

Business

There are a multitude of benefits from becoming a regular, efficient networker

Possibly the greatest benefit for members of Angels Bring Business is the opportunity for them to network with other like-minded business women, but that in itself begs two questions:

► What exactly is networking?

And

► What is so great about networking?

We all know that networking is a forum for meeting others, but it is easy to overlook that it is also an opportunity to do business with the people that those you meet know, with a never ending ripple effect.

Often when people consider whether to join a business club, they consider those that they meet at the first meeting and are sometimes put off if they don't meet someone from their target market, in which case they have missed the point.

It's a mistake to assume that you know who they know. Future contacts can come from the most unlikely beginnings as well, of course, from the more obvious connections.

Angels Bring Business is there for small, medium and large businesses because the mix will be advantageous.

A sole trader may be just as influential as a board director – it depends on so many factors such as experience, the type of industry and attitude.

I am of the view that a



Face to face: Networking is an excellent tool

First Person

Wendy Spalding-Siracusa, founder of Angels Bring Business



positive attitude is best of all. Without it you will never get the best out of networking.

The word "networking" suggests hard work to score your goal. Indeed it is hard work – a lot of time and commitment.

Just like anything else worthwhile, there is no quick fix to networking.

To get the most out of a club, you need to be prepared to put in lots of effort, and very often that will be for other members, either looking out for connections for them or giving them support in another way.

I like to call that "netgiving". Again like so many other things in life, doing right by others will benefit the member in the long term; not only will they learn from the experience but the old adage "what goes around, comes around" certainly applies if you are a netgiver.

So what can you expect to gain in return for the effort you put in to the club?

To start with, it has to be an enjoyable experience, an event you look forward to going to at the end of a working day, where you will get to know others in a similar business position to yourselves and relax!

In addition to the great connections you will make over time, you will get other business support like being able to bounce ideas off others

who have been in a similar situation before you, as well as more formal training on business skills.

Networking is also a great way of marketing at a low cost. Word of mouth marketing is always the best. Of course you have to do a quality job or sell a quality product to have a successful business, but you also need to let others know what you do.

Waiting for the work to come to you isn't going to bring success in these difficult times, networking is about reaching out and spreading your sphere of influence.

It is only natural that as a member promotes their business, they will as individuals grow in stature.

That's another benefit of networking which is often overlooked or taken for granted, but it is a very big plus.

Anyone who takes up membership will undoubtedly grow more confident and more at ease giving presentations.

You have also got the opportunity to create and grow your own individual brand, that is whether you own a business or are an employee.

We all know that people buy from people, and it is therefore very important that we learn how to promote ourselves as well as the business for which we work.

Later on in the year one of our speakers will be talking on that subject of developing a personal brand.

► The next meeting of Angels Bring Business will be on August 9 at 6.30pm in Lincoln when Rod Whiting of BBC Lincolnshire will be our guest speaker.

Further details can be found at our website www.angelsbringbusiness.com or our Facebook page.

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