.
- ✓ Arm yourself with questions to make the conversation flow.
- ✓ Set goals, what do you want to accomplish at the meeting?
- ✓ Build Rapport with each person you connect with. Exchange relevant and timely information. Find ways to help each other.
- ✓ Follow up after the meetings

Maximizing your Participation At Conferences and Trade Shows

Conference attendance is a professional activity providing an opportunity to hear cutting-edge speakers, meet influential and up-and-coming people, and to network. It is a chance to



build the rapport you need to move on to the next step in maximizing your participation at any event.

As a speaker and presenter, I spend a great deal of my time at conferences and trade events. I use a system to maximize the time I spend both presenting and attending these events. For me, I need to be able to be easily recognized, so I have developed a signature look – I always wear my glasses on the top of my head. And the glasses are always designer ones that are in bright colours. I always wear something with pockets so that I am able to give and get business cards easily. My clothes are always easy care fabric that travels well and will not wrinkle. I choose styles and colours that can be dressed up or down as the occasion requires. I recommend finding a designer you like, and build a conference wardrobe around a complimentary style.

I am the foster mom of a guide dog puppy – it is hard to miss me when I am travelling with a dog in a green jacket! My dog guide in training is an icebreaker for me – almost everyone will stop and pet her and say hello. The conversation just naturally moves on to the conference and to why they are attending. I travel to every conference with a small suitcase that can hold all the conference materials, extra business cards, bottled water, and my laptop. I make sure I have all the reference materials I may need, my presentations and my database. Often times, it's not what you know, but who you know that makes the connection valuable.

Maximizing your time at conferences means that there is a win on both sides of the introduction. When I am at a conference, I am there to work, to meet new people, and to provide them with resources, contacts, and leads. I maximize each opportunity by taking the time to build a rapport with them – I find something we have in common, and I note that on the back of their business card. People like people who are like themselves – it takes only a few minutes to find that common denominator.

I always use the directory provided as my source of contacts. If there is a directory with pictures, I make sure that the picture I submitted is current and complimentary. You want people to be able to find you, and a picture that is out-dated does not work. I recommend getting a professional photographer to provide you with a few shots that can be used when needed. The directory can be a great resource – use it to schedule meetings, to make notes of whom you have met, what you need to do for follow up.

I also do my homework in advance of any conference, so I ask for last year's program. I find out as much as I can about the kind of people who will be attending. I determine their education level, their special interests, and any relevant information on their industry sector. I visit the Web sites of previous speakers, and check out this year's program to see if they are listed. Being informed in advance helps me design a plan of action that will maximize my time at any conference or event. Pre-planning really does reap huge rewards. I always check my database for contacts in the area where the conference will be located. I try to reconnect with



as many colleagues and clients as possible. Often as a speaker, I can actually book additional speaking opportunities because I will be in the province or vicinity. Clients can take advantage of the fact that I am already there and travel expenses have been covered. Below is my checklist:

Be organized – ahead of time

- Check the long-range weather forecast before you go and pack accordingly. A suit that will work for both day and evening events is a must. Layers work well in places where the temperature is unpredictable.
- Gather all of your travel documentation in one place (i.e., tickets, maps, reservations, programs, photo ID for the airport, etc.)
- Make life simple by creating a checklist of things to take.
- Provide your significant others with information on how to contact you in your absence.

What you will need

- Sensible walking shoes (at some conferences the sessions are spaced out in different buildings and if your hotel is not at the conference site, you may not get "home" until evening).
- A jacket in case it is cold (or in summer, in case the AC is on too high).
- Highlighter pens for marking up your program.
- Pen and notebook for taking notes during the sessions.
- Business cards.
- Walking-around money.

During the Conference

- Write down 3 to 5 goals that you plan to achieve while attending the conference.
- Pick up a copy of the conference program. Skim the program and highlight interesting sessions.
- If there is a directory, make special note of anyone you specifically want to meet.
- Use the directory; write comments of those you meet for follow up.
- Use a small suitcase on wheels to carry your laptop and conference materials. This saves your back and makes travelling the conference easier.
- Have your database loaded on your laptop. Use it to provide valuable contacts when possible.
- Attend opening plenary, keynote, and closing sessions where possible. Introduce yourself to the speakers, ask how you can help them, and be memorable.
- Gather business cards only after establishing a rapport. Your cards are kept in the right pocket, theirs go into your left pocket.



