

# Connection Pros

Title – A Major Shift for The Networking Guy

For the past five years, I have been known as The Networking Guy and my company was called Networking U. I've developed a great reputation as someone who can help people learn how to network more effectively, more comfortably, and more profitably. My involvement with ten different Chambers of Commerce around the Valley has allowed me the pleasure of impacting thousands of people by showing them a new way to network. I'm writing you this month to tell you that all of that is about to change.

As of August 1st, Networking U will be known as Connection Pros. While I will always be known as The Networking Guy, just as I have been known in the past as The Cap Guy and The Cookie Guy, you will start seeing my name without the networking title. I will continue to have major involvement with Chambers of Commerce, especially the Phoenix Chamber, and I will continue to speak and train in the Valley as often as possible.

Before you start questioning my sanity about moving away from a topic and a brand that I've spent over five years developing, allow me to explain how this shift came about.

For the past few years, I'd walk out of programs at which I've spoken and, while I knew I did a great job and the scores on my evaluations were always high, I had this nagging feeling that people just weren't getting it. I would spend hours with people, giving them all the tips and tools that I felt were necessary to become a better networker and, in the end, I always questioned if they were taking away the right message. It would have been easy to say, "Hey, if I'm presenting the right material and they're not getting it, it's their problem, not mine." However, you'll know that I never thought that was the case.

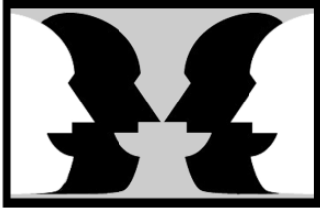
My message has always been to help others before asking people to help you. I will preach this message until the day I drop, but I started to recognize that people were having serious problems helping people that they'd just met. This problem was caused by people rushing from initial introduction to relationship development in 7.9 seconds. If people understood that it takes longer than one initial meeting with people to create a REAL connection, they would spend much less time talking about their businesses, handing out a lot fewer business cards, and annoying fewer people.

What Connection Pros allows us to do is spend our time helping people to learn the skills and the tools for creating connections with others. Just like networking, creating connections is a learned skill. We plan on offering comprehensive and cutting edge assessment tools to help determine all the roadblocks that might be getting in people's way to creating more connections. These connections can be between salespeople and their clients, management and their staff, employers and their employees, as well as people and themselves. Once we identify the specific issues, we can start working with individuals and companies to help them overcome these obstacles and start making REAL connections that count.

Before I'm accused of making this month's column an advertorial, allow me to give you one tip that can help you start making more connections today.

So many times, I'll be attending a business function and I see people standing off to the sides of the event, either not talking to anyone or talking to people they already know. While their level of comfort might be very high, their chances of making any real connections are severely limited. If you happen to be one of these people, you must understand that you are allowing other people to determine the success or failure of the event for you. If you are waiting for people to approach you and attempt to make connections with you, **YOU'RE FOOLING YOURSELF!!** Ninety percent of people attending business functions are so nervous and uncomfortable that the idea of approaching total strangers in an attempt to make a connection is incomprehensible.

The only way you can take responsibility for your own success at a business event is to **MAKE FIRST CONTACT**. That's right, folks!! I'm suggesting that **YOU** be the one to walk up to a **TOTAL** stranger and say hello. In the beginning, it will be very hard for you so take it slow. Make small goals for yourself that you know you can achieve but will still pull you out of



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your normal comfort zone. Try to approach one new person at each of the first three events you attend. Once you get more comfortable, approach two people at each event. The more times you make first contact, the easier it will become for you.

This month's column is just the beginning of incredible things to come. Keep your eyes and ears open for new topics, new activities, and new products coming to you from Connection Pros. See you next month.