



# Why Is Networking Important to You and Your Business

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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Every time that I attend a workshop or Conference, I am reminded of the importance of building a network. There are so many benefits for doing this:

1. Gaining knowledge about organizations - People who have held memberships in specific organizations can provide you with a great deal of information about member benefits, important committees and opportunities to serve. You might not ever gain this without attending the annual meeting, workshop but when you attend you have a chance to talk with others about this. Remember to ask good questions about things you would like to know more about.
2. Learning new ideas and techniques - Sometimes people who are visiting with you even informally say things that will help you with your business. Their tip might be something that they are doing or that they have heard others do successfully.
3. Critiquing your business - Objectivity of others can often be exactly what you need to solve a problem or help you to move forward. You might meet with another professional and purposefully discuss the issue or just get into a conversation and during that receive inspiration and direction from the other person.
4. Supporting each other - We all need to have other people who understand and support us - especially if we are facing a stressful time or specific problem. Knowing someone else cares can be as or more important than receiving advice at times. When you turn to your network you find people who have understanding and, at the same time, save stressing out family members if it isn't necessary.
5. Sharing resources - There is an old expression that states, "Don't reinvent the wheel". Often people in your network will be willing to share handouts, products or even equipment so that you will therefore not have to buy or rent it yourself.
6. Setting an example - Many times we need someone to follow who will be a mentor or role-model. When we are discouraged, we can turn our thoughts towards other people those have carried on when it was difficult for them to do so and find inspiration for ourselves.
7. Becoming the cutting-edge leaders in the world - You do not have to build your network only with people in your trade. In fact, having individuals from a number of different fields can create a master mind group where you can even develop the cutting-edge ideas and be known as the thought leaders in the world.