- Ask how to communicate after the conference and write the best method on the back of their card. If it is by phone, ask who answers it. If it is by e-mail, put where you met them in the subject line. If it is by fax, make sure the line is dedicated or call first.
- Be memorable. You want people to be able to find you.
- Actively participate in the conference, ask questions, and share your knowledge and resources.
- Arrange to attend sessions with another colleague. Maximize your learning by discussing the content of the session with a colleague afterward.
- Complete evaluation forms when they are provided.
- Jot down your impressions and reflections of your conference experiences; it could be valuable for your next conference event.
- Take a break when you need to!
- Try to avoid taking other work with you to the conference. It will detract from your conference experience, and you will feel guilty because you won't have time to focus on it anyway!
- Turn your cell phone off. Schedule a time to check for messages.
- Have some fun! Conferences often have banquets, dances, performances, and field trips. Take advantage of these if your schedule permits.

Follow Up

- On your way home, review the notes that you have taken, and begin to organize a written reflection. Some ideas will be a match between expectations and reality.
- Use the conference as your reference point to reconnect with all the contacts you made.
- Ask for permission to use a quote from a keynote, or other session presenters.
- Write a relevant article and submit it to the conference organizers for inclusion in their next publication.
- Go over your list of conference goals, did you attain them? If not, why not?
- Build your database. Use the conference as your reference point.
- Follow up within a week.

Business Items

- Save receipts for any reimbursable expenses. These typically include airfare, hotel, taxi, local transportation.
- Submit expenses quickly. Write a brief overview of the value of the conference.

Ethics

- Show professional behaviour and attend conference sessions rather than playing golf, going to the casino, or hiking. If the conference is in an attractive geographical location, schedule a few days before or after the conference to do these things.



- Try to attend the entire conference. It is not appropriate to simply appear for the session in which you are presenting.
- Only refer and supply contacts with permission.

Donna's Top Ten Tips for Business Networking

Tips 1 & 2: Be prepared; Be open-minded.

We already have a business network. The problem is many of us do not know how to tap into it and use it wisely. Keep plenty of business cards with you, and an eye out for connections between people you know. Far too many people fail to make the right connections because of narrow thinking. Re-evaluate your network.

The single most important networking skill to develop is lateral thinking. Try to look at your contacts differently; see connections between everyone in your network. It is all about helping fulfill someone else's needs.

Do your homework. Know the type of people you will be meeting and dress for success. Your attire makes a statement.

If you have a name that can be related to something that helps people remember you, use it to introduce yourself. Example: "My name is Susan Banks. Wish I could give you a loan." This is a simple memory trick, but you will be surprised just how many people will remember you, your name, and your business.

Tips 3 & 4: Don't be afraid to ask; Treat everyone in your network as equals.

Careful listening is another important tool. You will be amazed at how easy it is to connect people if you really listen to what is being said. Standing tall, giving a firm handshake, and delivering a brief introduction, while looking your contact in the eye, is also very important. When networking with a new acquaintance in a business milieu, start your conversation with, "How can I help you?"

In every instance, the reply will be the same: "I don't know. Tell me what you do." This opening will give you the opportunity to give your infomercial. Good networking requires that you have a synopsis of yourself and what you do. Your infomercial provides all of the information needed to allow the other person to decide how you can help... and whether they can help you. A good one-minute introduction is almost a guarantee of success in networking.



Network everywhere. Take advantage of travel and introduce yourself to travelling companions. Remember, everybody knows somebody you would like to know, and vice-versa. Treat everyone equally. You never know when you might make the right connection. The man who services your car in the winter is probably open to hearing more about your sister's discount travel agency.

Tips 5 & 6: Build your network on information, not status; Say thank you.

Remember, everybody benefits, when we network properly. It is about sharing your knowledge with others.

Always thank those who made time for you. Even if you have not closed a deal, you have opened a door. And thanking people for their time and efforts is not only good business. It's common courtesy.

Tips 7 & 8: Don't waste your resources; Give without expectation.

With lateral thinking everyone can connect. But not everyone will want to. Never force yourself on someone who is not interested. If you are hitting a wall, go around it. If they want to get back to you, they will.

Use your time positively; nurture the contacts you have. Selflessly help those people whenever you can. They will not forget any favours and your efforts will ultimately pay huge dividends.

Tips 9 & 10: Set realistic and achievable goals; be committed and determined to do whatever it takes.

Be absolutely honest – with others and especially with yourself. Assess exactly where you are and where you want to be. Now go to it and remember rule 3. Do not be afraid to start asking. Somebody out there not only has what you want, but wants what you have to offer.



Changing Times

Conversation
Is BACK!



