

3 Ways To Eliminate Your Networking Fears

Introduction

Are you afraid of networking?

Don't worry, a lot of people are. It can be daunting to put yourself out there and open yourself up to the judgement and criticism of others. You might feel shy, not know where to start or think you lack the necessary experience. Meeting new people makes you vulnerable to perspectives of yourself that you probably never knew you had. One bad experience can also lead to a lifetime of difficulty keeping your confidence and composure when meeting others.



Throughout our years of school, networking is a skill that is rarely given any focus. What you need to realize is that this is a skill that you *cannot ignore*. You should know how to do it, why it's important, and what can result from it. Everything starts and ends with people, in your business, job or personal life. Without an effective understanding of how people work and how to interact with them, you will struggle in anything you try to accomplish.

This book is dedicated to helping you get over the major fears that surround networking. We will provide three simple tactics that you can apply to confidently approach others and leave a lasting, positive impression. We have also created exercises that will build your networking skills. We have designed each activity to be something you can apply right away, even if you are not in a typical networking setting.

If you have any questions about what is discussed below, don't hesitate to reach out to us. Our contact info is near the end of the book.

Wishing you success in all your networking adventures,
Bobby and Ryan

1) Understand Context

What do we mean?

The greatest barrier to networking is mindset. Your mindset is a set of beliefs that determine your behaviour, outlook and mental attitude. We all have fears and doubts about networking events. But the most important key to overcoming them is understanding the power of context.

Context is king! The definition of context is simply the circumstances surrounding a situation or event. The context of a setting or situation offers unique insights that we can leverage.

Why is it important?

If you truly get the context of a networking event, it will build a stronger mindset and melt many of the fears you have about the event. For example, people are at networking events specifically to meet new people and create potential opportunities. Usually, they have all come to the event voluntarily. Once you realize this, then you will understand how open they will be to connecting with you when you approach them.

Here's how to do it:

Ask yourself the following questions:

- 1) Why are you attending this networking event?**
- 2) Why is everyone else attending this networking event?**
- 3) What aspects are aligned between your attendance and everyone else's attendance?**

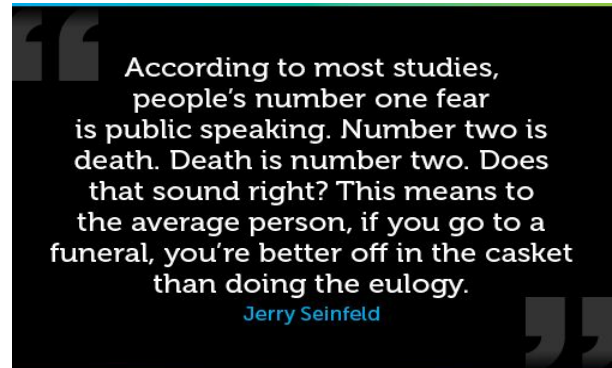
Write them all down. Once you know what is aligned, you will get a clear picture of the context and what areas you and the others can connect on.



2) Prepare

What do we mean?

Networking requires you to speak publicly and most people often fear this worst than death. Our fears are often based in doubt. Why do we doubt? Usually because we lack information or have no idea how to do something. The best way to address this is by preparation. Prepare anything and everything you can to not only give you an advantage over everyone else, but also to anticipate most scenarios that you might encounter at a live networking event.



Why is it important?

When you have prepared, you will have the confidence to network effectively. Preparation will help with almost anything you do that makes you nervous. If you had to speak to a large group of people, write a tough medical exam, or wrestle a crocodile, preparing beforehand will greatly increase your chance of success. It will also lessen any nervousness before you start such a task. It is the same thing with networking! So make sure you know your “elevator pitch” (a quick and personal summary of who you are), what value you bring and how to start a conversation. Have prepared questions, and dress appropriately. Learn how to make conversations go well and create authentic connections.

“Failing to plan is planning to fail” ~ Alan Lakein

Nothing beats having a plan. If you have a plan, you will eliminate some of your networking fears right away.

Here's how to do it:

You need to focus on the following:

- 1) **Know your audience**—Who are will you ? What interests them? What kinds of questions will they have?

