

8 Ways To Develop Confidence In New Situations

By Maria Marsala

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Do you enjoy one-on-one networking, however, the thought of walking into room full of people you don't know horrifies you? You're not alone. Yes, even a social butterfly, President of the Social Committee in High School and avid networker knows how you feel. Here are some of my tricks. And they have all worked!

~A great way to network at a conference is to volunteer at the registration desk. Why? You get to say hello to everyone who registers in your line and everyone who registers gets to see you behind the registration table. At the event, you'll feel more comfortable talking with people because you've "met" them already. And if those aren't enough benefits, people will "recognize you" from the registration desk, and be more likely to come talk with you.

~If you teach a class or speak, go into the room early. Get a feel for it, change it around if need be, and greet everyone who walks in with a big "hello my name is ...". Bring name tags or recycle the tops of old manila folders, have each person put their name on it, and put it on the table in front of them.

~When you are planning to attend a meeting for the first time, call up whomever you can from the organization. Ask them if you can meet them at the meeting. Then you'll "know" someone that you can look for when you arrive.

~Carry a nametag in your glove compartment. Make one for personal use, another for business use. Then people will feel more comfortable walking up to you in meetings.

~Put your notes on the back of duplicates of pictures (photography) you've taken. Then they won't stick out so much from the podium (like white paper or index cards do.)

~Practice some opening lines and your handshake before you attend the event. Practice using a mirror and ask your family to let you practice on them, too.

~Develop two a 30-second commercials (also called elevator speeches, USP - unique selling propositions). One is for personal use, and the other would be for business use. On a recent teleclass I attended, provided by Jay Levinson of Guerilla Marketing fame, suggested creating a 7 word commercial, too. www.coachmaria.com/articles/usp.html

~Remember that everyone in that room is a human being, too. Everyone has their own fears to deal with... and they might even be the same as yours.

~Find other ways to build your confidence, too. Email me the ones that work for you. maria@coachmaria.com

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