Times are changing—no longer are the large corporations hosting hospitality suites at major conventions and trade events. The risk is too high when it comes to the legal implications surrounding drinking and driving. More and more, major corporations are looking for alternative ways to maximize their time and get a measurable return on their investment when attending these functions.

Now, conversation needs to be developed—not just surface talk. Corporations are contracting experts to teach their employees how to implement a system that will let them measure the

results they generate when attending conferences, trade shows, and events.

As a communications specialist, I am training groups of people from all areas of employment to help them maximize their own personal style when it comes to being comfortable working a room, a conference, or a trade event. The system I use shows participants in my workshops, how to recognize each opportunity, to evaluate it, and to determine whether it is something to pursue. If the contact is worth exploring, the system provides the process needed to reach an acceptable solution, which in most cases is a lead that will generate a sale, form an alliance, obtain a new client, get a job, or take the contact to the next level of opportunity. The first step in the process is to learn your communication style. Are you auditory, kinaesthetic, or visual? Using a very simple series of exercises, we can determine which style is most applicable. Once the style is identified, it is classified with a coloured link. The system is called Link and Think™.

Participants are encouraged to recognize that people like people who are like themselves; and by using the system, they can recognize the styles of others and maximize the time they spend in

Top 10 Tips for Profitable Conversation

Be open. Be open to new ideas, opportunities, and people. There could be answers and magic in everything and everyone.

Be prepared. “Success in conversation is when preparedness meets opportunity.” Learn your communication style.

Give just to give. Do not give with the sole purpose of getting something back. Build the rapport first, and then learn to maximize the opportunity.

Treat everyone as equals. There is no real value in title or prestige alone. Value is in the information and support people can give, and that often comes from surprising sources.

Ask for yourself. If you need help, ask! It sounds simple, but far too many people do not do it. Always be willing to help others in return.

Say thank you. Thank the people who have helped you. Send a fax, an e-mail, or write a letter.

Commit. Commit to following through. Work hard. Networking takes time. Only you can do your own work on building that relationship.

Be courteous. Listen to others when they speak. Do not monopolize the conversation. Get to the point quickly. Follow up on advice or suggestions.

Circulate. Talk with as many people as you can at functions. Establish identities, needs, goals, and resources. Make notes on the back of each business card. Follow up and monitor your results.

Follow Up. Ask each person you meet how best to communicate with them when you follow up. E-mail? Make sure that you put something identifiable in the subject line. Phone? Ask who answers the phone and use their name when you call. Fax? Ask if the line is dedicated and make note if you should call first before you fax.



conversation with each new contact.

The second step in the process is to learn to generate meaningful and measurable conversation. How do you make that first minute count? That meeting should not be about buying or selling product, it should be about building rapport, finding a common interest that will keep the conversation flowing. We use the simple acronym SMILE and ASK.

- ✓ Start with a Smile
- ✓ Make eye contact
- ✓ Introduce yourself
- ✓ Let them know what you do
- ✓ Exchange information
- ✓ Ask how you can help
- ✓ Say thank you
- ✓ Keep in touch.

The third step in the process is learning to use, without abuse, the business cards you collect as you meet new contacts. We use CardScan, a simple effective little piece of equipment that can help you keep track of whom you meet. We have adapted the scanner so that it can be a measurable tool to monitor your progress through the networking system. Once you have exchanged business cards, there is a responsibility to follow up as quickly as possible after the event. This is when the FloWork system comes into place. The process begins with an opportunity and all cards are placed in this category. Before making contact, you must explore the website of the card owner, if there is one. Google the person's name and learn as much as you can before making that next connection. When the contact is made, whether by phone, fax, or e-mail, you will have pre-determined where the fit will be. Using the system, there must be a benefit for both sides of the introduction. Once the rapport has been established with the contact, you move on to strategize about an acceptable next step for you and your new lead. Negotiating begins when potential business development has been identified that is of interest to both parties. A profitable solution is attained when the conversation has been mutually beneficial and both sides agree on the results.



IT'S ALL ABOUT INTEGRITY

There is a new buzzword taking the world by storm: Integrity. In today's ever-changing world, we need to revisit the people we know, that in the past we have held in high esteem. No longer does position equate to respect and trust, now everyone has to earn that respect.

How do we revisit and find out who is willing to communicate with us, to share their information? Strange as it may seem, it's still called networking—only this time it's for insight and integrity, not just for resources or contacts. As a journalist, I have been interviewing high profile men and women and asking them to talk about themselves and their core values. It has been important to me to get to know not only the professional being, but also the personal one. The one who is a family member, a friend, a volunteer, and a responsible community citizen. With this new era, my role has become even more valuable as I travel across the country searching for that new culture of integrity. The word has lost meaning over the past decade and many of our colleagues have stopped practicing that important and ethical art of networking.

