

## CULTIVATING AND GROWING YOUR NETWORK

**Sarah Flashing & Kim Rampenthal (Solutions Bank), May 12, 2021 (Women's Enrichment Network)**

**THE WHAT AND WHY:** Networking is a form of marketing and the product being promoted is you and the people you are connecting with. But listening is the foundation for networking in that it builds trust, authentic engagement and effective communications.

You value your product or service - you value what you do. You want to share it with others because you believe in it, otherwise you wouldn't be committing so much time to it. Networking is about sharing ways to improve another person's work or life by providing your solutions to their problems or needs.

### 1. **Scattering the Seeds: What Networking Is in the Broader Sense**

**Pay attention** to the impact of your existing relationships and how they can grow and birth new relationships.

**Pay attention** to what's happening in the community. Read paper and social media posts, attend some things just to listen and show your support.

Reach out when good/bad things happen to people. We are part of a community when we celebrate one another's successes and support each other in the challenging times.

Always be thinking of how your knowledge can benefit others.

Networking:

1. Leveraging relationships by connecting dots.
2. Self-promotion (not an evil term)
3. Your desire to succeed can help others also to succeed. Or conversely, by helping others succeed, then you will succeed.

Networking is truly all about LISTENING & making connections !!

### 1. **Germination: Rules of True Engagement – How to Really Connect with People**

Instead of "Talk Less, Smile More" .... Really it's "Talk less, **Listen** More!!" ....but smiling is always a good idea :)

ASK GOOD QUESTIONS

"It's more important to be interested than interesting."

As you listen, focus on remembering what they are telling you, and how you can be helpful—not your own stories and witty next comments.

Find common ground, shared experiences and goals

### **Key Questions for Networking Opportunities**

1. What brings you here? (Shows you are interested in them and not just how they can help you.)
2. How did you get involved in your work? (Can provide valuable in for you as well as make you more likeable)
3. What is your take on X? (Finding a way to ask something specific about their industry makes you both knowledgeable and thoughtful, which helps you to be memorable).
4. What do you do outside of work? (Helping people to open up in light hearted topics can help solidify a new connection).
5. What is the best for me to connect with you at another time? (Business cards are still relevant! Plus, even if you're unsure about your new connection, its great to communicate that you will share their info with others who may be in need of their services. They just may reciprocate and offer the same!)

#### **1. Harvesting: Navigating Networking Events**

Sometimes when we think of "networking," we're thinking about how to better navigate networking events and functions.

What to do/not to do, when you're networking:

1. Why are you attending? Have a goal!
2. Look your best, you want to be remembered for that, not the alternative.
3. Notice people standing alone. Think how you felt when someone came up to you when you were alone.
4. Make an effective introduction...and remember their name and use it throughout the conversation. Hand shaking?? Is this now an ancient ritual?
5. Cliques prevent networking.
6. Don't prejudge potential connections.
7. Tricks for remembering people's names!
8. Pay attention / Cell Phone Usage
9. Moving around / How to disengage
10. Be succinct in a few sentences about who you are and what you do. Focus on building rapport, don't lose them in jargon.
11. Business card helps to close the conversation, its not the opener (always)
  1. "I'd like to talk to you more"
  2. "I think I know someone I can connect you with"
12. Food & drink.....can become awkward, complicate conversations.
13. Follow up!

*If you'd like additional information, please contact Sarah Flashing at [sarah@sarahflashing.com](mailto:sarah@sarahflashing.com) or Kim Rampenthal at [krampenthal@solutions.bank](mailto:krampenthal@solutions.bank).*