



April, 2014

Command the Room

By Ann Golden Eglé, MCC

You can lead a team of 20 individuals brilliantly. Present you with a speech to an audience of 500 and you shine. Yet, ask you to join me in a Networking situation and your initial response, after a few rapid heartbeats, is no.

Why are leaders who command any stage with ease, so ill at ease in networking situations? Could it be that you are not the same person 24x7?

You are a multifaceted creature: sometimes dynamic, other times pensive; sometimes commanding, other times withdrawn; sometimes expressive, other times inquisitive.

Why stretch yourself into uncomfortable situations as networking? Because good business is created through relationships and with care, networking can be a highly effective tool to initiate new relationships.

Not all business is good business. Choose wisely.

Networking is a way to gather information--meet new people, gain new insights and learn about professions other than those with which you've been exposed and find individuals in these fields that you can refer business to in the future.

It is a tool to create visibility for you and your company, to begin to showcase your talents and grow as a professional and to have fun.

For those of you who are uncomfortable with Networking, *which includes most of you from my experience*, below are my **Top '7' Tips** to succeed. Let's work together to turn

1. **Be selective.** Vital to your success is that you don't spread yourself too thin. Select venues that truly interest you and get involved. Go often, volunteer, get to know the leaders, become valuable to this group or organization.
2. **Go where the money is.** What interests your current clients or customers? This will likely interest you, thus make it easier for you to join in and enjoy yourself. Result: spend more time with those whom you already enjoy, meet their friends and create referrals.
3. **Know why you are going.** If the word 'should' is in your reasoning for networking you can stop right now. Effective networking is about enjoying yourself with people, topics or organizations that you sincerely enjoy.
4. **Have a plan.** As with any significant endeavor, visualize its success. What will you need? Appropriate attire with something unique to 'you' thus becoming more memorable; a nametag (placed on your right side so it is visible when shaking hands);

business cards; a great handshake (please get feedback on your handshake as many turn people away instead of toward you); questions for the presenter or host.

5. **Create an exceptional introduction.** There may be fifteen individuals in your profession in the room. What makes you different? Focus on benefits one receives from the distinctive product or service that you provide. Keep it short, to the point and with the appropriate enthusiasm.
6. **Go with a partner.** Safety in numbers. This is your safety net, not someone whom you are glued to throughout the event. This individual can provide introductions and feedback.
7. **Command the room with confidence and respect.** Confidence blended with genuine respect is universally appealing. Many clients shy away from appearing too confident fearing that they'll appear arrogant. Confidence exudes assuredness, trust and poise. Arrogance displays egotism, conceit and condescension. Know the difference.