

The Art of Networking

Learn networking techniques and strategies that will instantly help you grow your business or find a job.

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By Mike Aguilera

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The Art of Networking

Learn networking techniques and strategies that will instantly help you grow your business or find a job.

“According to statistics everyone on average knows 250 people.”

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Chapter One

The Power of Networking

First and foremost, it is important to understand why networking is so powerful. Networking, or simply socializing to help others and yourself, is the most cost-effective way to promote your product or service. According to statistics, everyone on average knows 250 people. So, if you meet 20 people at a networking event you are being exposed to potentially 5,000 other people. Of course, only a small percentage of those 5,000 could be customers; but just think of the possibilities. Also keep in mind that a referred customer is more likely to do business with you and less likely to shop around. Now see why networking is so powerful!

This Book is going to teach you how to network. You will learn how to “work a room,” and learn how to build relationships with important people in your business and industry. Read on and discover simple, but very powerful techniques that will make

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your networking experience easy, fun, and successful.

Seventy percent of all jobs are found by networking and a major percent of business can be developed by networking. Collect the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the people you meet, because you never know who could help you. When you go to a convention, meeting, or business luncheon, make it a point to meet industry leaders.

If you are job hunting, it is beneficial to have personal business cards. The business card should simply have your contact information and what you do. You may also want to create a personal web page digital résumé. (You can include the URL on your business card.)

Another reason for networking is to expand your own personal network of friends and associates. The more people you meet the more you can add to your social network. Most people get nervous and anxious about attending events, which may be due to their negative attitude towards networking. They are concerned with how they look, what to do, and what to say. Once you have read and applied the simple and powerful techniques

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in this Book, you will discover that networking can be both fun and profitable. Combine these techniques with the proper mindset and attitude, and you will soon have your own unique charismatic style for successful networking.

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***“Receiving
business cards
is more
important than
giving them.”***

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Chapter Two

Planning and Preparation

Business cards

There are a few things to do in preparation for a networking event. First, be sure you have business cards.

Next, keep your cards and a pen in one pocket (the pen is for jotting down any notes), and the cards you will receive in another pocket. The reason for suggesting this is you want to avoid any fumbling when looking for your card. Searching your pockets and shuffling through cards breaks the flow, and diminishes professional credibility. Imagine meeting someone, asking for their card and then watching them quickly lose their composure as they nervously fumble for their business card. Be prepared, and avoid this embarrassing situation. Your business card will be more valuable when you present it with confidence.

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As a final note, receiving business cards is more important than giving them. When a key contact doesn't have a business card to give, make sure you write their contact information on a piece of paper or on the back of your card. What if that person loses your card? Or they simply get busy and forget to contact you. That person may be an important prospect, and you want to make sure you can call and follow-up.

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***Make your goal
to be a great
“networker.”***

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Networking opportunities

The only way to become a great “networker” is to do it. Go out of your way to meet people. Network and watch your contacts and business grow.

Here are some ways to meet new people:

- At Local Groups. There’s the Chamber of Commerce, the Kiwanis, the Rotary Club, your church, or other social group.
- At Your Industry Trade Associations.
- At Your Client’s Business and Industry Trade Associations. What better way to find out your client’s interest.
- With Charitable and Philanthropic Organizations.
- At Local Community Events.
- At conferences, seminars, workshops, and training sessions.

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Key points to consider when you are thinking about attending an event:

- Where will it be held? Is the distance to the event convenient or is it out of your area. (If key people will be attending it may be worth the distance.)
- Who will be attending?
- What type of networking event is it?
- Who do you want to meet?

Setting Goals

To get the most out of your networking, have an outcome and goals. Set goals specific to your business.

- How many people do you want to meet?
- How many business cards do you want to get?
- What is your criteria for determining if this was a successful event?

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***“Make others
feel comfortable
and welcome.”***

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Chapter Three

The Proper Mindset and Attitude

It is important to have the proper mindset and attitude in every networking event. The correct attitude makes the event enjoyable, and makes you more approachable.

So, the first thing is to set your intention on enjoying the process, and not on dreading another networking event!

One way of making it a joy is to think of the networking event as a treasure hunt. Since every person knows around 250 people each, consider who you might discover, or who might discover you at this event?

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Be the host

Pretending to be ‘the host’ of the event is another powerful attitude to have. I’m not suggesting that you greet people at the door and say “welcome to my party.” I’m just suggesting that you walk through the event as you would if you were the host. Introduce yourself, ask people if they are enjoying themselves, doing the same as you would if it was your event or your home. Most people feel uncomfortable at networking events, so by *making them feel welcome*, you stand out as someone with leadership quality and confidence.

