

***REPLACING
- THE -
RAINMAKER***

WORKSHOPS

NETWORKING TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

This workbook accompanies the audio workshop. It includes speaker's notes, which summarize the content covered in the workshop. It also includes activities, which you'll complete during the workshop, and a continuing education assignment, which you'll complete after the workshop. The continuing education assignment gives you a chance to apply the theory you learned in a practical setting. At the end, there's a quiz to test what you've learned as well as space to make notes and information on where to go to learn more.

SPEAKER'S NOTES

Learning outcomes

- You'll learn strategies for how to prepare for a networking event.
- You'll learn what to do and what not to do during the event.
- You'll learn what to do after the event to maximize its value.

Work the room

- It's easy to focus your networking efforts on what to do during the mixer.
- Networking success also depends on how well prepared you are and whether you follow up afterward.
- It's the combination of preparation, execution and follow-through that will determine your success at networking events.

Better than the dentist

- Networking is not most people's favorite activity.
- Some people would opt for the dentist's drill over a networking event.
- It's worth learning to conquer your fear.

B2B mixers

- B2B and B2C mixers are two of the most common types of networking events.
- A B2B mixer is a great vehicle for establishing the foundation of a strategic alliance with another organization.
- B2B mixers provide an opportunity to showcase the depth and breadth of your firm's experience.

B2C mixers

- There are typically two types of B2C mixers.
- Informational events center on a topic of interest.
- Hospitality events feature a firm announcement or celebration.

Prep, prep, prep

- Walk into every networking event knowing what you want to get out of it.
- Dress appropriately for the event.
- Bring an ample supply of business cards and pens.

Practice your pitch

- Practice your elevator pitch before arriving.
- An elevator pitch explains what you do, for whom you do it and why you're different.
- It should succinctly state what makes you different from your competition.

Practice your pitch

- At networking events, your elevator pitch shouldn't take more than 10-15 seconds to deliver.
- The most important thing to convey is what value you provide to your clients.
- Practice your pitch until it rolls off your tongue.

The best questions

- Prepare a list of questions ahead of time.
- These questions should help you determine if "suspects" are in fact "prospects."
- Prospects are people who have an actual need for your products or services.

The best questions

- Beware the temptation to start selling too hard at a networking event.
- Networking should not be “overly directed.”
- Your questions should be inquisitive and conversational, but not overly “salesy.”

Know your targets

- Identify individuals ahead of time whom you want to meet.
- Ask the event organizer for a list of individuals who are attending.
- Figure out which attendees can help you achieve your business development objectives.

Build your professional network

- Referral sources are people who regularly come into contact with your ideal client.
- Strategic alliance partners provide products or services that can help you or your clients.
- Thought leaders are experts in an industry who have built up a reputation.

Mix and match

- Ask the host to introduce you to the individuals you have identified.
- Your prep work will help you make the most of your time at the mixer.
- You’ll be able to direct your efforts to meeting the people who are most likely to help you.

Set goals

- Set goals before you enter the mixer.
- By setting a metric for yourself, you can judge how well you’ve done.
- Don’t leave until you’ve met your goal.

In the moment

- When you’re at the mixer, be approachable.
- Don’t sit scowling in the corner with your arms crossed.
- If you look like you’re having fun, other people will notice and want in on the action.

Open and inviting

- Think about how you’re positioning yourself relative to your conversation partner(s).
- If you’re in a closed position, it will be hard for others to join your conversation.
- If you want others to join, leave physical space for them to integrate themselves.

Start a conversation

- Make sure you’re comfortable initiating a conversation.
- Ask questions to get the conversation rolling.
- Start with broad, open-ended, easy-to-answer questions.

Evaluate and elaborate

- The “Three E’s of Questioning” are entry, elaborate and evaluate.
- Start with broad entry questions and follow up with elaborative questions, such as “Tell me more.”
- Then ask evaluative questions to help you understand how important the topic is.

