



Leanne Hoagland-Smith,  
**ADVANCED SYSTEMS**  
*Unlocking Results:*  
*Achieving Tomorrow's Solutions Today*  
219.759.5601  
or <http://www.processspecialist.com/>

## **Power Choices©** **October 2008**

### **Power Choice – Networking**

#### **Definition of *Networking*** (According to *Dictionary.com*)

*"A supportive system of sharing information and services among individuals and groups having a common interest."*

#### **Why is *Networking* important in your life or work?**

*Do you want a new job, more business or a better relationship? If you do, than consider networking to help you to get what you really, really, really want out of life or a career. We all need support to achieve our dreams in life. By mastering the art of **networking**, you can gain access to money, resources and tools that ordinarily might take excessive time. **Networking** leverages **your** assets (think strengths) and resources.*

#### **How can we *Network* in our lives? Make a *P.L.A.N.***

**Prepare** - Because you have identified why you are attending the event or engaging in a situation, preparation becomes essential. Prepare what you will wear, what you will say and how you will feel. Know your audience and dress for the occasion. Be informed. Focus and wrap your mind around "why" you are going and set goals for the experience. (*I want to talk with the CEO. I want to meet the engineer that designed...*)

**Listen** – Pay attention to conversations around you. Meetings, something said in passing. These opportunities may lead to events or extra opportunities to **network** with someone that is important to your career or life.

**Ask** – People love to share information, especially about themselves and/or what is important to them. While preparing, create a list of questions prior to the event. Become an investigator or researcher.

**Network** – Move around the event. Meet with at least 5 people. Don't go to hang out with a friend. Don't go to be held hostage or to hold someone else hostage. Have fun, however grow from each experience.



***"Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one."***

Jane Howard



**"Personal contacts and experiences help shape our thinking."**

Anonymous



Laura R. Novakowski,  
**Positive Power Strategies, Inc.**  
***Inspiring People to Discover Their Health & Wealth***

570.477.3388 or

<http://www.positivepowerinc.com/>

***“The more people you know,  
the more people you can influence,  
either positively or negatively.”***

Anonymous

## ***Networking Will Open Doors!***

Laura Novakowski

In an ever-changing world, time, money, resources to knowledge are at a premium. Learning how to build a powerful **network** is essential to overcome challenges and obstacles or capitalize on opportunities for you to succeed.

**Networking** is first and foremost about building relationships. Whether we are in a nine-to-five job, an entrepreneur or student – healthy, strong relationships become essential to achieve our dreams and accomplish our goals.

In the book **Leadership and Self Deception** published by the Arbinger Institute, there was a story about a new lawyer who was assigned to a huge project with a large team. Life events caused him to disrupt his life and move. When he arrived to work with the new project, most of the team was located on the 25<sup>th</sup> floor. He, however arriving later, was located on the 21<sup>st</sup> floor. Feeling a little put out, he moved into his office and decided to dig in. If he worked really hard, *someone* was sure to notice. The project moved along. He missed lunches with the team because he didn't travel to the 25<sup>th</sup> floor (free lunches were provided for the team daily and there was a team understanding that *everyone* was invited). Changes were made in the project, but because this young lawyer was isolated (mostly self imposed), he didn't incorporate changes, causing him to look ill prepared and his reports to be substandard. Another time, he was "chewed out" for being hard to find, although he was in his office working. If he would have taken the time to **network** internally, he would have avoided a lot of grief and anguish.

A young woman moved far from home. She wanted to learn a new industry and put her talents to good use. She had identified where she wanted to live and she moved. Jobs were limited. Her temporary job was over; however she decided to stay rather than move back home. She worked six part time jobs, one of them in a restaurant. One evening she was speaking with one of the customers who share that they were looking to fill a new position in their company. The more he talked, the more he described a person with her exact qualifications. When he asked, "Do you know anyone?" Her response was "that sounds just like me." Within weeks she was interviewed at the corporate office and was hired for the job. She "**networked**" her way into her "dream job."

Relationships are imperative to our success. Limiting our relationships and our experiences prevent us from discovering our potential and restrict our ability for extraordinary health and wealth!

**Networking** is one of the golden keys to opening the many doors for success. **Go Forth and Network!**



Laura Novakowski, MBA, RN

*Positive Power Strategies, Inc.*

*Inspiring People and Businesses to Discover  
Extraordinary Health & Wealth*

<http://www.positivepowerinc.com/>

## **Networking = Results**

Leanne Hoagland-Smith

**"Effective networkers either consciously or intuitively apply what he calls the VCP (Visibility, Credibility; Profitability) Model."**

Dr. Ivan Misner

Business **networking** is touted as a viable growth strategy. In fact, organizations such as **Business Networking International** (BNI) have been created to capitalize on the innate potential within this very strategy.

Take a moment to envision the word **network** specific to your business, professional or even personal life. What comes to your mind's eye when you hear this dynamic word? People shaking hands? Short to extended conversations between complete strangers? Business cards being exchanged and quickly stuffed into pockets or purses? Lots of promises, but far fewer results?

**Network** is comprised of two words: Net and work. A net is defined by Webster as "a fabric of string, cord used to snare birds, fish; etc." According to Webster, work means "bodily or mental effort exerted to do or make something; labor; toil."

