

Chantal Cornelius writes Scribbles, the newsletter of [Appletree Marketing](#). Here she shares her tips on Networking.

### Marketing Moments - Is Networking Right for You?

To find out how useful networking can be in helping you market your business, answer the following questions:

1. Does your business provide a service rather than a product?
2. Do some of your clients tell you they work with you because they like you as a person?
3. To help clients decide to buy from you, do you need to demonstrate what you can do for their business?
4. Do your clients go through a long decision making process before buying from you?
5. Is your service something that requires a serious investment of time and money from your clients?
6. Do you have a limited amount of time to spend on your marketing?
7. Do you like meeting people?

**Questions 1, 2, and 3** - when you provide a service, rather than a product, you are actually selling yourself and your expertise. It is a cliché, but people really do buy people. So, to encourage people to buy from you, you need to meet them. Networking is one of the most cost effective ways of meeting the number of people you need to meet. (If you sell products, networking can work if you take samples for people to see.)

**Questions 4 and 5** - the service you provide may be expensive. You may need to speak to a prospective client a number of times before they will buy. Networking gives you the opportunity to get to know people, building up their trust in you. When people trust you they are more likely to buy from you.

**Question 6** - Marketing is something every business needs to do, but time is often an issue. Networking allows you to meet many people in one place, instead of setting up numerous different meetings, at different locations.

**Question 7** - when it comes to deciding which marketing tools are best for your business, you need to focus on doing what you enjoy. If you like meeting people networking is right for you.

If you **answered 'yes' to more than four questions**, then networking is definitely for you. If you didn't then it's not right and you need to look for more cost effective ways of promoting your business.

### Words at Work - How Should You Introduce Yourself?

Once you've decided that networking is for you, you need to be really clear about how you introduce yourself. Get it wrong and you can leave people remembering you for the wrong reasons.

There are three types of introductions that often get used by networkers:

- **The list** - where you tell someone about all the things you do in your business
- **The long ramble** - where you tell someone about all the things you, who you do them for, how you do them, how much they cost and why they should work with you
- **The sales pitch** - where you try to sell your product or service to a complete stranger.

None of these works. You can't sell yourself to someone who has never met you before; they don't want to know all the minute details about your business and they certainly don't want to listen to you all night.

### **So how do you make your introduction?**

Do:

- Ask the other person what they do first, so you can tailor how you describe your business
- Be specific, concise and to the point
- Use groups of three, e.g. I write, train and speak about how businesses can grow without wasting money on marketing
- Say something unique about yourself, something you've done or a client you've helped
- Make a statement of belief. "I believe that many businesses waste money their on marketing."

Don't:

- Tell someone what you do before they have asked you
- Use acronyms that might not be understood
- Keep talking just because you don't like the sound of silence!

Plan what you're going to say when someone asks what you do and you'll make the right impression and really make networking work for you.