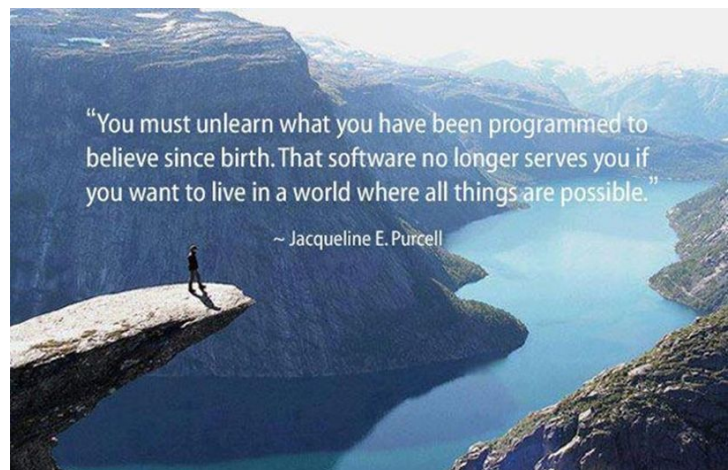
- 2) **Know what will resonate**—What are some things that they will want know? What do they care about? What will they be interested to learn about you?
- 3) **Learn, Practice, Ask for Feedback, Refine**—To alleviate some of your fears, you can prepare by writing down and memorizing the following.
 - a) Elevator pitch—Who you are, what you do and what is unique or special about you)
 - b) Value proposition or personal brand—What are the things you do very well or are known for)
 - c) Conversation starters—Write down three openings such as, “Hi, my name is Steve, I really enjoyed the first speaker. What has been your favourite aspect so far tonight?”
 - d) Conversation questions—Write down five to ten questions that you can use to keep the conversation flowing, such as, “Who has been the most interesting person you have met tonight?”
 - e) Select an outfit—Choose an outfit you feel comfortable in and think you look good in. Get feedback from a friend you trust on how you look.
 - f) More research—Do some deeper investigation and learning on how to create deeper, authentic connections. (You can start with our books!)

After you have done this, you should practice and get feedback from your friends. Then you can refine and make any changes.

3) Visualize

What do we mean?

Visualization is a process that programs your mind to stay focused on a certain perspective and look for a desired outcome that aligns with it. Our minds are so powerful. This technique can drastically change your experience of any situation.



Why is it important?

The funny thing about the future is that we can only think about it.

It doesn't really exist. It is only a projection from our imagination.

The problem is that many of us have the habit of imagining the worst-case scenario. We become so focused on everything that *could* go wrong that we lose sight of anything that may go right. In doing so, we skew our perspective to seek out the negative and thus attract negative experiences into our lives.

It's for this very reason that so many people fear networking. They believe that they will "mess up", "embarrass themselves" or "not be liked" and all because they've created an imaginary view of the future that tricks them into thinking this outcome is the *only* possible outcome. It's not! If you study Personal Development (like we do), you come to realize that you are always in control of how you see things and at any given time you can always see things from at least two perspectives.

Below, we will teach you a simple three-step exercise you can take to start visualizing a positive networking experience for yourself.

Here's how to do it:

- 1) Write down what the worst possible networking scenario could look like**
- 2) Write down the the best possible scenario**
- 3) Choose the perspective you *want***

Here's an example of how this exercise could look:

1) The worst scenario would be to go to the event and nobody I know is there. No one wants talk to me and I would feel like an awkward loser.

2) The best scenario would be to go to the event, not knowing anyone at first, but meeting a lot of interesting people. I would make new contacts and potential clients. I would be listening to their stories, sharing mine, joking, laughing and making meaningful connections.

3) If I went while I was focused on the worst scenario, my actions would align with being shy, not talking to anyone, looking for ways to confirm it is a bad experience. However, if I go looking for the best scenario my actions will be much more positive and productive! Most of the people who come out will WANT to meet others like me. Heck, it's a networking event! Wow, the worst case scenario is so silly, now that I think about it.

Conclusion

Fear is natural. Every person has jitters before taking on something that is important to them. So let's first embrace the fact that networking fears are completely normal.

If you attend a live event, particularly one with a strong networking focus, you are going to a place filled with people who want to meet you! The **context** is set for you to introduce yourself. Firmly plant this in your head if you ever feel nervous or hesitant. People expect you to be networking and they are hoping to connect as well.

There is great value in **preparation**. Having a plan gives you the edge, not only because most people don't have a plan, but also because it will build your confidence. Using the tools we mention here and in our other content can be a game changer.

As mentioned in our book *How to Network Anytime, Anywhere, with Anyone*, "Commit to showcasing your value, offering your support to others and building the relationship in an authentic way."

Finally, the best way to make something happen is to **visualize** that it can happen. Your mindset is a powerful vehicle for eliminating fears and creating success. If you have a vision and a belief, you will be much further ahead than the majority of networkers. Your mind will ease up on your fears, boost your confidence and create an attitude of gratitude. You will leverage the support and tools to get you where you need to be at networking events. You will know why you are there and you will have focus and purpose.

NEXT UP

Now that you aren't afraid to network, let's get you armed with the skills to network effectively, so that you can take advantage of the many benefits meeting new people provides!

We have created an in-depth book that takes you through *everything* you need to know when networking at live events. You will gain knowledge on how to properly prepare for an event, how to start a



conversation, what to talk about, how to close a conversation and finally how to effectively follow up.

Whether you are looking to build a business or make your way up the ranks of an organization, this book is must-have to help you develop the right interpersonal skills. Remember, every opportunity comes down to how you relate to other people.

To get your very own copy, click [here](#) to purchase it from Amazon or Kindle.