

Create Visibility For Yourself

By Leni Chauvin

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Leni Chauvin
leni@superstarnetworking.com

Leni Chauvin's Superstar Networking <http://www.superstarnetworking.com>

Everyone in business has one thing in common. It doesn't matter whether you're a salesman, a coach, a dentist, an artist, a lawyer, running a nonprofit organization or a work-at-home-mom. What we all need is to have people know about us. We can be the very best in all the world at what we do, but if we haven't got any customers, clients, or patients what good will it do us?

If you're just starting out or want to take your business to the next level, you're probably a lot like many others in the same boat. You've got a limited budget for promoting your endeavor and there are so many things you could easily spend it on. It's like being a kid in a candy store all over again. So many choices, each as enticing as the next. All the selections seem to be calling out, "Pick me." "Pick me." "Pick me."

I'm talking about logos, Web sites, graphic designers, brochures, 1-800 numbers, business cards, advertisements, Yellow Pages listings, and memberships galore. They all cost money and they're all shouting, "Pick me."

What if you can't pick one, though? What if you need to bring in more business before you can spend money on bringing in more business?

The solution is very simple and it boils down to just one thing: networking. That is by far the least expensive and most effective method of marketing known to wo/man.

If you're serious about becoming the success you know you were meant to be, I urge you to do two things now: 1) STEP AWAY FROM THE COMPUTER and 2) create visibility for yourself because that's where it all begins.

That means leaving the safety of the confines of your cubicle, office, or spare bedroom and getting out to see and be seen over and over again. After all, when people are in the market for your product or service who do you think they'll think of to help them: someone they met once at a party 18 months ago or someone they see and speak to repeatedly?

One way to get yourself noticed is to set a routine and stick with it. For example if you think the gym might be a good place to meet prospective clients, go regularly at the same times and days. You'll get to talk to far more people--and form relationships with them--than you would if you went on a drop-in basis, and it's relationships, after all, that are the crux of networking.

Check out the supermarket. It's an often overlooked, but excellent place to create one-on-one visibility. If you go at roughly the same time and stand in line for the same checker each time you go, you will find that you start chatting to the checker and before you know it, he/she will remember you and start calling you by name.

Over time, his or her memory will increase from the realm of "paper or plastic," to what you do for a living, the name of your company, etc. Supermarket checkers come in contact with an awful lot of people and they share a lot of information with their customers, too.

Wouldn't it be nice if this person, who has access to probably several hundred people a day, knew you, what you do, and even better yet, had a ready supply of your business cards in his/her pocket? It can happen and it all begins with starting a routine and forming a relationship.

Join and become active in your professional association, a service club, your Chamber of Commerce, Attend networking meetings. Go for a walk in your neighborhood. Coach a Little League team. Become a member of a professional leads exchange group like my own BRE Business Referral Exchange. Lead a Brownie troop. Join a book club. Take up a new sport. Start a new hobby. Pick up the phone just to say "hello." Go to seminars where your customers go. Invite your customers or prospects to attend a workshop with you.

BOTTOM LINE: It doesn't matter what you decided to do to get yourself noticed. Just do it, and do it consistently. You'll find it's a low cost way to build your business; you'll learn a lot from others and have fun at the same time.

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Leni Chauvin is a Certified Professional Coach and an expert in building business through strong referral networks. She helps entrepreneurs attract more clients, make more money, and have fun while they're doing it. Visit <http://www.superstarnetworking.com> to learn more and to subscribe to NETWORKING GAZETTE, Leni's FREE e-mail newsletter packed with tips to help you grow your business AND your life.

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