I have developed a rapport with the individuals who grant me interviews; because these are the men and women who have agreed to share not only their professional bio, but also their personal mandate. My referrals for them are always ethical and never without their permission. I compare the challenges that are occurring in networking to what has been happening with Bill 198, which calls for compliance and transparency within our public corporations. It requires everyone from the top down to be willing to show and tell the world all about themselves and their relationship within the corporate world.

While compliance is critical, it is just one step toward a greater reward. Having strong ethics, good governance, and reliable reporting can lead to the bigger benefits of enhanced operations, reassured stakeholders, restored corporate culture, and even potential long-term cost reductions. I compare using Sarbanes-Oxley and the Canadian equivalents, as a methodology that is building a bridge to better business performance. Corporate leaders who embrace the spirit of the requirements will get a re-energized company, reassured investors, and maybe even reduced costs. That is what ethical, effective networking needs to replicate. We should be building bridges to better business wherever we go, providing our contacts with transparency. Networking has taken a huge step forward, crossing the barriers of buying and selling, and moving into a world of trust, integrity, and ethics. Today, networking is getting to know each other, to become comfortable referring, not just because you belong to a referral network, but because you have taken the time to get to know each other and have willingly shared critical information that makes it a more transparent introduction. Again, the new rules of networking call for strong ethics, good governance, and reliable reporting. No longer do we refer just because that is what networking is supposed to do. Now we use a system that gives everyone the chance to really get to know who we are dealing with.

The Six Steps to Compliance when it comes to networking with integrity.



1. **Opportunity.** Recognize that whenever you meet with someone new, you have an opportunity to get to know that person. Not just a quick business card exchange, but an actual conversation where you can take the time to find common ground. Once you have identified the commonality, you can move towards building a bridge between yourself and that person. People like people who are like themselves; they buy from them, sell to them, and they refer them.
2. **Reconnect.** You have had the first encounter, and have decided it is worthwhile to follow up with another meeting or conversation. How should you make that next connection and where is the value for each of you? It's all in the planning. You have found common ground; use it to make the next encounter profitable. Share a resource that has merit, perhaps an article or an upcoming event. You know how to connect, you asked at your first meeting and learned e-mail was the communication tool of choice. You reconnect using where you met the first time in the subject line. This helps bring back the memory of your first encounter.
3. **Commit.** You have scheduled a meeting, you want to build a bridge that will provide an entry into a new market, meet new colleagues, and even provide opportunities for business development. This meeting cannot just be for what you want; it has to be valuable to both sides of this new connection. You must commit to sharing not only relevant and timely information; you must make sure that you have permission to do so. When you meet, bring with you verified contacts that are willing to be referred. Start the conversation with the words "how can we help each other, and mean it!" Honour and integrity must be a key component of your meeting. Provide a bio of yourself and your company and ask for a similar package from your new colleague. Recognize that this meeting is not just about business, this meeting is about friendship, trust, and a new culture of integrity.
4. **Strategize.** Making full use of a new contact makes good sense. Do a little strategizing before the meeting. Who do you know that might be a valuable contact for your new colleague? Make those connections in advance and ask for permission to make the referrals or introductions. This will not only make the meeting more profitable, it will establish a relationship that is based on an ethical arrangement where referrals are already in place.
5. **Negotiate.** As Canadians, we often assume rather than speaking frankly. We need to establish just what the roles will be for each side of this new connection. If we are comfortable with our newly found colleague, it is acceptable to make suggestions that might not already be apparent. As an example: I'm in the manufacturing business and my market has so far been Canadian, I'm ready to move into an international market, and I need contacts that are honourable and ethical in this new arena. By asking for referrals, and for actual introductions, you are setting the stage for reciprocal arrangements for the other side of this new connection. It is simply an old proverb with a new twist, "Ask and you receive, knock and the door will be opened." This will only work if you are able to



provide the same or similar services for each other. Networking with integrity, cannot be a one-way street, there must be a win on both sides of the introduction.

6. **Communicate.** Once you have established the relationship and that trust factor is part of your arrangement, let others know that you have found a company, a colleague who has high integrity, and is worthy of knowing. Third party referrals are the best way for any business or individual to build the bridge they need to more profitable connections. Effective networking starts by building rapport, it progresses to exchanging relevant information, it moves on to finding profitable solutions for both sides, and it always maintains a high level of integrity, making ethics a top priority.

