

1. Do you feel like an extrovert when you think about networking?
2. Would you agree that successful networking is an important component of business success?

Introduce self and explain give a bit of networking activity in Victoria:

- I belong to four networking groups and write a networking column for a monthly newsletter
- I've made a study of networking both by experience and in my reading.

Well now that you've joined a networking organization or moved into a new community or workplaceIt's time to take advantage of these golden opportunities – you would agree this is a golden opportunity?

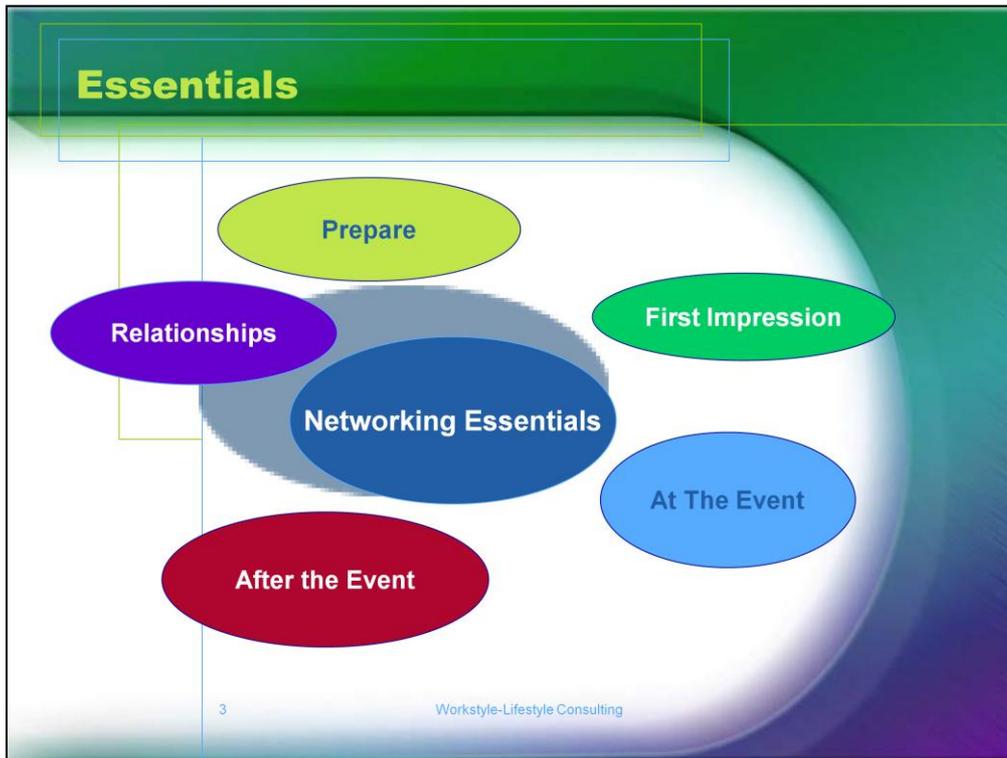


How many of you are quite comfortable walking into a room full of strangers?

Networking is a scary activity for most people!

Would you agree with this statement?

Well take heart - Networking doesn't come naturally to most people – it is a skill that can be developed and practiced.



There are at least 5 networking essentialsgood networking doesn't just happen – it requires our focus and attention.

