

# Networking vs. Prospecting – What is the difference?

So what are the five biggest mistakes people make at networking events?

## 1. Collecting business cards instead of forming relationships

Don't go to a mixer with the mindset of exchanging cards, playing the numbers game and hoping for the best.

Do have a system on doing a mixer:

- Set the number of people you want to meet, bring that many cards.
- Practice what you want to say to that person to (your elevator speech).

## 2. Prospecting instead of networking

Do not do prospecting, this means looking for someone to sell to and only to sell to.

Unless someone needs your product or service at that moment they will be turned off by a sales pitch. This includes elevator speeches that are cleverly disguised sales pitches.

Do try to find out what they do or what they need and offer to help or make the appropriate connection for them.

## 3. Talking too much about yourself

Do not spend time thinking about what you're going to say next, trying to explain exactly what you do or trying to get the other person interested in you.

Do first become interested in them by asking question. Here is a hint; ask questions that begin with "What," "How," "Why," "When," "Who," "Where." These are opened ended question starters that will get you information and not just "yes" "no" answers.

## 4. More on talking about yourself

People frequently ask this question at a mixer; "What do you do?"

Then we or they can get stuck in trying to explain their careers and not talking about things that can lead to a mutually beneficial relationship.

Explaining what you do does not tell me what you need.

Perhaps these questions might help as conversation starters;

- What brings you here tonight?
- What challenges are you currently facing in your business?
- What type of connections do you need?
- What is the one problem you are facing that you would like to make go away?

These types of questions can be completely different then everybody else in the room is asking and you're showing that you are interested in helping them