

make+the sale

[Learn how to sell it like you mean it]



Good connections

By Barry Farber

How do you make the most of every contact you make? How can you gain the trust of your contacts so they'll start connecting you to all the people in their network? The greatest networkers have a simple, practical system for making a lasting impression and building a strong foundation for future sales success.

1. **Start off strong:** Give new contacts a firm handshake and look them in the eye. An upbeat attitude and a sincere eagerness to meet them will be reciprocated.
2. **Listen more than talk:** You can't really start to build a relationship until you're locked into the other person's hot buttons and listening to what makes him tick.

3. **Ask questions to build rapport and understanding:** Once you hear his answer, do you have him go into greater detail? Great salespeople know how to move the conversation forward with the right open-ended questions.
4. **Find common ground:** Doing so allows you to connect with contacts on a deeper level, whether it's sports, hobbies or family interests. When my customers start talking about their kids and how they are interested in the same activities as my own, the conversation flows.
5. **Do your homework:** When the customer sees you've invested time into

understanding his business, there is a certain level of trust established right away. Even better is when the homework you did brings new ideas and additional value to the customer.

6. **Sell what they sell:** You know who your customer is, but do you know who your customer's customers are and how you can help sell more to them? Help your customers build their businesses, and they'll end up building yours.
7. **Offer outside help:** Can you offer a resource—say, a personal trainer or a good book—that assists them in an area outside of what you sell? Going out of your way to help can get you in the door and keep you connected.
8. **Keep your network strong:** Surround yourself with people your contacts would want to meet. I am always thinking about the company my contacts keep. It tells me a great deal about their intelligence and integrity.
9. **Be true to who you are:** People cannot connect with you when you're trying to be someone else. Being honest about what you do, who you are and what you believe in says a lot about your character.
10. **Follow up and follow through:** In the world of networking, connections and building relationships, this is the glue that holds it all together.

Nothing really new here—it's common sense. And guess what? Common sense isn't so common anymore, but it's what the best salespeople have.

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