



How to get the most out of Southpointe Chamber networking events

If you're going to attend a Southpointe Chamber event, make it count. The key is to have a plan before you leave the office.

1. Determine number of contacts for your goal.
2. Determine how and when you will follow up with people you met. i.e. phone, email, letter
3. Bring extra business cards. (Of course.) Consider your picture on your business card to set you apart from all the others. This helps to remember you.
4. Gathering cards is more important than handing out cards. Someone doesn't have cards? Jot their info on one of yours.
5. Keep a felt tip pen with you and jot down what you talked about. (pens don't write well on business cards).
6. Tell people that you will follow up (and then do). Then they will be more receptive to hearing from you.
7. As soon as you leave the event, take a moment to sort through the business cards; rank and categorize them.
8. Enter them into your database and schedule contact dates in your calendar.
9. Add each new contact to your LinkedIn network. (Face book and Twitter)
10. Follow up with a quick email or phone call within 24-48 hours. Schedule this on your calendar.
11. Share a resource with them—something helpful (e.g. a blog, article, book suggestion, or person they should connect with)—not a sales piece. Give first and expect nothing in return.
12. Make it personal, "It was great meeting you at the Chamber event yesterday.
13. Following up once may not work. Touch base on a regular basis. You're simply staying connected.
14. Invite your new contact to another networking event you will be attending.
15. Continue to give and don't expect reciprocity – it will come on its own. When you're connecting with someone, you're communicating with their network. The idea is to keep your name up front. Your product or service doesn't have to apply to them, use the strength of that one connection to open many door
16. Have a name badge made at an engraving shop and make sure you wear it on the right side.
17. If budget allows, consider a pen, or novelty gift for special clients.
18. Add to your opportunity by joining service groups such as Rotary, Lions, VFW, etc.
19. Consider joining a public speaking class or forum.
20. It takes 2-6 months to effectively market t an organization. Be patient.
21. Be sure to reward anyone sending referrals. A \$25 or \$50 gift card to a local restaurant works great.

Networking is part of business growth, and two important aspects go hand-in-hand:

- 1) You're creating awareness of your brand and your existence.
- 2) You must capitalize on that awareness through follow up. To put it bluntly, without follow-up, you've wasted the opportunity.