

Networking 101

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Networking 101



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What's a graphic designer doing with a seminar on networking?

Well, partly I'm here because Tony Morse and I were talking after the last Twin Cities St. Olaf Alumni Networking Breakfast, and discussed a need at our event for some more explicit information on networking beyond just showing up, reconnecting, and feeding your face. And I just happened to have prepared this presentation for another networking group that I am a member of.

I don't consider myself an expert in this area, but I subscribe to the belief that you teach what you need to learn, so I'm going to thank you all in advance for allowing me to put what I've learned into an organized form, and also ask you to make your own suggestions and tell about your own successes afterward. By the way, we decided not to waste resources by having handouts, but write down this web site:

<http://www.imagespigot.com> then just go to the home page there and click on [news plus](#)) and you can download this entire Networking 101 presentation as a pdf, including my notes, and print it out if you'd like, or email me at sharon@imagespigot.com and request the Networking101pdf.

I should mention to begin with that it may seem like some ideas are repeated, but the repetition is intentional in order to flesh out the basic principles that I think you just can't overemphasize.

I used to be like a lot of people, gaining experience moving from job to job, getting recommended by friends. Then I started my graphic design business, and noticed I was getting my best projects by far from friends. My work with people I knew far outstripped that of work from

advertising such as in the Yellow Pages. Last year, dollars from projects obtained through people I know outnumbered dollars obtained through advertising 93 to 1!

I realized that if I could nurture this process, I could actually be in control of my own success. So I spent the last year trying to pinpoint the skills that would allow me to be more successful. One objective measure of success is more money, right? Since I've diligently worked at improving my skills, I've seen my income more than double. Yes, by May of 2005, I was at the same receipt level as the whole of 2004.

Introduction

So here we go! Even if you're an experienced salesperson, I hope you'll get something out of this, if only as a way to structure what you already intuitively know, because the sales and marketing world is changing fast.

Just for fun, and mostly to add a little color, I thought I'd put on exhibit here several projects I received from Oles through networking.

On the following pages you see materials done for Peter Dahlen, '79, and his two companies, American Choral Catalog and Labor Arbitration Institute, and for Dan Raether and his dental practice, Camp Smile Pediatric Dentistry.