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***“The event is
NOT to sell your
product or
service. Help
others.”***

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As you walk around an event as the host, also blend in the mindset of, “How can I help the people I meet?” When I say help, I mean focus on the people you meet, and ask them questions about “them.” Find out what kind of personal or business challenges they are having. A personal challenge for them may be having a car repair problem, and now you have the opportunity to possibly recommend a mechanic that you know.

A key point to remember is that the event is NOT to sell your product or service, nor to set up business appointments. Yes I did say “not to sell or set up appointments.” What you do want to do is to find out how you can help them, and qualify them as a potential client. Client or not, at least find out how you can help them. When you focus on helping others, your body language naturally changes, and your mind opens up to asking the right questions. Now you can focus on the people around you and not yourself. When people feel that you are genuinely interested in them and truly want to help, they will feel better and more comfortable about using your service, and/or referring friends to you.

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***“Be interested,
not interesting.”***

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As you meet people at the event, be curious about them. Be interested in their concerns, goals, and dreams and who they are. The mistake many people often make is to go to an event, and place all focus on themselves and how to be more interesting. When you are truly interested, the people you meet will open up. If you spend your time and effort on how you look to others or what you can say to impress people, you waste valuable time. Instead, ask the right questions and find out who would be a good potential client. The questions to ask will come naturally, your body language changes accordingly and you are more approachable.

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“You become a great conversationalist by asking good questions.”

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Chapter Four

Arrival and Greetings

When you sign-in or register at the event, you will probably be given a name tag. Be sure to place it on your right shoulder. This makes it easy for the people that you are meeting to read your name, since they usually look at your right shoulder when they shake your hand.

Understand that he who asks questions controls the conversation.

Your goal is not to tell others about you. Your goal is to find out all about them. When networking, if you talk about yourself, you're a bore; however, when you let the other person talk about themselves, you are a brilliant conversationalist.

You become a great conversationalist by asking good questions.

Here is an example of how to start a conversation:

1. Walk up to someone.

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2. Smile.
3. Say: “Hi, my name is [insert your name].
How are you today?”
4. Extend your right hand.
5. As they extend their hand – shake it.
See how easy it is.

Ice Breaking Questions

Are you a member of...[insert organization’s name].

How long have you been involved with...[insert organization’s name].

How did you hear about this event?

What has been your experience with this organization?

As the conversation develops, you can ask business-related questions:

What type of work do you do?

What does your company do?

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What's your position with the company?
How did you get into this type of business?
What are your biggest business challenges?

How is technology changing the way your company does business?

How is the economy changing the way you do business?

What trends do you see taking place in your industry?

What is a good prospect or customer for you?

(An important question to ask. Remember, you are there to help).

Be sure to ask questions that can qualify a potential customer for you. For example, if an ideal customer for you has 100 or more employees, you won't know this unless you ask, "how many employees does your company have?" For job hunting you can easily ask, "is your company expanding or growing?" Remember, be interested not interesting, and the questions will come naturally.

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I will cover a few more important questions in the Alliance and Referral Association section.

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***“Make an
impression
that is not
perceived as a
sales pitch.”***

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Chapter Five

Your 30-Second Commercial

Your 30-second commercial or sometimes called *Elevator Speech*, is a brief 30-second introduction about you and/or your service. It describes how you offer value and benefit to your customers. What you want to avoid is someone hearing your 30-second commercial, saying:

- That's what you do, we already do business with...
- We already have someone that helps us with that.
- That's great, but we don't need any.

If you get any of these reactions, two things have happened. One, you came across as selling. (Remember, you do NOT sell at a networking event). And two, you have a 30-second commercial that needs improvement.

You've heard the expression, "you only get one chance to make a first impression."

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Well, that's not completely true. I'll explain more about that later. However, for now consider the impact of your first impression and do your best to make a good one.

Your 30-second commercial should make an impression that is not perceived as a sales pitch. It should be presented in a way that makes you sound unique, and will stimulate conversation.

Here are some examples of introductions that are not appropriate 30-second commercials:

I sell real estate

I sell insurance

I'm a painter

Or, our company sells computers.

These statements only say what you do. They don't describe what sets you apart from your competition. You need to describe what is unique about you. Being unique isn't simply having great service, everyone else says the same thing. Being in

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business for 30 years or how long you're in business is also not important.

Think of the benefits your product or service offers. Blend benefits into your 30-second commercial so it makes you sound unique. Spark their interest to do business with you, or to refer customers to you.

