

The Best Business Networking Plan



Prepared by

Jen Mueller
Founder, Talk Sporty To Me

Contact

T: 425.280.4513
E: Jen@TalkSportyToMe.com

On the Web

TalkSportyToMe.com
[@talksporty](https://www.instagram.com/talksporty)

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WHAT'S MY GOAL?

WHERE WILL I BE SEEN?

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MY SUCCESS STATEMENT

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WHERE WILL I BE SEEN?

Business relationships take time to develop. That means you can't show up to one event and expect to reap instant rewards.

Be seen in a space to the point where people don't remember that space without you.

To do that you need to pick 2 or 3 networking groups or events and plan to attend multiple times over the course of the year.

Yes, you will likely see the same people. That's the point. It's about building the know, like and trust factor that leads to business.

MY SUCCESS STATEMENT

No one cares about your elevator speech. Instead give a 3-sentence (15-second) success statement that highlights your abilities.

For example, a business communications expert might say, "I know your company is among the industry leaders in personal development opportunities for your employees. I just conducted a training session for the X Company. It was great working with their leadership team."

Tell people what you do well and they'll tell you if they want to learn more.

WHAT'S MY GOAL?

Think of networking as the first play of a game. Nothing gets decided on the first play.

Money doesn't change hands after the first conversation. Save the sales pitches. Your networking goal should be to connect with 2 or 3 key influencers or new business contacts.

Know which specific people you want to meet. This helps focus your efforts.

WILL I PAY TO PLAY?

Networking happens at events that aren't specifically advertised as "networking" events.

Pay attention to upcoming events that your key influencer is attending.

Perhaps an awards banquet or a fundraising event. Consider buying a ticket and make it your goal to get face time with your key influencer.

(You are paying for the ability to play/network with a different group of people.)

MY FOLLOW-UP PLAN

Develop a follow up plan and set the expectation with your new contact at the end of your conversation.

Be specific: "I'll send you an email before the Seahawks game next week."