Networking 101



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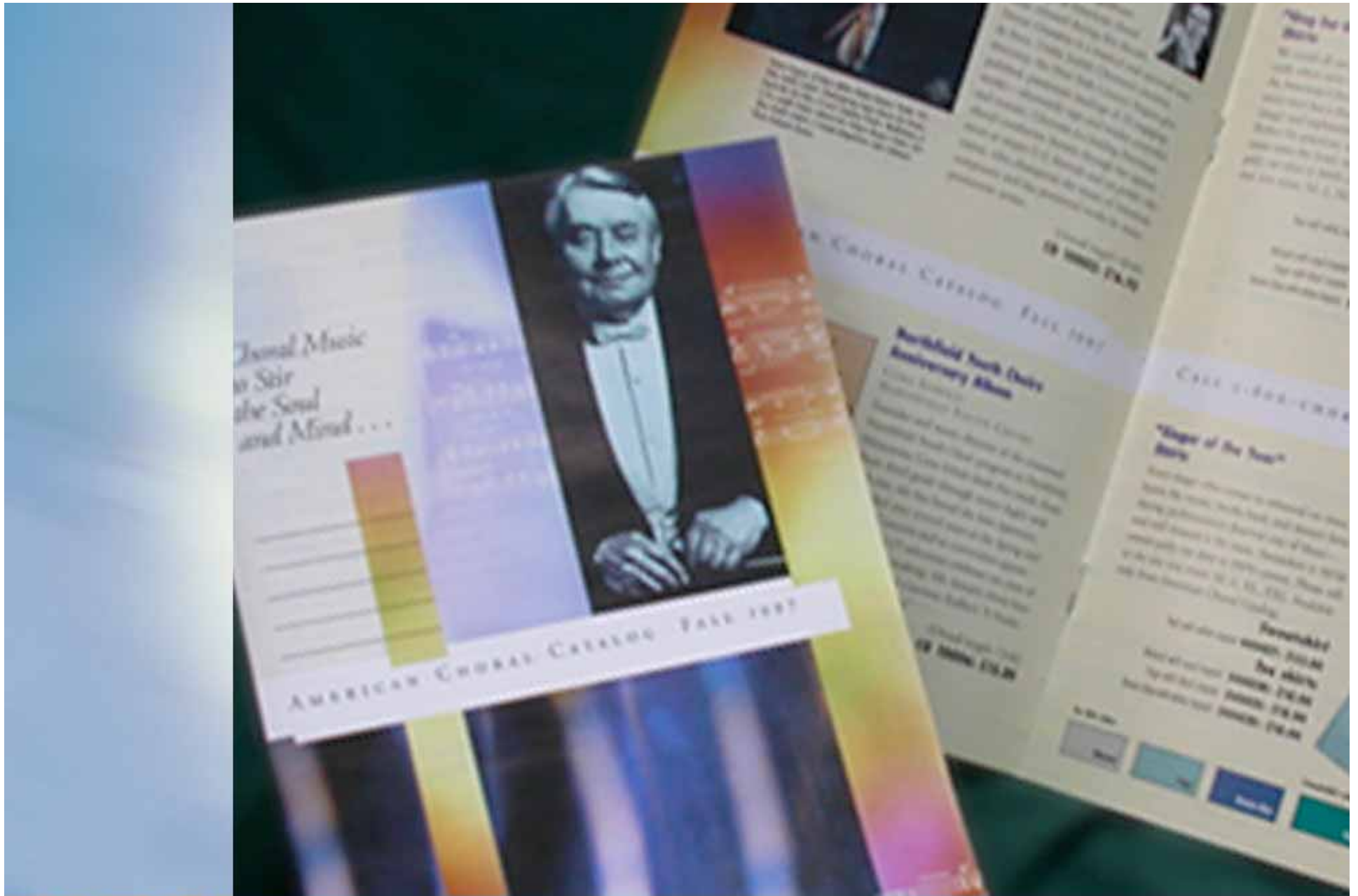


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ENTISTRY

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Jump on the Bus!

We're Headed for
Happy Trails
and Healthy Teeth!

CAMP SMILE PEDIATRIC DENTIS



IMAGE SPIGOT

turn on the ideas!

Survival of the fittest

It's a changing world out there, with new developments like the do not call lists for both business and residences.

There are tons of exceptions to the do-not-call rules, but penalties are stiff! \$11,000 per incident; in fact, there are those who actually make a living by baiting those who ignore the "do not call" rules. They keep great

records of telemarketers who call them illegally, and then take them to court! Direct mailings are relatively expensive, and they have a hard time cutting through the clutter: a 5% and falling response rate is considered

excellent, because that type of advertising is approaching the saturation point for audiences.

And we can't forget the root of all of this: privacy concerns, where any foray you make into someone's personal life is liable to be construed as an actual invasion, and can destroy the trust you need in order to create a strong bond.

Relationships are the key. Start now, because you can always improve your network, but it's hard to make use of something that isn't there. Build your relationships before you need them big-time. You know it's going to come someday, because nobody has an absolutely perfect life. Build your relationships, the trust, the quick response, into your life before you hate

your job, your spouse has to move, a new technology disrupts your industry, and so on.

How do you survive?

Survival of the fittest

A changing world

“Do not call” lists

Many exceptions; stiff penalties

Printing and postage: expensive!

Clutter: 5% response is great

Privacy concerns



How *do* you survive?