Networking with integrity is the future. Strong ethics, good governance, and reliable reporting, is what ethical, effective networking needs to replicate.



Road Warrior

We hear the term “road warrior” and often wonder exactly what it means—according to the dictionary, “A road warrior is a travelling worker ‘on the road’ requiring access to their company network via a laptop. A car, a cell phone, a briefcase and a computer are the tools of their trade.” Road Warriors are dependent on their skills to network and get work. They need to know how to approach their customers and clients on their own turf, on their own time, and make it a meeting that can be measured both in sales and in satisfaction knowing that both sides received value. Are all road warriors selling products or services? In most cases they are, however some are ambassadors, combing their territory to make sure that needs of their customers are being met. When I think of a road warrior, I often step back in time and think about the “good old days”. My Dad was an insurance salesman, and it was his responsibility to pick up weekly or monthly payments for insured families in his territory—he had what was called a “debit”. Each day he would drive to his territory and begin to call on his customers. His role was not only to do his job, but also to really get to know each and every one of his customers. He made a point of chatting with them, getting to know everything he could about the entire family, so that each time he dropped by he could ask about a family member, or an area of interest. He often brought soup for a sick customer, or offered to look after the dog, while another customer was in the hospital. He shared information with everyone on his route that was timely and acceptable. He was really a part of the community, not only bringing with him the latest products and services, but also information on what was happening in the community as a whole. He made a point of knowing the editor of the local newspaper, the policeman on the beat, the grocer, the baker, the doctor, the dentist—everyone who crossed his path, became part of his network, and he shared that network as he covered his territory. My Dad was always referred by all of his customers. His business increased by knowing he met their needs, personally and professionally.

I wonder if the “road warriors” of today are still thinking in terms of sharing with their clients and customers what is relevant and timely about their community. If they are, congratulations—if they are not, perhaps it’s time to rethink their role.

Six Tips for the Savvy Road Warrior



1. Get to know the politicians in your territory—municipally, provincially, and federally. They are the key to unlocking many of the doors your clients are knocking on. Be aware of issues, interests, and responsibilities these politicians have in your territory. Where possible, capture the information and store it in your laptop. Have names, addresses, and links to issues in your “war chest” then share that information with your customers and clients when it is relevant.
2. Find out if there is a Business Improvement Area in your territory. BIAs are usually active in the community and have a finger on the pulse of business development, both new and existing. They know who is moving, who needs new products and services, and they are happy to share that knowledge. They often represent a sizeable resource, both as potential clients and customers and as a source of current information.
3. Research is critical for a road warrior, what’s happening in a community reflects sales and business development. Subscribe to Stats Canada and read the daily reports, often you will find stats on an industry, a sector, or an issue that will influence your business development. If you listen to a talk radio station, you will hear items that have been brought to their attention by Stats Canada.
4. Check out local not-for-profit organizations and service clubs—they are often the breath of life in a small community. They know all about the needs and the resources here and will often share what they know. They are always looking for sponsors, for people who care about what they are involved in. It’s an excellent way to bring your company to the attention of the community. Supporting a local initiative is great for creating awareness
5. If you belong to a national service club, or an organization, make sure you visit these clubs whenever possible. It’s a great way to cement relationships and raise awareness of yourself personally and your company.
6. Read the local newspapers and listen to the local radio station. If possible, watch the community television station occasionally to learn about the community you have in your territory. Being a Road Warrior does not have to mean, ‘I came, I saw, I sold, I left’. It can mean ‘I came, I learned, I shared, and I’m actively involved in this community’.

When you consider the tools of trade for a road warrior, it’s a must to be current with all available technology. A laptop loaded with not only your database, but all the relevant and timely information that you can share with your client base is critical. Being on the road, gives you contacts outside the realm of some of your clients—make sure you learn to listen carefully to the needs of those clients. You may be able to share something or someone of value that would not normally be within their reach.



Your cell phone makes you accessible 24/7, but etiquette says turn off the ringer when you are meeting with a client. The call, while important, can wait until your business has been completed. Make sure you have plenty of business cards, and that you gather new ones. Always make a note on the back of new cards, and follow up quickly with the information or resources promised.



Influence, Integrity, and Information

The “I’s” have it!

I am often asked for the secrets to my success as one of Canada’s most influential women in business. My reply in almost every case is that my influence is not surrounding who I am, rather whom I know, and how I use that knowledge.

The use of that knowledge is called “Social Capital”, and to be successful you really have to take the time to get to know those people who are currently in your database. While it is wonderful to have a large contact list, it is worth absolutely nothing unless you know who is on that list, and what you know about them. You must be able to add value to them, as well as to yourself.

