

PORT AREA NETWORKING

P.A.N.

Networking Information

If your desire is to expand your business image without spending a small fortune on advertising, then join us every Wednesday from 12:00 to 1:30 pm for a brown bag lunch at the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce offices located at 4334 Fairmont, Pasadena, Texas.

Please fill out the members directory form with your information and join our mailing list.

The dictionary defines "Networking" as *"An extended group of people with similar interests or concerns that interact and remain in informal contact for mutual assistance or support."*

Make the commitment, shake a few hands, make a few friends, exchange business cards, and increase your business.

The most important fact is *IT IS FREE TO EVERYONE.*

Getting the Most Out of Business Networking:

Networking is a lot of fun! Business networking is when a group of like-minded business people gathers and help each other.

Regrettably, most people join a networking group by looking for immediate gains.... that is, for favorable results for themselves. If this is what you are trying to achieve, you are networking for the wrong reasons.

Many people think that the size of a networking group makes the difference in networking. When groups start falling in size, members will say, "We have to build up our numbers." Now, what numbers are they referring to? Is it the number of participants? I would rather belong to a networking group of two people who can help each other on a regular basis than have a large group of business people not following the Ten Basics of Networking. It is not the quantity, it is the quality.

"I haven't got any leads yet!" Well excuse me; have you given one, ever? Alternatively, have you made a suggestion that might help a fellow member? Did you call anyone with a compliment and say, "Just wanted you to know, that your comments on the ABC expansion was right on the money." One must be willing to put in time waiting also. It might take a while before people feel comfortable with offering you a referral.

To get the most out of your networking experience, you need to build a relationship with people who you want to have contact with. Not all members will be able to help you, nor will you be able to help them. That doesn't mean you should snub them!

When networking, spend most of your time and effort on people who can help each other out, for the long term. That is right. This is a long-term project. Countless times I have been to business networking events and have seen people actually run from person to person, with the expectations of first giving away their card and hoping to gather the other person's. How can you possibly build a relationship with a person when your objective is to get out there, and collect cards? What a waste of business cards!

You will find that a highly effective net worker will "work the net". What I mean is that they will go into a function with a goal in mind. My usual goal when business networking is to have the expectation that I will "meet" and "understand" only three people per event. I know what kind of person that I can help and expect that this person will be able to do the same for me. A win/win situation is what I am talking about. The highly effective net worker will take the time to cultivate a rapport.

After the business, networking event is when the real work begins. After all, you are only at the networking event to meet and build rapport. Follow up ASAP. Now is the time to send a nice customized card, and call a few days after to arrange a time to meet for a coffee or to have lunch. That is when you can listen to the details of what your new "friend" requires. You might even have the chance to offer your goods and services, only after listening.

If you want to gain the most out of business networking, follow the

Ten Basic Rules of P.A.N.

- 1) Drop the "what is in it for me?" attitude.
- 2) Listen.
- 3) Build a relationship.
- 4) Give the first referral.
- 5) Do not tell others of referral you require; "show them" with a story.
- 6) Be specific of the type of referral.
- 7) Reciprocate when appropriate.
- 8) Participate in the network functions and network time.
- 9) Thank the person who gave a referral.
- 10) Follow up on the referral within 24 hours.

Business networking is productive and fun, and that is why it will always be part of the Bigger Picture.

Meeting Rules of Order:

Turn off cell phones and pagers.

Meeting called to order

Invocation:

PHASE 1: Announcements of community events and items of interest.

PHASE 2: Members introduce themselves, their company, products and or service. (60 seconds commercials).

PHASE 3: Guest speaker has 10 minutes to make his/her presentation.

PHASE 4: This is the time you use for thank you's and referrals, to name the members you have done business with, the members who have done business with you, and the referrals you have made.

DO NOT USE THIS TIME TO MARKET YOUR BUSINESS, MARKETING IS DONE IN PHASE 2.

For more information about our group, contact any member listed on the Members page, or call the chamber at 281-487-7871.