

Effortless Networking

Everyday wisdom to transform
your business and life

Srirupa Dasgupta

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For Pablo.

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Introduction

Why network?

Why do you network?

Before we get into *how* to network, it seems appropriate to pause and reflect on *why* we network in the first place.

What do you want and expect to get out of networking?

Most people think of business networking as the reciprocal process of exchanging leads, referrals and recommendations with other people, making the business process easier and more profitable.

However, I think of networking as a means to an end.

It is the process of connecting with other people for help or information. It is a natural part of life. (You probably network everyday in your personal life.)

This means that you can use networking to achieve any goal you have.

You don't have to limit yourself to exchanging leads and referrals. You can use it to get information, do market research, get expert advice, recruit a "Board of Directors" (a group of people you can turn to for professional advice or guidance when you need it), and so on.

For instance, a few months ago, I was very excited about a particular project, but I wasn't sure how to fund it. I had no idea who the "best" person might be to ask for advice on this.

So at the next event I attended, I decided to ask the people sitting around to me for their personal opinion about this project and ideas on how I might proceed.

This event was a dinner following a conference, and I didn't know any of the people at my table. But they were happy to engage in the conversation, and help out if they could.

Well, it turned out to be a wonderful brainstorming conversation!

I left with all kinds of information and new ideas. Not only that, two of the people at the table gave me their business cards and offered to personally help out later — with additional advice, introductions to key people, and so on — as I developed this project further.

This is true networking, is it not?

So in the business context, what is your end goal? Why do you network right now? And what are some other things you want and need to succeed professionally, that networking can help you get?

My point is this: if you're clear about what you want and need, you can use networking as a means to get it.

So if you have wondered about the whole point of networking (i.e. "why bother?") or wondered about how best to get started, start here:



Effortless Networking

Everyday Wisdom to Transform Your Business and Life

Sri's content is fantastic because it is practical, informative and includes real life examples that you can easily relate to. It gets to the heart of many of the problems faced by inexperienced networkers. Sri obviously has a wealth of genuine networking experience and insights which she shares in an easy to read and apply manner. As the CEO of an organisation dedicated to helping small business owners to develop their business networks I recommend this book as "essential reading".

BRENDA THOMSON
CEO, NETWORKING WORLD
www.networkingworld.net.au

Sri's writing is very clear and easy to follow. She makes networking fun and more productive.

TOM LEAL
VICE-PRESIDENT, INFINIA BUSINESS SOLUTIONS, INC.
www.infinia.biz

I love your thoughts and ideas on networking. Your writing is easy to read and understand as well as thought-provoking! Since networking is a huge part of my business, I really thought I had read all there was on the subject; however, reading your book has certainly changed my mind! It contains a great deal of information and have helped me find new ways of networking and building business relationships. Thanks so much for your generosity!

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SRIRUPA DASGUPTA helps small business owners, entrepreneurs and self-employed professionals develop stronger relationships with key people around them; and build, sustain and leverage the professional and personal network that is necessary to succeed. She writes regular articles offering business networking tips and related resources. Visit www.EffortlessNetworking.com for more information.



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