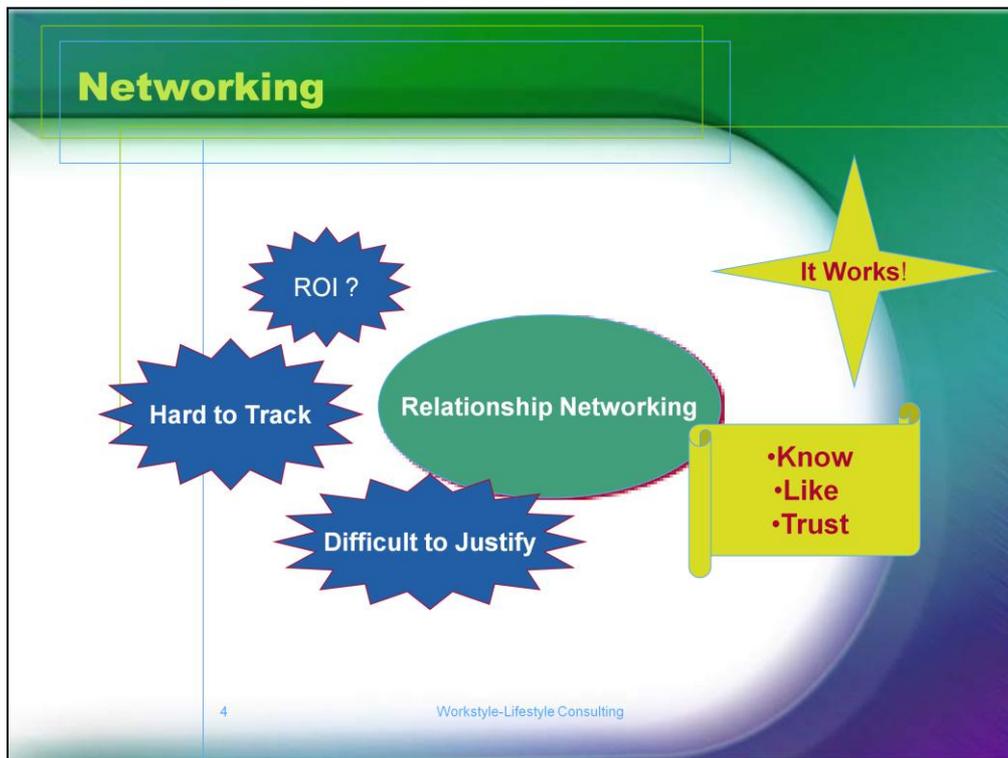
- Networking is all about **relationships**. How do you get most of your business? Would you say word of mouth?

- We never show up at a networking function without a good deal of **preparation**. Have you ever asked someone for their business card and watch them rifling through pockets and purses looking for one?

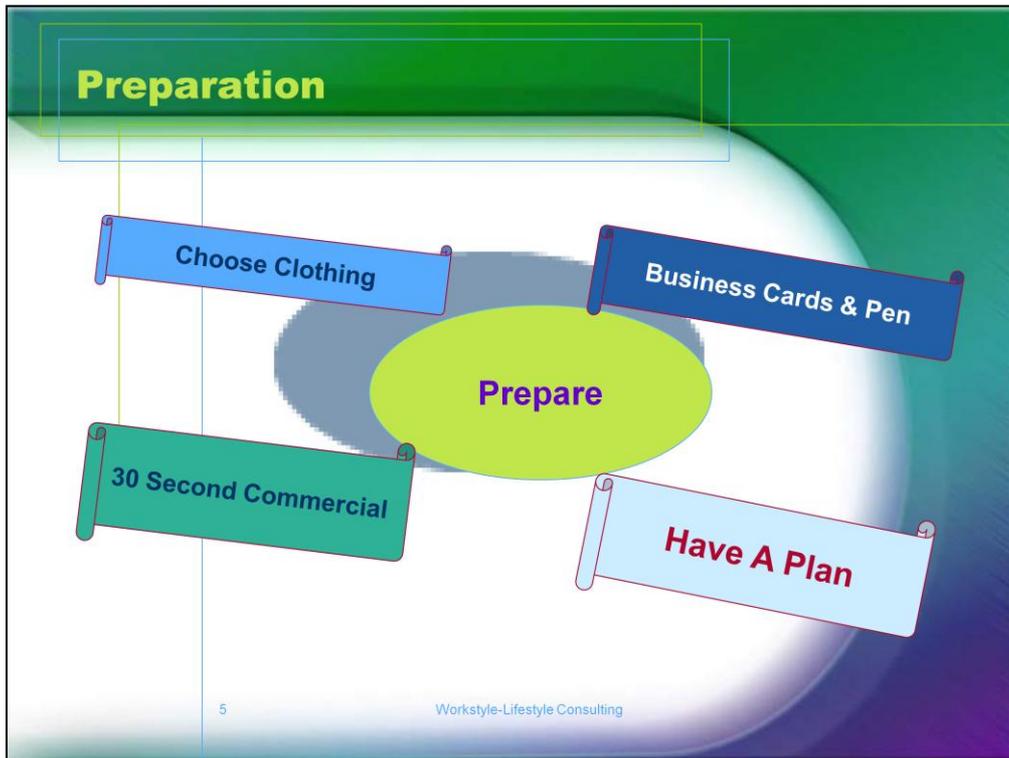
- We know that we reach a lot of conclusions about people in the first few seconds of our encounter, **first impressions** are very important.

