

# businessfulcrumlimited

marketing advice and support services



## Wake up and smell the coffee

**I am no shrinking violet but I still remember the traumas around my first foray into networking. Having stepped out of corporate life the concept was pretty alien to me but I did realise that I wasn't going to get any work if the local business community didn't know I existed!**

**So that first time I dragged myself to a local pub with a big neon sign over my head that said "Nervous Networker" and...**

...was immediately made welcome by a group of local business owners who shared challenges, opportunities, business gossip and quite a few bad jokes.

There is no question that networking **works**. The reason why of course is that people buy people. So where do you find these networking opportunities? Well look up "business networking + your area" under Google and a whole host of excellent networking opportunities are likely to appear. Some of these will be hosted by organisations set up expressly to do networking events and some will be hosted by banks, by incubator offices, by hotels, by universities.

My advice to you is to go along and try them all. Nothing is wasted; this is after all marketing in the most fun way possible and probably the cheapest! Some will fulfil your need for peer support; some will provide you with tangible business opportunities. And don't just think this is for "professions" trades people do particularly well at these events.

### So some practical hints and tips:

- Avoid joining 2 people deep in conversation Look for people standing alone or adjacent but looking out into the room
- Get the handshake right – firm and not clammy please
- You think many times faster than you can talk and that makes it too easy to start talking before someone else has finished. **Don't do this**
- NEVER sell directly
- Smile

The whole point of networking is to meet as many people as possible, so don't stand in a corner with your mates. To get past any discomfort you might set yourself a goal of how many new contacts you want to meet. You might also station yourself by the tea and coffee and show people how to use yet another coffee machine designed to confuse! Whatever, take the bull by the horns, walk up to people you don't know, introduce yourself and start a conversation

Never lose sight of the main aim, don't just place the business cards you have gathered in a teetering pile. Send new contacts an e-mail saying nice to meet them, suggest a coffee to find out more about them. Ask all of them where else they network and GO FOR IT

Hampshire based Jane Buswell provides marketing services from branding to copywriting and works as a marketing mentor to those businesses that recognise they need a bit more focus and direction to build their company. Contact her via [janebuswell@businessfulcrum.co.uk](mailto:janebuswell@businessfulcrum.co.uk) or on 07970 632077 for details of her free company healthchecks and check out [www.snakesandladdersworkshop.co.uk](http://www.snakesandladdersworkshop.co.uk) for details of her **Snakes and Ladders** workshops: "Great Marketing and Follow Up", "More Sales Please" and "Dealing with Business PMT" (Procrastination, Motivation and Time Management!)

definition: fulcrum the main thing or person needed to support something or to make it work or happen.  
Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary company number 4841379 [www.businessfulcrum.co.uk](http://www.businessfulcrum.co.uk)