

How to use the holidays to build relationships

It's that time of year when everyone is trying to wind up business activities so they wind down and will have more "holiday" time. It's a time for reflection and rejuvenation too. However, in the instance of building your business or your business relationships, it's time to step up the pace.



The holidays present the opportunity to send cards and token gifts without recrimination. You can touch base with people who you have lost touch with and avoid feeling awkward about it.

Over the years I have gifts from business expensive than others. approaches, I am always who have been creative me a holiday gift. Among items that I have oversized chocolate bar chocoholic) with the funky desk calendar, holiday wrapping paper, ornaments for my tree and many more. In any case, the gift puts that person back in the loop. It forces me to think about the person that sent the item and what it is that they do. It makes me consider them as a resource. They move to the top of my memory book. Remember, that's the system that helps me prioritize my referrals and people that I can help get business.



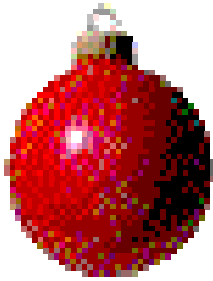
received numerous holiday associates, some more As the holiday reminded of the people and innovative in sending the creative gift/trinket received were an (my favorite since I am a company name on it, a

To get yourself back in someone's memory book, put your creative hat on. Don't just go out and buy a box of holiday cards. Be clever. After Thanksgiving I scoured the stores for a clever memento. Turkeys are a perfect door opener. I found the perfect item-honeycomb turkey place cards at 50% off. I can't imagine what I am going to do with them, but something will come to me. In fact, there are quite a few people I have lost touch with during my recent move. I've got it! "I am a turkey for not staying in touch." The place cards are fat with a place for a personal message. When they arrive in the envelopes (orange of course) I know the recipients will open them to see what's inside. This is an inexpensive yet creative way to say REMEMBER ME!

For more free tips on how to build business or relationships return the word "holidays" via email.

Thanks for requesting additional tips on how to maximize the holidays for business. Let's start simply.

When was the last time you picked up the phone and called someone just to reacquaint yourself? I know everyone is inundated with calls but think of it from a different perspective. You have valuable information to share. Pick a time when you are sure you will get voice mail. That way you can leave a provocative, intriguing and interesting message ready. Get those creative juices flowing. Remember the key is to leave a message so compelling that the person will want to call you back.



Here are some common scenarios that will get your foot in the door or at least get you an ear:

A little flattery will always get you somewhere. See if you can figure out what the person would like to hear. I'm not talking making up things but if you really admire someone or have always wanted to meet them because they are a role model then say so. Tell them what you think about their success.

Offer to provide a testimonial or a reference for someone's product or service, or a dangle legitimate business lead. That will get you a return phone call.

Ask the person for an interview. Suggest that they evaluate a product or service or feature them in an upcoming article. Tell them that you need a quote from them. Remember the key is to offer them something so compelling they can't wait to get back in touch with you.

Offer a discount or a gift certificate for your services. Don't just send it in a tacky old envelope. Find something unusual to partner with it. There are hundreds of inexpensive items that you can package your certificate in to make it really special.

Last, but not least ask for someone's help. I always get the biggest response when I ask for specific feedback. For example when I am doing a presentation, I put out a call for input. People love to respond. Just ensure that it's OK to quote them and use their name, especially if it's a controversial subject.

With all of that being said, if you enjoyed this article and found that you could use a single piece of advice, then I need your help. Our articles are syndicated in several publications and we have turned them into a series of insightful CDs.

We need you to order one or more. Please use the attached order form to support our continuing



effort of providing the best career and professional development advice to the industry.

Your support enables us to speak to the future professionals. Ms. Hines donates her time speaking to school students at RIT, MSU, Emory University and Devry Technical Institute.

Your support is needed to continue these programs and services into 2005.

Best Regards,

JoAnn



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