- At the event**, we have two choices – we can stick with people know and not get business value from this event or we can take full advantage of this opportunity to have people get to know us, like us and make a start at having them trust us.

- Many business people never get around to the important steps that must be taken **after the event**.



- Know most business comes from word of mouth and referrals. This means networking is a very important aspect of our marketing plan
- Membership in networking organizations can be quite costly – both in cash and time, so we want to ensure that ROI is there
- Results are often difficult to track because the results are often not immediate
- For this reason some people can find it difficult to justify the time away from the business
- Yet we know that low spots occur when we get really involved in our projects at the expense of our marketing activities. Need to fill the prospecting funnel continuously.
- Know that we all like to do business with people we know, like and trust
- Your marketing plan should address how you plan on establishing your business relationship as well as how to nurture them.



- Preparation beforehand helps us feel more confident

- Clothing – Professional, business like – above all, something with pockets – a professional looking lapel badge. Why would I want pockets and a badge?

- Have a supply of business cards and small pen in pocket.

- 30 second commercial – is your response to the inevitable question: What do you do? Or Tell me about your business. It tells who you are and what you do for people. Of course some originality is good here – as is a lot of practice.

- Have a plan – Someone in particular you want to talk to? Who is your target group? How many meaningful conversations will you have?



- Go in with a positive attitude – believing that this will be enjoyable experience
- Smile -Smile
- If it's not fun and you're not feeling comfortable – just pretend – fake it till your make it!
- Pay attention to names – if you are visual, immediately ask for her card – repeat it several times
- Act like the host - be the first to put out your hand for a handshake. Decide to make other people comfortable



How many of you attend functions with the intention of buying something? NO SALES PITCHES!!!!

Get there early – it’s easier to connect before the crowds gather and noise level increases

No juggling – stash the purses, brief cases. Do your eating then do your networking – or skip the eating. If you have a glass, make sure you are close to a table where you can put it down.

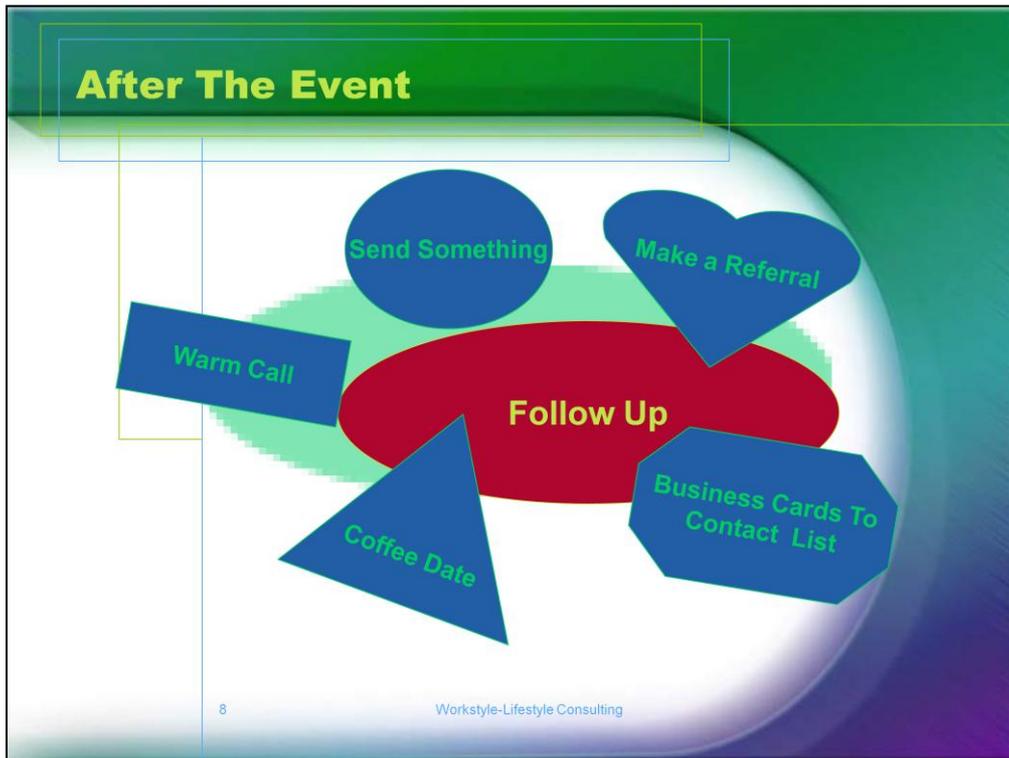
Make notes on the back of business cards

Get to know them – ask questions, be interested. Be looking for opportunities to help them with their business. Focus on the other person, not on yourself.

