

# Solve Anything with Dr. Mark

Career Advice  
for the  
Working Class

Beyond the name tag

**Q:** I've decided to take the plunge and begin to network. I am late to this process and I would like to catch up to those who have been doing it for years. So much of it seems hit or miss, and I'd like not to waste time. Any guidelines?

**A:** I can read between your words that you've been avoiding this for some time. I've observed when people avoid doing things, it's not that they lack the will but that they lack a way to go about doing it.

Dr. William Saleebey's "Connecting: Beyond the Name Tag" (Believe Publishing, \$15.95),

is an excellent resource for building effective and enduring relationships. The book blends his extensive experience in corporate relocation sales, where he utilizes networking for business development — with his doctorate in educational psychology. In it, you will find the way to be successful

in your networking efforts, right out of the gate. Saleebey contends that in order to develop fruitful relationships, you need to use a holistic approach.

He offers the following guidelines:

- **The prudent and consistent use of social media coupled with frequent face-to-face contact.** Neither is effective by itself. Don't restrict yourself to one or the other because some people are more comfortable with one of the other. The more you can connect with others via their preferred route, the better your chances for getting your relationship off to the best start.

- **You never know what a particular contact can potentially yield.** Some people are likely to be better sources of referrals than others, but some people can be surprisingly helpful to you if you really listen to them and are able to mine their connections for potential introductions. People will surprise you by who they know and if you don't keep yourself open to that possibility, you'll be likely to miss out.

- **Build your network both wide and deep.** Get to know many people, but follow up with certain



Q&A

select people to develop deeper personal relationships. There's only so much time and so much of you to go around, so after you cast your net wide begin to determine who you want to go deeper with.

- **Strike a balance between business and personal discussions.** When you find something out about another's passion, delve deeper and perhaps bring it up in a subsequent discussion. The greater your interest in someone as a person vs. their specific specialty the greater likelihood that they won't treat you as a commodity where they'll only care about price.

- **Effective networking at large events is not related to how many business cards you collect or pass out.** It is the prudent follow-up that nurtures mutually beneficial relationships. Write down notes about the person on the back of their card when you're with them. It will cause people to feel more considered by you and it will immediately separate you from the indiscriminate card gatherers.

- **Find ways to be useful to others that might not seem obvious to you immediately.** It could be making an introduction, offering a useful suggestion, or actually making a referral. Give generously without waiting for something in return. Generosity generally begets generosity and will again cause you to view as more than your service or product.

- **Determine ways to differentiate yourself from others, both personally and with your business.** People will remember you more if you're different than if you're merely "better" than others who do what you do (who are proclaiming the same about themselves).

- **Don't shy away from large group functions if you are more of an introvert.** You might even approach people who are standing alone who are not being standoffish, but are just being as shy as you are. Few people go to a networking event wanting to be left alone. And it's amazing how appreciative such people can be. When you find someone with whom you connect, set up a one-on-one meeting to deepen the relationship.

- **Effective networking should become a way of life rather than merely something you do to get business.** Have fun in the process and you will have rich and meaningful experiences and expand your community. And when you learn to be confident in this skill, it will spill over into giving you the confidence to try other things that will help your success.



Saleebey