Relationships

The best time to build your network is now *before* you need it



Build relationships

Before you hate your job
Before you lose your job
Before your company merges or is bought out
Before you want to stay home with the kids
Before you have to move, due to spouse/etc.
Before a major disruptive event occurs (9/11)
Before a disruptive technology comes on the scene
Before you get tired of working for other people
Before you want to do something exciting





Getting
started

This is my favorite quote from college days.

“ Whatever you can dream or do – begin it!

Action has power and magic in it!” – Goethe

There’s nothing like just getting going. I learned this in college when I was really stuck on my religion requirement. I was doing an animated film on the Holy Spirit — jeez! what was I thinking! — but when I decided to just *start* by making a decision to do so — actually by deciding to sit down with a concordance and see what each reference in the Bible to the Holy Spirit said — it sounds sappy, but it really started to write itself. The themes became clear, some of the Bible verses became lyrics for the score my friend wrote, the concepts that emerged became imagery, well, it really came together! So don’t just sit there, do something!

The other thing to be aware of is that networking is bigger than you are. It's an actual energy exchange and you can tap into this by adopting a psychology of giving. We do it all the time: we exchange greetings, compliments, money. You don’t think about it much, but how steamed do you get when you don’t get a fair shake.

Well, I’d like you to consider this: there is actually more money in circulation in the U.S. than actually physically exists. The last number I heard was there was six times physical amount. Our system of credit and trust actually works to create prosperity and wealth. The same thing can

happen in networking as people exchange information, leads and referrals. This is why I think it’s important for me to emphasize that what’s really important is what you put into the process, because the more you put in, the more there is. Think of what happens in our money economy when people pull back and stop exchanging money. Hard times kick in! Everyone gets more and more worried, and unless most of us get a shot in our optimism meter, the economy just bumps along. Maybe you don’t believe in miracles, but I do. The loaves and fishes phenomenon was probably just the disciples priming the pump by making it appear that there was plenty — so everyone pulled out their own stash and shared. And you may think that makes it not a miracle, but I think that’s what miracles are made of. People working together, exchanging what they have is what makes miracles for you and me.

One more note on getting started: too often, I see people join a networking organization for a couple of months, harvest whatever leads they can, and move on. But that’s scavenging mode! You’ll never really reap the rewards of networking in that mode. Don’t be embarrassed! We’ve all done it. Just don’t waste everybody’s time by doing it again! You need to create relationships of at least a couple of years before the long-term effects kick in.

Getting started

Whatever you can dream or do –
begin it!
Action has power and magic in it!
– *Goethe*



The network economy

An exchange of energy,
a psychology of giving

We do it all the time:

- Greetings
- Compliments
- Money



The network economy

Exchange builds the currency

There's 6x the money in circulation
as actually exists in the U.S.

This is the source of prosperity:
optimism, promises and action



The network economy

Don't be a scavenger
Be a participant!



Here are some basic ideas to keep in mind for networking:

Know what you do

You probably know what you do. You provide legal services, bookkeeping, coaching, and what-have-you. But people don't always want those things!

Better that you give some thought to what people really want: time, money, to achieve their dreams, look good, etc., and then learn to communicate your ability to meet those needs. I won't go into great detail here, but think creatively about what benefit you provide.

Communicate it and listen too

If you think about it, the advertising industry has known this for decades. Get professional help if you get stuck! This is the most important message you'll craft this year. Craft it and then communicate it along with letting people know your target audience. Make sure you have it boiled down into what everybody calls the elevator pitch. Say your name, organization, your benefit around what people value, then ask for a specific referral to a member of your audience, and say your name and organization again;

people will get caught up in your description and wish they had listened to your name. Here you are thoughtfully giving them a second chance! And when they speak don't forget to listen — your contacts have their own messages. Take notes if your memory is fuzzy about those things. One other thing to note about communicating your target audience to your

network — your audience is not "everybody." We've all made that mistake, but your network will have a hard time giving you referrals if you don't give them a clearer idea of what to look for, say, brides, or teachers,

or those ubiquitous soccer moms out in suburbia.