Developing that contact list and learning more about each contact’s Social Capital is really not that difficult if you take the time to establish a networking system that provides you with the template you need to fill in the blanks. I use a system called FloWork—it provides me with a check list that gives me the opportunity to get to know each person I meet that I choose to include in my contact base. Once the decision has been made to get to know that contact, I simply use my “top ten tips” and begin the process.

It is important to know how best to connect with my new contact in the future. If it is by phone, what is the name of the person who answers it? If it is by e-mail, what should I put in the subject line to catch my new contacts attention? And if it is by fax, is the line dedicated, or should I phone first? Once I have established the best method of communication, I begin the second step: getting to know my new contact, not just from a professional perspective, but also from a personal one. It is important to me to find ways to build a relationship with that contact without appearing too self-serving. People like people who are like themselves—I need to find that common denominator before making the next contact.

I love research and all of the search engines are my best friends! I know how to ask the right questions, and I inevitably find out all about my new contact. I visit their website, if there is one; I read all about their corporate identity, and I look at areas where they have a social conscience. Where do they spend their time when it comes to volunteering? Do they have a favorite charity? Are they active in the community? Once I have found out as much as I can about my new contact, I update my data base and include what I have discovered. I also make note of any “key contacts “or resources that I could share with my new contact. It is a great icebreaker to reconnect with a gift of an introduction that could be valuable to that new contact.



It is a great icebreaker to reconnect with a gift of an introduction that could be valuable to that new contact. Now that the homework is done and the social capital is beginning, it is time to reconnect with the contact. I have done my exploring and I have enough information that I can be comfortable reconnecting and offering something of value or interest to my contact. I have also found a common denominator by this time—we share the same interest in a charity, we volunteer within the same sector, or we have children the same age who participate in minor hockey! Whatever I have found in common, I maximize it, when I make that next contact. I never try to sell my product or service; I always try to find a way to offer my help. In fact, if you call my office or meet me in person, the first thing you will hear is “how can we help you?” We believe that business develops once the system is in place, and the system starts by building rapport. Once the rapport is built, it is time to exchange information, which is the time to share what you do, what you need, and how you might be able to add value to each other. It is really a lot like dating, but instead of looking for that perfect life partner, we look for that perfect business partner.

The contact feels comfortable with me, because I have taken the time to not only get to know him; I have found our common interests. I have shared resources and offered to help in any way I can. The contact will take my next call, because I did not try to sell him anything—I was strictly building that relationship.

I will monitor that contact and send relevant articles, make strategic introductions, and keep in touch. I will send a copy of my latest newsletter; even interview them for an upcoming article for one of the magazines I write for. Whatever I do, it is to bond with that contact and to expand my knowledge of their social capital.

The time will come when I need help, not monetary, but something that will involve their area of expertise. In most cases, I will ask for and get a reliable solution. It could be a financial problem for a client; it could be a legal one. Whatever it is, I know that I have an “expert” who will provide me with their solution. The results? I can shine a little in their light, as they help one of my contacts solve a problem or find a solution. Did I generate income from this? Absolutely not! However, what I did was to build a stronger link in that chain of connections that will ultimately come back to me.

My networking system is ethical—it is important to me to make sure that my contact has the integrity I need when I make that introduction. That introduction is for help, not the sale of a product or service. If a sale results and both sides are happy with the interaction, so much the better, but in the beginning of each introduction, it is for the mutual benefit of both sides.

Today, there is a new culture of integrity. Networking is strategic, systematic, and structured. It is important to recognize that we can “network and get work”, but a systematic process must be followed in order to maximize who you know, and what you know about them. Sharing contacts and resources is key to success, but only if it is ethical so both sides win.



Boomers and Zoomers

Is Networking Still Necessary?

“Zoomers” is a word originally coined by Toronto-based media executive Moses Znaimer. It refers to a growing breed of senior Canadians who aren’t just reasonably affluent, but remain extremely active, live large, and still want to enjoy the best that life has to offer.

In Canada, there are just over 14 million Boomers and Zoomers (age 44 - 62). This group accounts for almost 45% of the population and has more than 75% of our wealth. In as little as 10 years, according to Statistics Canada, this group could actually outnumber children under 15. The current life expectancy of Canadians is 82.5 years for women and 77.7 years for men.

As the baby-boomer generation grows older and thoughts of retirement come to mind, so do thoughts of the economy. Today, the question may not be am I ready to retire but, rather, can I afford to? While many Boomers and Zoomers may be in good financial shape, some may need to keep networking in order to supplement their retirement income.