Bottom line is that **networking** is about results. Those results are, figuratively speaking, snaring a lead either directly or indirectly as a referral. Now, this result may begin as a complete stranger or suspect and then may turn into a potential prospect, a center of influence, a qualified prospect, a strategic alliance partner or even a friend! How cool is that? All because you cast a net and then worked pulling that net into shore.

Unfortunately, research suggests that there are a lot of missed results being left on the shoreline from **networking** activities. The **National Sales Executives Association's** survey reveals that almost 1 out of every 2 leads are not acted upon or in *salesze* "followed-up." What a waste of all that hard work!

**Networking** is indeed work and that is why your **networking** efforts should be aligned to your marketing action plan within your overall strategic business growth action plan. For without predetermined goals, you are potentially casting your net for a lot of bottom feeders and not the true decision makers that you need to meet to increase sales.

When attending any business **networking** event, you have the opportunity to:

- Set a goal of how many qualified prospects you want to meet
- Check to make sure you have enough professional business cards
- Follow-up with all leads within 24 hours
- Send a thank you if appropriate to the organizer of the event

And most importantly, remember that only 2% of all sales are made during the first contact. Successful sales professionals to business leaders understand that additional work through ongoing contacts (between 5 and 12) will turn that lead into an earned sale. **Networking** is only the first step, but all success in life from personal to business ***begins with just that first step!***



Leanne Hoagland-Smith, M.S.

**Your Chief People Officer**

**Unlocking Results**

**Achieving Tomorrow's Solutions Today**

<http://www.processspecialist.com/>

**Networking  
Preparedness**  
Stephen Sisselman

*Question for the Month:  
Are you prepared to network?*

Creating and developing relationships are at the heart and soul of the success of any marketing endeavor. Whether you're marketing your company's services, expanding your market share, or looking for the person to share the rest of your life with, the creation and development of relationships puts one on a path to success. A very valuable word that defines this type of specific goal oriented relationship creation and development is **networking**. This is a concept that not only opens doors for you but creates additional doors to open. The greater the scope of people you meet and talk to the greater the opportunity is for you to find someone who needs what you have. We often hear the word **network** attached to television, but why? The answer purely lies in the advertising that runs these stations. If your company can only reach a certain demographic base on signal strength and location, the **network** of people who get exposure to your product is limited. However, if you can reach people all over the country and world through cable and satellite television, you expand your exposure and the possible number of people who need what you have.

**Networking** is an active process that can happen at anytime, are you prepared? Have you ever been on a train or plane or been sitting in a coffee shop talking to a perfect stranger and think, "wow, now here's a person who understands what I do, appreciates what I offer and can use my product"? Chances are the answer is yes! So, do you enjoy the conversation and let this incredible opportunity pass you by or do you exchange contact information? Having a business card is one of the best **networking** tools we have. Let's face reality for a moment, we are always looking for more time, if we meet someone in passing, giving a business card takes less time than finding a piece of paper and a pen to exchange information.

What does your business card say? Do you have more than one card for each of the roles you play in life and want to **network** for? Your business card should reflect you, what you do, and why someone should call you. Do the following exercise sometime this month:

1. Put your business card in your pocket before you leave for work.
2. When you come home from work and empty your pockets look at your card.
3. What do you think? Does this information get tossed in the trash or do you think it could be useful to someone?
4. If you think it's not worth keeping take a look at yourself and work to recreate a business card that says, keep me!

**Make everyday a day to remember!**  
**Stephen Sisselman, BS, MT (ASCP), MS**  
**Positive Power Strategies, Inc**  
**[ssisselman@earthlink.net](mailto:ssisselman@earthlink.net)**  
**(347)558-4082**



*Special Section*  
*Laura and Leanne*



### A Networking Checklist

#### **PREPARE IN ADVANCE**

I have <u>prepared</u> well in advance for my particular situation or event and the attendees in mind and practiced (verbally) delivering a <u>personal opening</u> .
I have created a quick personal introduction that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Is appropriate to the event, situation or meeting.</li> <li>▲ Is simple, no value statement here.</li> <li>▲ Uses person's name if you know it or if they're wearing a nametag.</li> </ul>
<b>Sample:</b> "Hi _____, I'm _____ with ABC company in the customer service division."
I have <u>prepared</u> a list of 3 general statements/questions that will help initiate a conversation with someone.
1.
2.
3.
I <u>prepared</u> at least 3 open-ended questions that help me learn more about the people that are attending the specific/event or function.
1.
2.
3.
I <u>prepared</u> 2 results statements in terms of the results delivered to others. (Example: My clients have experienced double productivity.)
1.
2.
I have <u>prepared</u> at least an exit statement to schedule follow up. (Example: "With your permission, can I give you a call next week to set up a time to talk in more detail?")
I have <u>prepared</u> at least one graceful exit statement. (Example: "It was great meeting you, good luck with your project.")

Laura R. Novakowski

Positive Power Strategies, Inc.

*Inspiring People to Discover Their Capacity for Amazing Health & Wealth*

3 Thorny Apple Drive, Hunlock Creek, PA 18621

Phone: 570.477.3388 or check out the website: <http://www.positivepowerinc.com/>

Or

Leanne Hoagland-Smith

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Phone: 219.759.5601 check out the website: <http://www.processspecialist.com>