Organize for it

You will meet a lot of people if you network seriously, so do stay organized. But respect yourself and your personal methods for organizing information. Everybody is a little bit different, so just because your best friend loves the latest and greatest software program, don't assume you have to use it too. How do you organize information? For example, I'm kinesthetic-visual with some spatial thrown in. I keep a spiral binder for business cards. When I go to a meeting, I come back to the office and tape the cards on a page with the date and meeting name. When I think of

Basic concepts for networking

someone I want to contact, I can go right back through time and space with my little book, and all the people I met that day are grouped together just like in my memory. I think I would be lost with a software program. Another element of organizing for networking is making sure your contacts are yours. If your company was shut down tomorrow, would you have your lifeblood, your contacts in your possession? I'm not asking you to steal things from your employer, but if you've spent years nurturing relationships, invest in yourself! Whether it's mirroring your Rolodex at home, importing mail addresses... don't put it off if it will make a difference in your future.

Get motivated

It's hard to stay motivated all by yourself. Read, attend seminars, connect with motivated people, with successful people. I want to say more about reading because there are just so many great books out there, and it's an easy way to connect regularly with positive energy. Jim Rohn has maybe the most comprehensive book out there, covering the principles for success: goals, seek knowledge, learn to change, control finances, master time, hang with winners, live well, give yourself discipline. There's Napoleon Hill; my boyfriend says he's the peak of positive thinking. Hill has a very positive and systematic approach to harnessing your mind, mostly through positive thinking. Dale Carnegie, we think of him as the power of positive thinking guy, but he's really the relationship guy: being real,

listening, putting the other person first. Judith Powell has one of the best books out there for effectively harnessing the intangibles: she outlines physical, mental and spiritual methods of success, along with the role of vision, faith and purpose toward your goal; of turning attention to what you desire in order to develop it. Our own Harvey Mackay has great success strategies do what you love and love what you do. I'll talk about this a little bit more later. Jeff Gitomer is a great one for sales strategies. After all that's what we're really doing isn't it? And he's into being real and providing value, not into tricking the customer into buying. He emphasizes testimonials and results, great elements to incorporate into your next networking encounter.

Basic concepts for networking

Know what you do

Communicate it and listen too

Organize for it

Get motivated and set goals

Ask for help and reciprocate

Look good



Do you know what you do?

You may think you provide:

- Financial services
- Mortgages
- Professional Services
- etc.



Do you know what you do?

But what people really want is:

- Time
- Money
- Dreams
- Peace of mind
- etc.



Do you know what you do?

Relate what you do to what people really want

Make sure you tell people about it!

Get help from a coach or brand consultant if necessary.



Communicate – and listen too!

Elevator pitch

Name, organization

Relate what you do to needs

Ask for a referral

Repeat name, organization



Communicate – and listen too!

Listen carefully to others - and remember!



Communicate – and listen too!

“Everybody” is **not** your audience
Identify **specific** audiences
Tell everyone you know about
your target audiences



Organize for it

Respect yourself, are you:

- Visual
- Kinesthetic
- Spatial
- Intuitive
- Intellectual



Organize for it

Memory: intuitive

Notebooks: kinesthetic, visual, spatial

File folders: alphabetical, intellectual

Software: visual, intellectual

Business card carriers: kinesthetic, visual

Rolodexes: spatial, visual, intellectual

File piler: kinesthetic, spatial



Organize for it

Keep a calendar

Mark appointments right away

Review calendar for next day
(every day)

Confirm appointments the day
before

Send a thank you the next day



Organize for it

Make sure it's yours

Don't leave your contacts with
an employer

Invest in yourself – Rolodex, etc.



