

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



222 Networking Basics for a Better 2019 – Part 2

Today, more tips on how to be a better networker and score greater results in 2019 and beyond. I'm Jerry Roberts and that's next on The Extra Point.

On Monday I mentioned that I had been a "scared" networker in my early business days, and later just grew to dislike it. Small talk wasn't my thing and I didn't look forward to entering a big room full of people, maybe not knowing any of them, and trying to carry on conversations in hopes of swapping business cards and getting an appointment.

This all turned around when I got some great advice that changed my attitude, as I embraced the idea that networking wasn't about me, but about the other person I was talking with.

Today let's talk about what to do before you get to the networking event, during the event, and what you want to do after the event.

Before the event

Most Guam networking functions or mixers are the open invitation variety. Anybody can attend. Therefore, you don't know who will be there. However, if the sponsors are solid and the venue is a good one, you can guess the food might be worth the trip and some top folks from business and government should be in the room. Maybe some people you've been hoping to connect with. Do your homework on some of the people you'd love to talk with. If they do show up you'll be in a better position to make a good impression.

And this is a straight up insider tip. You've heard of the term "elevator speech"? It refers to what you might say to a big prospect if you stepped into an elevator and you found yourself alone with him or her, and you only had the time it took to reach their floor to pitch them and get an appointment. What would you say? In Guam we don't have a lot of elevators, but we have parking garages and

lots all over the place. What would you say if you got out of your car and found yourself walking next to that prospect? Think about it.

During the event

Get there early and warm up your listening skills, maybe getting a couple of wins right off the bat. Don't monopolize any one person's time. Realize they came to meet a variety of people, too. If you want to follow up with a specific person, exchange cards and tell them when you'll be calling, and would they be interested in a coffee? Thank them for their time. Something else, know why you're there. I'm clear on what I'd like to talk about with people I know, if they attend. As well, I make it a point to meet two or three new people and get to know them.

After the event

Follow up. Follow up. There are so many people who attend networking functions, collect stacks of business cards, but never call anybody. I guess it's okay if you're just there for the food and whatever conversation you share, and you consider it all entertainment. For the rest of us, there's a serious business reason involved. Follow up. There are a lot of ways to do it, including a note on social media. It will certainly be appreciated. Uhh, did I mention to follow up?

Observe basic laws of connecting. Have a reason to be there. Know what you want to accomplish and what you'll say if so and so shows up. Be a great listener. Meet new people and have fun. Network to a great year in 2019.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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