A good 30-second commercial example is: *"I'm with xyz Real Estate company, we specialize in helping people buy their dream home in San Jose."* The benefits in this example are; buy dream home and San Jose location. You don't just sell real estate or help find homes. You help people buy their dream home and in San Jose. Now you can repeat that when you follow-up and they will probably remember you.

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***“The sweetest
sound to a
person is the
sound of their
name.”***

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Chapter Six

Names

Remembering names

It is important to remember the names of people that you meet. As we all know, the sweetest sound to a person is the sound of their name. The best way to remember names is make the commitment and effort to remember. Many people go to an event saying to themselves, “I’m bad with names, I can never remember them.” That alone will set you up to forget names. So, make the commitment to remember names. Change your self-talk to “I am going to meet a lot of great people and remember their names at this event”.

Some simple techniques to remember names are:

- Ask people to repeat their name.
- Ask them to spell it, if it’s a unique name.
- Use their name as you converse with them.

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- Introduce them to other people.

Try these, plus any others to help you memorize or recall their names.

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*“What to do if
you forget their
name.”*

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Imagine you meet someone new at an event, and you are talking with that person for a few minutes. Suddenly a friend walks up to you and you forget the name of the person you have been speaking with. It can be embarrassing and it does happen. So, be prepared. You have a couple of options. One is, state that you forgot their name, “*I apologize, I forgot your name, what is it again?*”

The other technique is to quickly introduce your friend first, and in most cases, the person you just met will extend their hand and introduce themselves. For example, if your friend John walks up, you simply look at the person whose name you can't remember and say. “Oh, I'd like you to meet my friend John.” And with human reflex they shake hands and introduce themselves to each other. An embarrassing moment avoided, that is as long as you remember your friend John's name. Otherwise, back to the first option.

You may see people you've met previously (even at that particular event) and don't remember their name. When this happens, be honest and say something like: “*Hi, I'm*

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*[insert name]. I know we have met before,
but I can't remember your name."*

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“What if they
don’t remember
you...make a
new first
impression.”

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Reintroduce yourself to people who don't remember you. If you approach someone you've met before and they have that look on their face that they don't know or remember you, reintroduce yourself. "*Hi, I'm [insert name] you may not remember me, however, we met at...*" Make this an opportunity to make a fresh new first impression. So, yes you can make a *second* first impression. Make this one memorable.

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*“Create a
network of
friends”.*

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Chapter Seven

Create Alliances and Meet All The Right People in a Room

A great technique for meeting most of the people in a room is by initiating an alliance team. When you approach someone, find out more about them, and who their ideal client is, then ask if they would like to be part of your alliance team. An alliance is when you team up with someone at an event that looks for potential clients for you, and just as important, you look for possible clients for your new team member. Do you see the power of this fun technique. It gives you an additional reason to approach a stranger and now, you have someone else searching the crowd to help you. Again, it's important that you look for your new alliance team member's potential client. Imagine having two or three alliance team members at an event. You now have increased your room coverage, created a new network of friends, and in most cases, you've added fun to the new alliance member's networking experience.

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Chapter Eight

Create a Business Referral Association

Develop your own business association. Create a list of business associates from different professional backgrounds with the intent that they all help each other. Your business association can have a mortgage loan officer, a real estate professional, a painter, a lawyer, etc. A business association can be very effective in the world of networking. In theory, everyone has the mindset to help one another – regardless of their networking affiliations. So, when you meet someone at an event that can use the help and services from someone in your association, you're now in a position to help both. When you meet people, consider the possibility of inviting them to be part of your association.

As an example, imagine meeting an attorney at an event. They introduce themselves and explain he/she is an attorney specializing in Trust and Wills. Your response can now be “that’s great, I have a business referral

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association and we are looking for an attorney that specializes with Trust and Wills.” Then you can explain what your association is all about.

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“Look for ideal clients.”

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Chapter Nine

How to Break Away From a Conversation

Watch your time. If you plan to be at the event for two hours and you spend 30 minutes per person, you will only meet four people. This can happen easily. As you become a great conversationalist. People will talk and talk. So, remember to have a plan and outcome. If you want to meet 20 people, be aware of your time with each person. Once you get their business card and have a good understanding about their business (and/or they become part of your alliance team), simply say, *“it was great meeting you, I now have to excuse myself because I’m looking for someone.”* The truth is, you are looking for someone. You are there to “look” for ideal clients. Shake their hand, say your farewell, and move on to the next person.

Another way to end a conversation is by introducing people to others. After you meet a few people you can now take the initiative to introduce people to others that they have

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not met. You can say something like, “*Bob, have you met Mr. Jones from XYZ company?*” If Bob says no, then guide him over to Mr. Jones and make the introduction. At that point you can excuse yourself. This tip goes back to the attitude of pretending to be the host. Be helpful and people will tend to remember you.