Get motivated

Read

Attend seminars

Hang out with motivated people

Hang out with successful people



Get motivated

Goal-setting reading: Jim Rohn

His principles for success:
set goals, seek knowledge, learn
to change, control finances,
master time, hang with winners,
live well, discipline



Get motivated

Positive thinking: Napoleon Hill

Mind control with intention of
positive mental attitude

Dwell on what can go right



Get motivated

Mental discipline: Judith Powell

Physical, mental and spiritual
methods of success

The role of vision, faith and
purpose toward your goal, of
attention to what you desire



Get motivated

Relationships: Dale Carnegie

Being real, listening, putting
the other person first



Get motivated

Success strategies:
Harvey Mackay

Do what you love
Love what you do



Keeping it going

It doesn't happen all by itself!
You and your commitment
are the critical factor



Set Goals

If you don't know where you're going you're not likely to get there

What are yours? Going to meetings (checking the paper, net), asking friends, getting to know your network better, following up/ email, phone calls; successful networking is really the aggregate of a myriad of activities in which you engage. If you set goals so that each week a few things happen, you can keep your network alive. As far as cultural activities, go with the flow! A lot of people view school, sports etc. types of obligations as burdens, but these activities are the lifeblood of your network. Set goals for both giving and getting, have goals per week, per month

Ask for help

People love to help! But be prepared! Have all those business cards, your elevator pitch ready. Believe it or not, many people forget to bring business cards - yipes! How will people ever remember you? You should hope to be memorable, but hopefully it's because of your skills, benefits, the way you present yourself, and the way you help others. Make it easy for folks and bring cards. Having a specific request will enable people to better help you, and believe me, most people do want to be helpful for various reasons! By the way, it's okay to ask more than once in a lifetime — maybe they didn't have your dream job open this year, but that doesn't mean it won't open up sometime sooner or later.

Reciprocate

And of course, reciprocate. You'll be more memorable if you can help someone else out. Be the go-to person for the best vendors, jobs, whatever.

Look good!

People respond to great packaging. Don't think of it as shallow judgment, think of it as communicating your great qualities in total consonance.

Do you have goals?

Going to meetings (checking
the paper, net)

Asking friends

Getting to know your network
better through one-on-ones

Following up/ email, phone calls



Do you have goals?

Keeping your network alive:
go with the flow!

Social activities

- Sports
- Cultural events
- School
- Holiday events



Do you have goals?

Giving/getting referrals

Making introductions

Group meetings

One-on-one meetings

Per week

Per month



Ask for help!

Be prepared

- Know your audiences
- Have 20–50 cards on hand
- Be memorable



Ask for help!

People like to help
Have a specific request
Ask more than once in a lifetime



Reciprocate

Listen, listen, listen
Give referrals
Make introductions

You will be memorable if you
can help them!



Look good

Business card
Self
Office



It's not rocket science, but it's so easy to overlook those very simple phrases. Maybe it's the Minnesota reticence, but if you put it in such a way that people can easily respond, you'll maybe get more thoughtful replies.

(see slides in next section ***How to ask for referrals***)

How to ask for referrals

How to ask for referrals

Networking encounter:

Smile, immediately introduce yourself to anyone nearby

Listen carefully to what they do

Talk while in line for food, on the bleachers

Sit **near** people, not in empty areas



How to ask for referrals

Hand out cards immediately or as appropriate

Ask for one-on-ones

Get involved, follow through

Go the extra mile



How to ask for referrals

At the close of each networking encounter, particularly one-on-ones, specifically ask your friend who they know who does or needs XYZ, and ask if you (or they) can make the contact.



How to ask for referrals

The magic questions:

Who in your organization would I talk to in order to let them know the great things I can do for you?

Do you know anyone who is [getting married, moving, works for a small business, etc.]?



How to ask for referrals

Who in your company [does the hiring in that area, needs assistance with XYZ, etc.]

Ask a question they can answer in the affirmative



Jesus was right, it is more blessed to give than to receive, and I think it's because the blessings do circle back on you as you give them out.

You can do everything you think you should do, but still the things you want to have happen don't. Please let go of results! Concentrate on honing your message, on gauging the effectiveness of your message. If you are diligent about your networking activities and goals, you will reap the rewards in good time.