Take an interest

- As you talk to people, take a genuine interest in them.
- Try to engage the other person and be interesting.
- You don’t have to limit yourself to work-related topics.

Build a relationship

- Think of each conversation as the beginning of building a relationship.
- The beginning is all about getting to know each other and building a bond.
- Don't start telling the other person why they should work with you before you know anything about them.

Exit gracefully

- For many people, exiting a conversation is one of the most awkward parts of networking.
- A lot of people feel it's rude to leave someone alone after talking to them.
- It isn't rude and all you have to do is excuse yourself politely.

Exit gracefully

- A lot of people also keep talking to the same person because it's the easiest thing to do.
- It's more comfortable to keep talking to someone than to strike up a conversation with someone new.
- But if you don't mix and mingle, you're not making the most of your time.

How to exit

- The simplest way to exit a conversation is just to say, "Excuse me."
- You can also exit a conversation by establishing a next step.
- Or you can exit by welcoming a new person into your conversation.

Take two

- Ask each person you talk to for two copies of their business card.
- One copy is for you and the second copy is to pass on to someone else.
- Make brief notes on the back of your card about what you learned during your conversation.

Odds and ends

- Act like a host, not a guest.
- Spend 10 minutes or less with each person you meet.
- Offer a lead or referral whenever possible.

Mixer etiquette, summarized

- Pay attention to your positioning and demeanor.
- Ask good questions, make personal connections and foster engaging conversations.
- Gain comfort in exiting a conversation.

After the fact

- After the mixer, review the business cards you collected.
- Log all the information you collected into your contact database.
- Add a picture from a social media page to each contact entry.

Follow up

- It's crucial that you follow through with the people you met.
- Do not under any circumstances send a "blanket" email to everyone you met.
- Customize each message based on your conversation and the notes you made.

Establish next steps

- Establish a next step that will add value to the relationship.
- A next step establishes the next time you'll interact.
- Next steps maintain momentum in your relationship.

Keep it up

- The more events you attend, the more you'll enjoy them.
- Don't let one bad experience put you off networking.
- Take heart that the more you do this, the better you'll get at it.

Summary

- Prepare for the event by bringing business cards and identifying the people you most want to meet.
- Once you're there, be approachable, be personable and ask interested questions.
- Follow up after the event to solidify the connections you made.

ACTIVITIES

If you're completing these activities on your own, please write down your answers in your workbook. If you're completing these activities in a group, please write down your answers individually. Then share your responses with up to two other people. Look for commonalities among everyone's responses and discuss any differences.

Activity 1

Before we get into the specifics of how to network, what qualities or characteristics do you think make certain individuals better at networking than others?

Activity 2

Now that you have a better understanding of the tools and techniques that are at your disposal to be a better networker, what steps can you take after a networking event to ensure good conversations convert into tangible business opportunities?

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Attend a networking event and practice your one-on-one networking skills.

QUIZ

1. The key is to walk into every networking event already knowing what you want to get out of it.
2. The most important thing to convey with an elevator pitch is not what you do but what value you provide to your clients.
3. Networking should not be "overly directed." The point is not to sell. The point is to connect with a prospective client and begin to build a relationship.
4. It's not necessary to set goals before you enter the mixer.
5. If you look like you're having fun, other people will notice and want in on the action.
6. As you talk to people, remember to take a genuine interest in them. People like talking about themselves, so ask questions and give them a chance to respond.
7. Regardless of the setting, act like a host, not a guest.
8. Given time limitations, it's OK to send a "blanket" email to everyone you met the night after an event.
9. The more events you attend, the more familiar faces you'll see and the more you'll enjoy catching up with people.
10. There's no big secret to being good at networking. Anyone can do it. You just need to remember a few easy tips — prepare beforehand, engage in person and follow up after.

NOTES

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about additional workshops, or other Replacing the Rainmaker products and services, please visit ReplacingTheRainmaker.com.