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***“The more you
volunteer, the
more people will
recognize you.”***

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Chapter Ten

Volunteer or Be an Ambassador

If you want to be approachable and be seen as a leader, volunteer as a helper or an ambassador at the event. Even if it's registering people – you can mingle with, and re-approach the people you met while registering them. In addition, those attending the event see you as part of the organization that is conducting the event, and will be more comfortable approaching you to ask questions.

Many organizations encourage the help of event ambassadors. An ambassador is a volunteer that walks around the room and ensures everyone is enjoying the event. This is a great opportunity to meet people, the organizers of the event, and have people approach you. The more you volunteer, the more people will recognize you.

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*“You need a
follow-up system
in order to be
successful.”*

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Chapter 11

Be Different and Follow up

Why attend networking events if no one remembers you days after, and you don't contact the people you meet?

Earlier I said it's more important to collect business cards than to hand yours out. Most people never follow up. You can be different and stand out by a simple follow-up call or email. How can someone give you a referral, or use your services, if they don't remember you?

You need a follow-up system in order to be successful. Use a contact management system. Such as ACT, Goldmine or Microsoft's Outlook. Any system is better than no system. Years ago, it used to be that a person's importance was determined by the number of Rolodex files they had on the top of their desk. A person with two Rolodex files was considered more important than a person with only one. Now, it's more important to have an effective contact manager database.

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A good contact management system captures name, address, email, phone number and any appropriate information to help you follow up.

Many people are not aware of the power of a contact management system. You can easily sort by name, date, zip code, address, or specific information. Also, many contact management systems have calendars and reminder alarms. To be a great networker you need some method of keeping in touch.

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***“Set your mind
on what you
want.”***

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Chapter Twelve

Look For the Magic in a Room

In my *Power Thinking* workshop, you discover Quantum energy techniques to help you succeed.

Quantum energy is what many consider to be part of your intuition. The feelings and emotions that you get about things and people. And the notion that whatever you think about with emotion is attracted to you. Your subconscious mind will only look for what you want. So, be sure to set your mind on what you want. For example, think about meeting ideal customers and meeting a great fun group of people. Avoid the mistake many people make, and that is to think negatively about networking. They think about possibly wasting their time and meeting all the wrong people. Set your focus on meeting the right people, socialize, and invest in your future, and let the magic happen. Pay attention to the people that approach you, or to the people you are drawn to. Since you've decided to utilize networking to help you in your business or

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career, then let it be an enjoyable experience for you.

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Networking Exercise #1

Write out your 30-second elevator speech:

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Networking Exercise #2

List the characteristics of a perfect client:

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Networking Exercise #3

List twenty people you know and will stay in contact to build your network.

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Networking Exercise #4

List twenty people you want to meet. People that will help create a strong network.

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About Mike Aguilera

Mike Aguilera, CSL, CAC, MPNLP
Mr. Aguilera is founder and President of
Aguilera & Associates



Communication Expert

**Specializing in Subconscious
Communication Techniques**

*Speaker * Trainer * Coach * Consultant*

<http://www.MikeAguilera.com>

***“The way people communicate
fascinates me.”***

Mike Aguilera has always been fascinated and interested with language and communication. Mike realized early in life that communication is much more than words alone.

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Communication experts say only seven percent of face to face communication is based on the words spoken. The majority of communication is generated by body motions, gestures and voice tonality. All of this is sensed at a subconscious level. Mike Aguilera conducts trainings and presentations on *communication* with a focus on its subconscious impact. Mike says that the way you communicate to yourself effects the way you communicate to the world. Your self-talk words and thoughts effect the way you feel, the way you communicate to others, and even your health.

Mr. Aguilera President and founder of Aguilera & Associates has conducted over 1000 empowering presentations internationally at corporations and college campuses. He has created and conducts a series of unique empowering workshops and presentations all based around subconscious communication techniques and strategies for relationships, both business and personal, stress reduction, creative solution thinking, sales, negotiations, and leadership.

Mike Aguilera has been invited to conduct his workshops at many major companies

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that include; Sun Microsystems, Netscape/AOL, HP, Cisco Systems, IBM, PG&E, GE, and Lockheed. Mike is a certified NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) master practitioner and trainer, who has trained thousands of people worldwide in cutting-edge technologies of accelerated human change and is a constant guest of radio and TV programs across the country.

When you hear Mike Aguilera present you will understand why his unique combination of business experience, empowering NLP skills, and certification in hypnosis make for a learning experience that create instant results.

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