A couple of notes

Also, if you are having trouble making those calls, make sure you start small. It's easier to call friends and family. As a musician, I can tell you that practice really does help in this activity!

Note: Let go of results

Concentrate on honing your
message

Concentrate on setting and
refining goals

Results will come



Overcoming call reluctance

Start small and work up:

- Friends, relatives, alumni
- Religious groups
- School and sports
- Professional affinity groups
- Target client groups
- Executive groups



Overcoming call reluctance

Make sure they are educated
about **you**

**Don't let the day go by
without picking up the phone
or sending an email**



On the next few pages, you'll find suggested approaches for creating more networking opportunities with those close to you and not so close. By the time you'll have practiced these techniques on those close to you, you'll feel very comfortable in the executive suites.

Power networking

Power networking

Friends, family, alumni

Does your mom know what
you do?

Ask for a favor – an
opportunity to tell them
about what you do



Power networking

Religious groups

Participate

Don't overcommit (Say no!)

Do a great job –

use all your best people
and communication skills



Power networking

School, sports

- Connect
- Make friends
- Volunteer but use boundaries



Power networking

Professional affinity groups

- Learn and practice better networking skills
- Acquire better vendor/supplier contacts
- Search for a new job



Power networking

Client groups

Business leads

Referrals

Expanded network



Power networking

Executives/CXOs
You've arrived!



Circle back - and share!

Jesus was right



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The 5 attitudes of networking

I make it a priority

I do it regularly and track results

I am creative

I follow through/follow up

I am aware of the circular nature
of networking



Well, they're not really secrets. Your mom probably told you about some of them. But eat right and exercise, and fill your mind with good thoughts. People are attracted to others who are fit and healthy. But when networking you are exposed to hors d'oeuvres, heavy lunches etc. I'm not perfect myself, but I get up and walk in front of the TV for ten minutes every morning. It clears the mind and even a little is better than not doing it at all. Avoid a lot of sugar and alcohol and you'll be way ahead of most folks.

Remember, we're all in the same boat! As my mom used to say, we're really all just sitting around in our underwear, there's no reason to get intimidated or be a wallflower. Speaking as a recovering wallflower, I can tell you that focusing on others and practicing really does get you comfortable with areas outside your comfort zone.

Reward yourself! At some point when you start to see results, take your nose off the grindstone and reward yourself in the manner to which you are motivated.

Desire success — there are those who don't desire success because they are afraid of being disappointed, and will they ever get to real success? Probably not.

Plan to succeed: what will success look like for you? When will you know you've reached your goals? Can you give yourself a rest and then set new ones? Have a flexible plan that will accommodate failures and wins.

Above all, love. Love yourself,

love the work you're doing, love the work itself. That's a lesson that I actually learned late in life. I had the first two down all right, but I found out about the third when I was at an agency where a younger designer was having her work chosen and mine wasn't chosen. Eventually I realized the passion she put into each project was a form of love, it was almost palpable, a tangible thing she was sending out from her being into the projects. It sounds like hooey, but I tell you, once I learned to do that, my projects were chosen too. People just love things that are loved! A few are into the underdogs, but the vast majority of Americans anyway are attracted to things that are already loved. It works! All the networking in the world will go for naught without this element.

Success secrets

Success secrets

We're all in the same boat
Follow your best impulse to share
What do others need?

- Introductions
- Business ideas
- Referrals
- Audience/positioning ideas



Success secrets

What's your reward?

- Time
- Money
- Things
- Experiences

Enjoy!



Success secrets

Desire Success

If you desire it, you might get it.
If you don't desire it, you ensure
that you won't get it.



Success secrets

Plan for success

Do you have a Plan/winning strategy?

What will you do if you succeed?

Never stop reaching – it's part of the fun



Success secrets

Love yourself

Love doing your work

Love the results of your work



Thank you!

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