If people are standing in non-inclusive groups, look for others who are alone and introduce yourself. Or just push your way into the group with a joke about joining the club.

Stories – Looking over your shoulder Sticking out hand rudeness

Frogs princes and toads – get over it and move on – Darcey Rezac’s Frog & Prince



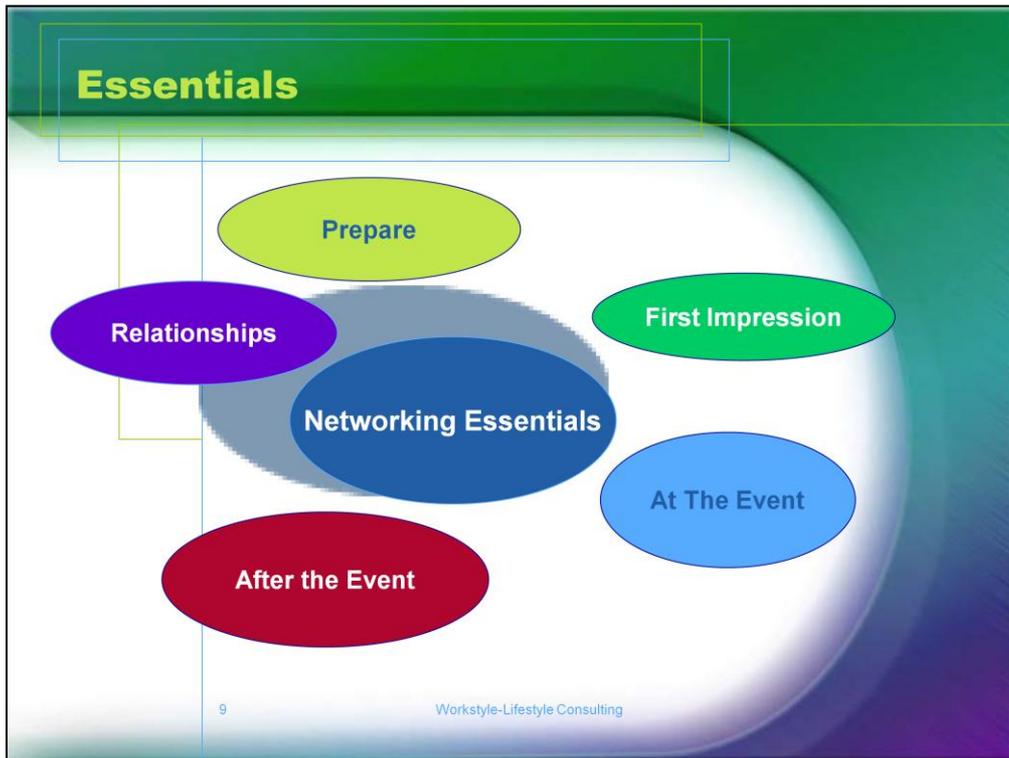
It's so easy to return to the office after a networking event, toss the business cards that were collected on the desk and then get caught up in the business.

To do this is to throw your marketing budget away!

Your marketing plan should detail how you follow up with your contacts.

Here are some examples of some actions you might take:

1. Enter the business card in your contact list.
2. Make a warm call for each card you picked up.
3. Call and make a coffee date to explore how you might mutually support your businesses
4. Send something - by mail or e-mail whichever is appropriate
5. Make a referral to someone that needs that service/product
6. Keep track of the efforts you have made so that you know what is working or not working.



We have covered 5 areas that require our focus

- We need to develop and nurture our business relationships, just as we would a special friendship.
- Attention to preparation will raise our networking confidence
- We must manage the first impression that we create and even more importantly our positive attitude
- At the event, we focus on what we can learn about the others and pick up their business card.
- Follow up is the most critical part of your network
- And remember this takes practice – it gets easier and easier as time goes on – then first thing you know – you consider it fun!



In my workstyle-lifestyle coaching, I have helped many solo entrepreneurs with their 30 second commercials and with their prospecting processes. If you would like to try a complimentary sample session, contact me.

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