



FREE ADVERTISING AMONG THE PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Yes you can do it without being loathsome

Parties are times of celebration. They can also be a fun opportunity to network with people you don't often get to meet or be with.

This is the season for weddings, graduations, college reunions and family reunions. At these events, everyone knows why you are there. Take advantage of that connection.

They know you in connection to the bridal couple at a wedding reception, the new graduate at the graduation party, your class year at the college reunion, or who is your mother/father, son/daughter at the family reunion. But have you laid the foundation so well and so broad that they all know what you do, what business you are in, and who your market is?

Often we don't see these people enough to keep up. So celebrations are a great relaxing time to get the word out in a low key way and have fun at the same time. And if networking is not usually your cup of tea, this is a safe environment to practice.

Obviously, you don't want to be known as the MLM person cruising the room to recruit everyone within three feet. But, you do want them to know what you do and to become a great referral source for your business when they meet someone who is an ideal prospect for your business. They can't help you if they don't know what you do. Here are a few basic guidelines I suggest when you talk about work at social occasions.

- Don't ask for names - rather leave the door open for you to followup with a phone call.
- Don't sell - you don't want to become persona non-grata.
- Don't book sales appointments or bring out your datebook - followup with a phone call to do that during business hours.
- Don't hog the conversation - If you find yourself engrossed with one person more than 30 minutes, you need to close the conversation and move on. Your listener did not come to the party to hear a sales pitch by you.
- Don't corner anyone - As tempting as it might be to try to hook an ideal client, strategic partner or person of influence. Don't do it. You'll burn too many bridges.
- Do be specific about who your ideal prospect is, the person, title, company size, industry, niche, etc. - This makes it easy for your listener to relax knowing you are not targeting him.
- Do clarify what problem you solve - This will engage your listener in the benefits of your product/service.
- Do brag on one or two recent successes, opportunities, or achievements - At celebration events, everyone is in high spirits, so good news will be well received.
- Do move about the gathering and meet lots of people - if they don't know who you are, they won't be able to tell their friends about you.

When they remember you after the party, you want them to still like you and enjoy your company. To be memorable, it is important that you spend more time asking about them than talking about you. It's that easy to get free advertising among people you know at all the festivities this spring.

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