



Connection Pros

Title – The Incredible Power of a Smile

I have had the opportunity to write my column for the “Scottsdale Airpark News” for about two years or so. Occasionally, I would receive an e-mail from someone complimenting me on one of my articles. It doesn’t happen very often, but when it does, it’s a true pleasure for me. I’m here to tell you that July was a month filled with pleasure.

The title of July’s column was “Does Networking Really Work?” According to the number of responses I received, I’m assuming LOTS of people were wondering the same thing. I received at least six e-mails, three phone calls and two pieces of snail-mail from people saying how much they enjoyed the article. This response was not only a serious boost for my ego but it also confirmed my discovery about the current state of networking. Now that we have finally identified that things need to change, let’s start making those changes right now.

Last month, I ended my column by saying that the only way to really succeed in meeting and connecting with others is by making first contact. What I mean is that you need to be the one to start approaching people and introducing yourself instead of standing on the sideline waiting for people to approach you. However, to say this to you is kind of like saying you should eat more vegetables and get more exercise. You know you should be doing it but don’t.

Since I know that walking up to a total stranger is a major challenge for many of you, allow me to share with you the first of three important parts of this initial introduction. No, one of them is not a killer 30-second “elevator speech.” For years, people have always asked me to help write a great introduction for them so they can walk up to people, give them their 30-second pitch, and make the connection. While I believe the proper introduction can help engage people into a great conversation, it’s more of who you are and the impression you make on people that helps create the most connections.

The first and most important step to approaching new people is to have a great smile. Some of us can do this naturally but this can be a challenge for other people. I don’t care if you are the biggest sourpuss in the world, anyone can conjure up a good smile when they need to.

Have you ever wondered why a smile is so powerful? It’s just a small facial expression that is caused by the upturning of your lips and the displaying of many of your teeth. However, it’s so much more.

1) Smiles show friendship – it is kind of like a peace offering for the new people you are meeting. It shows them that you are friendly and warm and have a desire to meet them.

2) Smiles make new friends – This is a universally known symbol of kindness. All over the world, the smile is used to create the beginning of so many relationships.

3) Smiles make other people's day brighter – Think about the people you know that always have a smile on their face. We typically feel happier when we see them.

4) Smiles improve your day – Try this little experiment. The next time you are having a bad day, unclench your jaws for a while and smile. I guarantee that you will start to feel much better.



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5) Smiles look better than a frown – This idea is so obvious, but to prove my point, walk around your office or take a look around the next restaurant you go to and see how much better a smile looks instead of a frown.

6) Smiles put others at ease – When meeting people for the first time, the best way to create connections is to do what you can to help make the other people feel more comfortable.

7) Smiles are always enjoyable to give and receive – Plain and simple, smiling just makes us feel good and it will always make others feel good, too.

8) Smiles leave favorable impressions – As you all know, you only have one chance to make a great first impression. A smile will help you make this possible.

9) Smiles make you look happy, confident, and self-assured – People want to be associated with people who are happy, confident, and self-assured. Smile more often and people will want to meet you.

10) Smiles can be the start of a lifetime relationship – AHH, the best one for last. All great relationships must have a starting point. In most cases, that starting point is always a great smile.

If you want to meet more people, make more connections, be more successful and enjoy a happier and healthier life overall, wipe that scowl off of your face and start smiling more. You will look better, feel better, and best of all, people will start warming up to you more often and more quickly. See you next month.