



Bee

BOLD EDUCATION & EMPOWERMENT

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a dark jacket, is holding a glass of red wine. She is looking towards the right. The background is a blurred crowd of people at a networking event, with warm, ambient lighting.

Success Hack

THE SECRET TRICK TO ROCKING A NETWORKING EVENT

When it comes to networking, many people are awkward and uncomfortable and all that does is make other people awkward and uncomfortable.

Networking events can turn into fun social affairs where worthy business connections can be made. It's all about getting the basics down so you can enjoy yourself. Here are five basic tips to have a successful experience at your next networking event:

HAVE A HOME BASE – If it's possible, go to the event with a friend or colleague. We call this person our “home base.” Now, and this is important, don't stay with this person all night. The purpose of home base is to provide a safe place for you to retreat to if you have a lull in your networking and can't readily find another

person to talk to. It prevents you from wandering around the event looking lost or looking like you're trying to find someone to talk to. When one conversation ends, you just head over to home base. Now, you're walking with purpose and confidence and you look like you know what you're doing and where you're going. When you get to home base, if he or she is a good networking buddy they will eagerly welcome you into any conversation they may be having when you approach and introduce you to whoever they are talking to. If your home base is alone when you approach, then you just chit chat and regroup until you see an opportunity to start a conversation with someone else.

If you are alone at an event, the bar or buffet table can easily serve as home base. Just head for the bar or buffet, eat or have a drink while you regroup and then head back out there and keep networking.



STOP!

DON'T SAY THESE THINGS AT WORK

According to Fortune 500 consultant Richard Moran, there are a few phrases that should never be uttered in the office. Here's a mashup of his best advice:

"It is what it is" is the sound of defeat. The subtext of "it is what it is" is: "I give up." That negativity enforces the kind of thinking that kills projects and how coworkers understand your attitude. It makes you the Debbie Downer in business clothing. Moran points out that you might as well say, "Life sucks and work is even worse," and this attitude gets old very fast.

If the "low-hanging fruit" even does exist, going after it is just bad strategy. The analogy of going after what requires less effort normalizes what is too easy and simply not existent. "Even if it does, the fruit on the top of the tree is ripest, and that's where the greatest returns for your effort will be," notes Moran.

The only thing that happens at the "end of the day" is, well, the end of the day. Referencing the elusive "end of the day" is common in politics, academics, and especially business. "It's so ubiquitous that it seems to imply that it's news that each day ends," explains Moran. "The truth is that, given technology and workdays that never end, the end of the day is a myth."

These next two aren't exactly clichés but they're still all-too-common phrases you should probably avoid, says Moran. (Call them the "Don't Says" perhaps.)

Ditch the R-word and the B-word. Though

Mindset continued on BEE:4

A portrait of Sandy Rubenstein, CEO of DXAgency, looking directly at the camera. She has dark hair pulled back and is wearing a light-colored blazer. In the background, there are some colorful flowers and a window with blinds.

How I Did It!

SANDY RUBENSTEIN, CEO, DXAGENCY

STAND UP FOR YOURSELF

DXAGENCY CEO SANDY RUBENSTEIN ON SPEAKING UP

Don't Let People Get Away With Ignorance

I've always felt that my job is to educate people. I tell everyone about my country of origin and I tell everyone what it's like to be Hispanic and what I do at home that's different. I think part of it is on us as women and as minorities to believe that we're just as good.

Stand up for Yourself

I was at a company that primarily employed men and I was trying to present an opportunity for the company. While I was presenting I was hushed and told, 'sweetheart, it's OK, we have a bunch of other things to consider.' I turned to that person, who was actually incredibly senior to me, and I said, 'this opportunity is just as good as the ones you had and never call me sweetheart again.' From that moment on my offerings were listened to in a different way.

Seize the Day

When I was a kid I'd had a terrible accident and I was told that I might not be able to walk again. I said, 'you know what? I'm not done, I'm really young' and I wrote down all the things I wanted to do when I grow up. Part of that was to take no prisoners and I really live my life that way and I've raised my kids that way.

Embrace all Types of Diversity

One of the things that's interesting about [DXAgency] is that besides having a good ratio of women to men and ethnic diversity, we also have age diversity. I want to make sure that we have equal voices at the table so when we're creating something we're able to see everybody's different viewpoint on the same thing. Something I might think is super cool, might actually be offensive to somebody who's 20 or 30.

How I...

Ask for a Seat at the Table

I used to go into my boss' office and he'd be like, 'yes, Sandy, what meeting do you want to go to?' My response would be, 'that meeting over there and I want to know what are they doing and what's happening and what's going on.' Or if it was a meeting that wasn't appropriate for me to be in I'd ask my boss, 'when you come back can you tell me how it went?' The more you ask, the more knowledgeable you become and the more knowledgeable you are, the more powerful you can become.

But Don't Neglect the Things/People You Love

I drive my kids to school and that 20 minutes in the car every morning is awesome. Every day at three o'clock they call me when they get out of school and we talk about the day so far. I usually don't let anybody book any meetings at three o'clock because that's when my kids call and if I have a meeting, I'll step out and talk to them. We have dinner together almost every night and that's important. It's a lot of work and people who don't think of it as work are the ones who say you can't have it all.

Pay it Forward

I think people forget in business how important education is. I mentor kids at our high school [and] I mentor kids at the University of Miami...business school. I think it just takes one person to change your career path and the course of your life. If I can be that one person for somebody I would be thrilled because I had somebody like that when I was in high school and I wouldn't be here today if she hadn't pointed me in the right direction. So, the more I can do for other people I think I'm just paying it forward.

Don't Forget to Have Fun

If you're not having fun, it's not worth it. Life is too short, we're not curing cancer. You know? Enjoy yourself...Unless you're saving somebody's life, there's a way to fix whatever the situation is and whenever people get so crazy about this or that, or the other and I'm like, "OK well, take a deep breath and a step backward...you'll probably find a better solution than the one you were even thinking about now under duress."

Mindset

Continued from BEE:2

they're not the hot-button words you're likely thinking of, Really? and BUT often exude snark, bad attitude, or are just plain irritating. It's certainly not true in every spoken instance of these little words, but when your go-to response is "Really?" when a coworker asks for help or you're constantly using "BUT" to excuse your own responsibility or knock down something (or someone) else—well, it's really annoying.

"I don't know; what do you want to do?" is a known verbal con-job. Moran cites the "Abilene Paradox," a group dynamics phenomenon. When nobody knows what exactly they want to do, it's likely the group will settle on a decision nobody in the group wanted at all. It's best to stop these indecisive circles in their tracks with an assertive, "I don't want to do that."