How much money do these Boomers and Zoomers need to live the lifestyle they’ve been used to? Like it or not, the answers still revolve around that over-worked word called “networking”.

I was contacted by a gentleman who has a CFA designation; this means he is a “Certified Financial Analyst. When he called he told me he was concerned with what he’s calling the current “economic crisis”. He wanted to bring people nearing retirement together so that he could provide a few solutions that might relieve some of the concerns that Boomers and Zoomers, teetering on the edge of retirement, might have.

Why did he contact me? I’m not an expert in financial planning. He contacted me, because he needed someone who could bring people together to share resources, ideas, and concerns in a non-threatening way on a topic that concerns us all—our economic welfare.

Those who know me know that I never try to sell anyone, anything—my networking events are strictly for information and alliances. People come out because they can mix, mingle, measure, motivate, and move on—never feeling as if they have been coerced into buying anything; but always coming away with new connections that might just turn into a profitable business venture.

With today’s Boomers and Zoomers, they not only need to keep their network current, they must expand it and be prepared for the changes that might be on the horizon. Statistics show



that Boomers and Zoomers can help make their assets last in retirement with a little help from the experts.

A market research firm reports that online network activities, once mainly popular with teens, now see more than 61% of Boomers and Zoomers “connected”. Research shows that they are using social networks like LinkedIn, Facebook, and MySpace.

As an experiment, ConnectUs posted a networking video on YouTube. Then we registered with all of the social networks. We sent out a message throughout the social networking system that we wanted an opinion on the video. The purpose of the experiment was to find out if the response would generate business development or be strictly a social connection. After only one week, we had over 300 replies that were all based on business comments; many people replying we hadn’t heard from in years. Now, based on our experiment, we are able to say that using the Internet and social networking sites can benefit both career opportunities and business growth.

Looking at what some are calling an “economic crisis”, the experts say we should be proactive rather than reactive. How can we do this? It’s simple; we use our network!

There is a wealth of information out there, and the experts are more than willing to share their knowledge. Don’t worry and wonder—take action. Attend workshops and seminars that can provide you with the answers you need in order to put in place an economic strategy that will work for you.



Ten Timely Tips

- 1. Don't Make Rash Decisions**—Recent events highlight the need to have a financial plan that you can follow regardless of market swings. Don't let your emotions drive your investment decisions. Reacting to every up and down in the market is not good for your health—or for your financial portfolio
- 2. Revisit Your Reasons For Investing**—In volatile markets keeping a long-term time horizon can be very challenging. However, if your investment goals, time horizon, and financial situation have not changed, your best course of action may be not to take action.
- 3. Establish an emergency fund**—Keep at least six months of living expenses easily accessible in savings or money market fund accounts. This enables you meet unexpected financial obligations.
- 4. Make saving automatic**—The best way to get past volatile markets or tough economic times is to make investing automatic. Establish an automatic investing plan. Make investing a seamless process by regularly deducting a set amount from your pay cheque. Transfer that amount to a retirement savings account.
- 5. Review fees and expenses**—Take another look at the fees and expenses you pay on your financial products and services. For mutual funds, review expense ratios; credit cards, scrutinize interest rates; and banking products, transaction charges. to a lower cost product may save you money.
- 6. Resist impulse purchases**—Think twice before making a discretionary spend. Avoid incurring debt on any impulse purchase regardless of the “deal”. Put that money in a savings or investing account.
- 7. Have a plan**—It is never too late to put a retirement plan in place. Having a plan helps you determine if you are on the right path to the financial future that you want. And in times like these, a plan—not your emotions—should drive your investment decisions.
- 8. Consult with an expert**—Financial advisors are specially trained to help people manage their finances. Schedule an appointment to review your portfolio. Discuss your concerns and request an assessment on the performance of your holdings.
- 9. Get Informed**—Research shows that many people struggle with fundamental financial terms and concepts.
- 10. Don't be Afraid to Ask for Help**—Find a Financial Advisor that can provide you with personalized investment advice to help you make the most of your retirement investments.



To Lead-How Can We Count the Ways?

According to the dictionary, to lead is to guide, to show the way. How can you determine if you are a good leader? There are three main components that make a good leader. The first is that a leader must walk his talk. The second is that he has to respect and protect those he leads. The third is that he must be able to develop other good leaders.



What else makes a good leader?

