

HOW TO WORK A ROOM

For more coaching call Shary Raske at (314) 560-1088

MISSION: Talk to a minimum of 5 people, and set up follow-up with coffee with at least 2

Going to networking events can be very productive, but you must initiate the conversation. Don't wait to be discovered. You may wait a long, long time!

When you go to an association meeting or networking event, get there fifteen/twenty minutes earlier than the actual posted registration time. If there is a way to research attendees before hand you can pre-select who you want to meet.

Your goal is to introduce yourself to five people prior to the meeting. It's a very abbreviated informational meeting with the goal of setting two-three follow-up meetings. It goes like this:

1. (warm-up) Hi, I'm Shary Raske (fill in your name) and you are?
Nice to meet you. Is this your first meeting or are you a regular member?
2. (If it is a speaker event) The topic today is great! I'm really looking forward to the presentation.
3. What is your work? Where do you work? How long have you been there?
4. What do you enjoy about your work?

(all these questions will help you quickly assess if this is someone you want to request a follow-up meeting)

(If you don't want to follow-up, say, "Well, enjoy the program!" and move on. You are not being rude. If someone monopolizes your time, interrupt and say, "Say, there's a few more people I need to talk with before the program. It was nice meeting you. (If he/ she persists) Say, let's continue this conversation afterwards". DO NOT GET BOGGED DOWN.

You want to spend 5 minutes max for each person, 8 minutes max if it is an important person from one of your target company list.

(Now put the focus on you: informercial) Well, just to let you know a little bit about me.....

....because of that I'm at a place in my career where.....

Sounds to me like we have a lot in common! I'd like to meet with you for a longer conversation. Would you be open to that? Great!! (overcome objections, if they come up)

(open up your calendar, set the appointment, exchange business cards, or write down name, company, phone, and email in your bi-fold notebook, then move onto the next one)

(From start to finish, this initial conversation should take no longer than five minutes. Remember you want to have five conversations before the program starts)

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DON'T

- A. Ask if he or she knows where there are job openings
- B. Make the conversation all about you
- C. Appear needy

DO

- A. Smile occasionally and keep eye contact (at the very minimum, talk to their eye brows)
- B. Stay in control of the conversation
- C. Ask to meet
- D. Tell the person: "I enjoyed our conversation. It was nice meeting you"

SPECIAL TIPS for the painfully shy and socially awkward person.

1. Remember the person you are initiating conversation with may be just as shy as you. Help them feel welcomed and comfortable. Put the focus on them.

After you've completed the first conversation, before you move on to the next person, take a deep breath or go to the bathroom, look in the mirror, and say, "You are a VERY courageous person today! Good work!!", then go back and initiate the next conversation.

2. Congratulate yourself for your attempt even if it doesn't result in an agreement to meet later. Reward yourself for the success of stretching outside of your comfort zone.
3. Debrief, write down what you did well, and what you will do differently next time.
4. Stay detached from the results of the conversation. Reward yourself for initiating. Don't take acceptance or rejection personally. This is not about you. It is about finding other people that share common interests.

Good Luck

Remember Practice, Practice, Practice!

Shary Raske, Career Advancement Leader

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