



WELCOME

Happy Spring time! Recently I facilitated a networking training for a law firm. The program covered such topics as how to begin and end a conversation, how to tell someone what it is you do in a concise and compelling manner, and how to follow up with those you meet. At the conclusion of the day, we held a “mocktail” party, which is a pretend cocktail party. Everyone was given a fictitious personality and were instructed to use their new communication and networking skills to find areas in common with at least three other people. This lighthearted yet very educational conclusion to the program was announced as the highlight of the day and attendees said they felt much more confident in their ability to attend events and meet people. A little practice makes all the difference in the world! This month’s article expands on listening skills and body language which are at the heart of great communication. Enjoy!

ARTICLES

LISTENING SKILLS AND BODY LANGUAGE

1. Maintain eye contact with the person to whom you are speaking.

Looking over the person’s shoulder to see who else is coming into the room is not only rude, it makes it impossible to fully concentrate on the person who is speaking.

2. Smile! Being courteous, gracious and warm lets the other person know you really care about what they are saying.

3. Stand straight and lean slightly forward while respecting the other person’s space. This posture implies that your full attention is on the speaker, while not getting so close as to make the person feel uncomfortable.

4. Nod your head and say, “uh huh” and “I see” at appropriate times. These verbal cues reinforce the fact that you are listening and engaged in the conversation.

5. Encourage expansion by the other person by saying, “Tell me more about that” and “Will you give me an example?” The more you can get the other person to talk, the more you will learn about them and their issues, desires, challenges and goals.

6. Paraphrase periodically to make sure you understand what the other person is saying. Paraphrasing keeps you listening and involved in the conversation even while the other person is speaking.

7. Focus your end of the conversation on asking the other person questions about them and their business. This will help you learn as much as possible so you can determine if there might be a potential business opportunity or some other way you can work together.

8. Spend five minutes without using the word “I” if you become tempted to talk about yourself. Notice how often you were inclined to talk about yourself instead of focusing on the other person in the conversation.

9. Repeat the person’s name during the conversation. Use the rule of three: repeat the name immediately following introduction, once again during the middle of the conversation, and finally at the end as you exit the conversation. This will help you remember the person’s name. In addition, repeating names also serves as a jolt back into the conversation if the person’s attention seems to be wandering.

10. Listen for a few minutes for an appropriate opening before chiming in when joining a group already in conversation. Look for eye contact or verbal cues welcoming you into the group. Often they can see you on the periphery of the group and will issue an almost unconscious invitation to join through body language.

11. Look for two people near you to shift slightly, with shoulders opening toward you, so that there is a space between them. When you do join, add to the existing conversation rather than changing the subject of the conversation.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Assessments. Assessments can be powerful tools for individuals and organizations alike to reach their true potential. Contact me if you are interested in finding out whether the DiSC Personality Profile, Time Mastery, or 360 Degree Feedback assessments are right for you and your business.

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Want to know more? Please contact me directly at Barbara@Rainmaker-Strategies.com or go to my web site at www.rainmaker-strategies.com and click on the Products link.

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