



Networking.

Does the mere mention of that term make you cringe?

If so, the official term for that is normal because unfortunately for most of us we associate networking with a networking event.

We feel awkward. We don't know anybody. Somebody's in the corner trying to sell us insurance and who's going to have a positive association with that.

My challenge today is to change this association and to help you realize how positive, beneficial, and dare I say, enjoyable networking can be.

Because at its core what networking really is is relationship building. The reason a lot of us have negative associations with it is that we're missing that mutual component. We get caught up in conversations that are one-sided when people are trying to sell us things or talk at us or persuade us of something and that's not what a mutually beneficial relationship is.

On the same token, you need to realize your role in that when you're having conversations and connecting with people.

Are you dominating the conversation?

Are you trying to sell them something?

Are you talking at them rather talking with them?

It matters because networking is going to have a huge impact on your career success and trajectory.

When we consider it as relationship building, of course, it's happening everywhere.

Yes at networking events, but everywhere else too increasingly online and particularly with LinkedIn. Part of your homework is to make sure your LinkedIn is looking good and up to date.

We'll talk a little bit more about that later.

It's also happening at work. Networking isn't just for new jobs. Networking is happening all day every day at your current position.

How are you nurturing those relationships?

Learning how to network effectively is going to benefit you when you are ready to get a new job, when you're ready for a raise or promotion in your current job, when you are seeking support or recognition or awards for the good work you're doing, building



partnerships, and of course when you are also looking out for the other people in your relationships to make sure that you are benefiting them.

Now, let's be real for a minute. Performance is important. You need to be able to do your job well, but we know that just performing well is not generally enough to get that promotion or raise or award. Whether it's internal or external from your organization, relationships matter.

How are you building those relationships within your current job as well as outside of it and of course remain open and keep your eyes open for opportunities that you can share with other people in your network.

This is a slide you're going to start seeing on a lot of other videos, because mindset is central to everything that we do including when it comes to confrontation and difficult conversations which includes networking. It's really important no matter what specific situation we're talking about that you take a minute to really think about what's challenging for you about this.

Don't just go surface- dig a little bit deeper.

If you need to pause the videos or prepare before you even watch them because you know, these questions are going to be coming and really think about what is challenging for you.

What's your current mindset around this and how can you start to shift it to better serve you?

At the beginning of this lesson, I tried to warm you up a little bit by saying think of networking as not some crummy event with cheap watered down cocktails. Think of it as relationship building and that might be a good mindset shift for you.

When it does come to networking events, there are ways to make them more positive and beneficial to you. By networking events, I mean events that are self-described as networking events, but also networking is happening in events that aren't necessarily designated as networking events, but you know that a lot of networking is going to be happening. Things like conferences or trainings or things like that.

Focus on the benefit. Don't focus on all the terrible things that you're currently associating with it. Before you even step in the door check your mindset and think about all the good that can come out of this situation.

Take the pressure off. No situation you're going to be in is going to permanently make or break your career. Try to have some fun with it. Try to take on the mindset that you might need a good person or someone who's interesting to talk to don't make it mean everything.

Normalize it for yourself. Know that most people feel that same thing. That might even



be a topic of conversation at some point, but you're not the only one in the world who feels awkward and uncomfortable. It's a very common feeling to have. Think about what you want to get out of the event and also what you can provide to other people again with that mutual mindset.

Have a goal. Maybe if you're just starting out or you're really don't like these kinds of events, maybe your goal is to stay for 10 minutes and just say that you went and then you get to go home. You can't do that for every one, but if you need to warm up in that way then do it that way. Maybe your goal is to give one person a business card or to make one LinkedIn connection or to get one new partner for your new project or whatever, set a goal for yourself.

When you're having conversations with people, ask a lot of questions. People love to talk about themselves. Listen more than you talk.

If part of your challenge is that you just don't know what to say or you have trouble getting the conversation going, get people talking about themselves. But be careful with this because a lot of people will take that opportunity and run with it and they'll never bring the conversation back to you.

If you get stuck in that one-sided conversation, see if you can't bring it back to you and if you can't, you can say, 'it was great talking with you' and move on to the next one.

Have fun as best you can- these don't have to be torturous events. And know your limit.

You want to push yourself, but you also don't want to put yourself in a situation where you're so uncomfortable where you really are experiencing a lot of negativity from doing this so find that balance for yourself. Know what your Healthy boundaries are.

Always keep your eyes open for a new opportunity. It may or may not be a job but there are opportunities out there everywhere.

Maybe you can get highlighted in a blog post or be a guest on a podcast or be up for an award or write an article or... there are so many different opportunities out there that aren't just a new job.

Always keep your eyes open and be willing to listen to what other people have going on.

When it comes to partnerships, there might be good training opportunities and just new stuff going on in the field when you get to talk with people and you can learn about new ideas and things for you to think about to improve your practice.

When it does come to looking for a job keep in mind that 70% of people are open to new jobs. They might not be actively looking but they're open.

So when you have a job opening, reach out to people in your network, see if they might be interested in applying even if they're not actively looking.



It takes on average five months to find a new job. For some people it's much longer.

Dn't wait until you're looking for a new job to look for a new job. Make sure your resume is up to date. Make sure you're LinkedIn is up to date. Make sure you're continuing to connect and build relationships, so when you are ready for a new job, you're good to go.

Again, the importance of LinkedIn- it's the number one place where recruiters go to find job candidates.

Keep in mind that 70% of jobs are never posted. There's an asterisk after that because when I was looking this up online some places said 60% some places said 80% I split the difference. It's not a perfectly scientific answer.

But what we do know is more than half of jobs are not posted online.

You're going to have much more success reaching out to people and asking about job opportunities, then you will just cold reaching out online.

Ask and you shall receive. Sometimes. I had a situation where one of my friends was working at a place I was really interested in working at. I reached out to them to ask for a connection. It never really ended up happening. It was unfortunate and we're still friends. I didn't let it ruin anything in that regard just because you asked doesn't mean you're going to get it.

In most cases you're never going to get it if you don't ask. Start to build up your boldness and stamina and courage to have conversations with people that you are looking.

Update that LinkedIn profile. Clean up your social media. Potential employers and partners are constantly checking people's social media. Focus on giving. Always be looking and again focus on that mutual part.

I hope I did my job of helping you shift your thinking around networking from something that's cringeworthy and that you always try to avoid to something that's positive and beneficial and really at its core relationship building.

So the most important question for you is what do you need to do to focus on strengthening your networking?