

# The Business Connector

A Quarterly Newsletter from AmSpirit™ Business Connections

## *The Need For Networking*

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It happens every spring. Collegiate men and women from across the country embark upon an almost sadistically strenuous regime of diet and exercise. They do this in hopes of toning and buffing their bodies for the migration to the beaches for Spring Break.

And every year, no matter how good their intentions, the outcome is generally the same. As hard as they labor through push-ups, aerobics and portion control, they meet with disappointment. The reality is that there just is not enough time to tone and sculpt their bodies to get the physique they want.

The truth is that getting that “beach body” is not an event that serves to occupy the six to eight weeks leading up to arriving on the sand. Rather, this should be an ongoing process. To become that poolside god or goddess, they need to focus almost year-round attention to the task.

When it comes to networking, however, many of us are no better than these beach-bound college students are. In our mind, we identify that desired place we want to be. While it is not necessarily Fort Lauderdale or South Padre Island, it is a place nevertheless. It may be a new employer, a better job at the

same place, or perhaps getting to that prized client.

Once we decide where we want to go, we attempt to prepare ourselves by firing up our networking machine, hoping that it will get us there. We show up in key locations, at designated times and do what we do. We flash bright smiles, offer warm handshakes and converse with anyone who is willing.

Sometimes we get lucky. The stars align and we find ourselves in the right place at the right time. We land that job, promotion or client.

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Generally, however, this is not the case. We find ourselves much like the person hoping to hit the beach with that near-perfect form and shape: Disappointed. The reality is that our networking efforts are simply too little too late.

We need to learn from those headed to the beaches for Spring Break. Just like getting in shape, networking is not something we embark upon in the weeks leading up to an event. It is an ongoing process that has no real beginning and certainly no end.

Too often we view our networking as an activity that we employ when we have definite needs to fulfill. The reality is that in our lives – or anyone’s life for that matter – there is a constant need for networking.

You may have a job and the prospects for future employment may look bright. Nevertheless, one never knows what the future holds. It is a fact that businesses merge, they close, and even eliminate entire departments. Knowing this, you need to make the time and find the opportunity to network.

You may be perfectly content with your professional place in the world. If have any ambition at all, however, that contentment will not last. What you are doing will become stale or it may be that you will eventually want to grow and advance beyond where you are. An ongoing regime of building professional relationships with those around you will position you for that growth.

You may currently have a full plate of customers or clients. Great. However, nothing lasts forever. Projects end. The need for what you offer diminishes. Competition cuts into your book of business. In short, to remain busy, you have an enduring need to network.

In summary, whether we feel we need to network or not, we should. To continue to enjoy success at any level, our need for networking is continual. ▼