- ✓ The ability to influence others
- ✓ The ability to encourage others to set and achieve goals
- ✓ The ability to understand the experiences and ideas of others
- ✓ The ability to share a sense of direction and vision
- ✓ The ability to motivate and take risks in the face of challenges

An effective leader unites his followers with a shared vision that offers true value, integrity, and trust. The key to good leadership is accomplishing the tasks at hand while building effective relationships. Leaders who recognize their own skills and position themselves effectively have the power to influence and motivate. Good leaders are made not born; they have the desire and willpower to lead. They develop through a never-ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience. Leadership is a systematic process where you influence others to accomplish by objective. Leaders carry out this process by sharing their beliefs, values, ethics, character, and knowledge. The basis of good leadership is honourable character and selfless service. Respected leaders concentrate on what they are, what they know, and what they do.

Communicate clearly

Effective leaders need to communicate their vision and excite people by enabling them to see the benefits to themselves and their organization.

Have self-confidence and courage

Taking the lead in any situation requires confidence and the courage of your convictions. Too much can turn people away; too little and people doubt you will succeed.

Seek out effectiveness

Take time to assess progress and constantly review results. Build relationships with colleagues who can add value to your project. Recognize that you cannot do everything yourself.

Inspire others to follow

Using your authority to complete a project will ensure the task is finished, but will not motivate the team. Tapping into the team's emotions is the key to inspiring them. Take time to understand their thoughts, feelings, and needs.

Develop win-win relationships



Continually develop win-win relationships with your team. Ensure you give credit to your team where it is due.

Learn from situations

Encourage your team to learn from both successes and failures. This creates a high-performing team that proactively seeks new and better ways of achieving results.

Be persistent

Be clear about what you want to achieve. Be persistent; find ways to make it work—tenacity can overcome many obstacles. Persistence is the quality that differentiates the leader from the others.

Be sensitive to the needs of those around you

It is important to understand the needs of those around you; a key ability is to know what your team is feeling. Understanding how they feel will ensure you bring the best out in them.

Have a positive attitude

Decide on your vision, then take steps to make it a reality; remaining positive is crucial. People follow a leader because they create opportunities that have not been recognized before. A leader who displays passion and commitment will find this attitude mirrored in their team.

Be resistant to negative opposition

Identify negativity. Explain the impact lack of support has on the team. Encourage constructive feedback.

To be a good leader, simply count the ways

1. Set an Example
2. Stop Talking... Show Results
3. Be Humble
4. Build Bridges NOT Walls
5. Be Flexible



Who is Donna Messer?



"Speaker", "journalist", "author", "coach", "trainer", "advisor", "facilitator", "mentor" and "leader" are all words that describe Donna Messer to a tee. Look closer, however, and you'll see that a common theme runs through them all – a *love of people*. For more than two decades, Donna has been a renowned expert on and promoter of the often overlooked, *true* currency of business – personal relationships – how to forge, nurture and leverage them to enable those who *properly* cultivate these relationships to put them to mutual benefit.

As President of *ConnectUs Canada*, Donna's contact network extends well into the tens of thousands – a network that she routinely and freely shares with her clients, associates and acquaintances via the extensive speaking engagements and workshops she holds around the world.

A dynamic, highly sought-after speaker, Donna has spoken throughout North America, the Caribbean, Mexico, Europe and Iceland on a host of topics dealing with the art of networking and the ties that bind. She has spoken before Federal, Provincial, Municipal and State governments, even serving as an advisor to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on issues relating to women in business.

Among Donna Messer's several hundred clients are top tier financial institutions, boards of trade, major accounting and law firms, and leading universities and colleges across Canada.

A noted author and journalist, Donna's more than 4,000 articles have graced the pages of newspapers and magazines including *Enterprise Magazine*, *Small Business Canada Magazine*, *Career Options Magazine*, *Canadian Opportunities Magazine*, *Life and Fashion Magazine*, *Pets and Animals*, *Women with Vision Magazine*, *Company of Women Magazine*, *Timeless Woman*.

Donna has interviewed various "movers and shakers" including Senator Pamela Wallin, former Liberal Cabinet Minister, Sheila Copps, as well as an exclusive interview with the Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson. Among her five books as a published author is *Effective Networking Strategies*, a Canadian bestseller written in 1993 well before "networking" became the *de rigueur* buzzword of the outplacement and executive search industries, selling over 50,000 copies over the past 15 year.

Donna has directed and advised on numerous boards and committees and has won various awards including Woman of the Year - Women in Pursuit of Excellence WFIM, International Leader's Award – Women and Diversity, and the Award for Outstanding Achievement – CACEE. She was also Ernst and Young's nominee for Entrepreneur of the Year.

