

What Type of Networker Are You?

Networking is critical to the success of the growth of a small business. But for many, networking is something that is a chore rather than a must-do activity.

Understanding your networking personality and that of others can be the key to your success. Attending functions around Australia I have noticed that there are six distinct styles of networkers. Identifying these and who you are dealing with can help you grow your business. Which one are you?

The Socialite

Socialites love to attend events and can be relied upon to 'lighten' up any occasion. They seek out the person standing at an event on their own and include them in their conversations. These are great people to meet if you are fearful of attending an event on your own. If you are a 'socialite' you run the danger of spending too much time socialising and leave little time for yourself to do the things you must do, often resulting in time pressure and unfinished business. Time must become your friend not your enemy.

The Serial

The serial is known to rush around collecting cards and making quick 'friends'. They rarely give you a chance to talk or catch your breath are a whirlwind of information and have a database that reads like a business who's who directory. For those that don't like attending events meeting the 'serial' is their worst nightmare. The serial can appear overbearing and pushy even though this is not usually the case. Serials – be aware not everyone is on board as quick as you.

The Initiator

The initiator is well connected, has strong business relationships and will connect you for a common purpose that benefits all. They see opportunity and follow up immediately. Their ability to cut through the red tape, clear the clutter of thinking and to take action assists in initiating change, action and results.

They are resourceful and if they don't know it someone they know will. Take care to not waste their time they become frustrated easily with people who do not follow through on what they say. They operate with a 'what you see is what you get' attitude.

The Occasional

Unfortunately this is the most common type of small business owner. They network occasionally because they need to, either business is slow or they feel a need to seek opinion, ideas, social interaction or business. Typically they attend an event, make contacts, exchange business cards and not follow up. They rarely get business from networking so see it as a last resort rather than a must-do part of their business.

The Balanced

The balanced are consistent with their actions, follow up when they meet people, see opportunities, connect people and give without expectation. They understand the true value of networking. Importantly they plan their networking activities, they know each day who they will call, each week what events they will attend and who they will follow up with. They are never short of business and are happy to refer their 'networking friends'.

The Inactive

These people think 'I really should', networking is a waste of time, are fearful people will reject them or they are just way too busy or lazy to network. If this is you and you want to grow your small business... NETWORK!!! It won't kill you; in fact you never know what it might bring!

The most important aspect of small business growth is to network - create connections, build relationships and follow up with the people you meet. You will come across many people in your lifetime - even if they are not useful to you at the time you never know what is around the corner or who they know!

Professional Profile – Sue Henry

Sue Henry is a networking expert and author (Network or Perish). She is in demand as a public speaker, motivator and small business expert. Her latest book "Accelerate – How to Accelerate Your Business, YOURSELF and Your Networking Skills" is now available. Visit www.suehenry.biz for further information.