



The One Pager Shortcut Series

Build Your Business by Building Relationships

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People do business with people that they know and trust. As a solo entrepreneur, your goals will be to make yourself known to your target market and then elevate the relationship to the trust level. This process of building relationships can take many forms. Take a few minutes to review what is working for you in this area. Then consider these ideas to add to your relationship building toolkit.



30 Second Introduction

Have you upgraded your 30 second introduction lately? If you haven't revised it in the past year chances are the impact may be stale. A new introduction can spark your own energy which will show when you introduce yourself. Consider the use of powerful action words such as create, design, compose, organize, generate, solve, produce, and supply. Deliver it in front of a mirror and see what others see.

What do you have to give?

We often think of what we want to get from relationships. Things like a request for proposal, a new resource, a potential alliance, or a business contact or sale. Flip this over and consider what you are willing to GIVE to your network of potential customers. Do you offer sample products or trial services? Do you have free information that your target market can use? Can you provide a free evaluation of your client's current service provider? Keep in mind that building relationships is a two way flow that begins with you. Approaching these relationships in a giving, proactive mode is a terrific beginning.



Follow up, Follow up

The simple act of following up with individuals that you meet for the first time will make you stand out. Very few people use a consistent follow up method over a period of time. You must have contact information in order to implement this step. Successful follow up actions include handwritten notes (they stand out), e-zines, newsletters, holiday or birthday cards, an article of interest, and invitations to an event. Choose several actions that fit your personal style and do them consistently. Watch your network grow as you demonstrate an interest in building the relationship.

Tracking System Consistency in building relationships will be difficult to maintain without a method to capture and maintain contact information in a practical way. This means being accessible and easily updated for changes. Contact software such as ACT, Goldmine, and Outlook were created for this purpose. Other options include business card files, Rolodex, Palm Pilots, and planner systems such as Day-timer or Franklin. Choose the system that fits your work style and schedule time for communication with your contacts and maintenance of the database. This nut and bolts step is an important part of building relationships over time.



Plant a Seed Think of building relationships in the same way as planting seeds. In order for the seeds to grow, they need water, food, and sunlight over time. For relationships to grow, you provide opportunities for your network to get to know you, what you provide, and ultimately trust you with their business.