



E N T E R P R I S E S

ABCs of Power Networking!

Valerie J. Lyons, LMHC, CRC, CPC

A: Awareness. Are you aware of your impact on others? When people compliment you or acknowledge you for your skills, gifts or talents, do you own it, or do you minimize it? A Power Networker lives in their greatness with humility, grace and confidence!

B: Brand. What makes you unique? What do you stand for? What do you value? What problem are you solving? What do you want people to know about you or say about you when you are not present? A Power Networker leaves a positive impression about themselves with others and creates a space where people feel heard, understood and supported.

C: Collaborate. Power networking is a collaboration between two or more people. It is not a one-sided activity where one person is out to "get something" (i.e. job lead/opportunity) from someone else. In collaborating with another, there is an opportunity to explore multiple needs and identify multiple ways to meet those needs. A Power Networker seeks to create partnerships that can be nurtured over time.

D: Dare to step outside your comfort zone. Dare to take a risk. Dare to Dream Big! Dare to approach someone you've wanted to talk to about a job or career opportunity but have resisted to do so because of fear of rejection. A Power Networker takes action and is not afraid to be afraid! Transformation lives in action!

E: Expand your network. Are there organizations that you can join for personal and professional development? Are there social media tools like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram that you can fully utilize? Is there a particular industry that you want to learn about? Are there informational interviews you can schedule to get to know people of influence? A Power Networker recognizes there are multiple ways to build a powerful network and is eager to learn new, innovative and creative ways to expand their network!

F: Fun. Ease up and don't take yourself so seriously! Make a game out of networking! Who is down to play the smile game? The next time you attend a networking event, smile at everyone you make eye contact with. You get 5 points for every smile you get back. You get 10 points for a "hello". You get 20 points if the conversation results in a business card/phone number exchange. You get 50 points if that conversation leads to a meeting or a date for those interested in meeting someone special! A Power Networker finds pleasure in making connections with others and sees play as a powerful way to demonstrate vulnerability and humility.

G: Giving. Networking is as much about giving as it is about receiving. When you are actively networking, you are bound to come across job leads, opportunities, and information that others will benefit from. Spread the word and share the wealth! Universal law is in effect when you give. Inevitably you will be blessed! A Power Networker networks for all!

H: Habit. Get in the habit of sharing your interests, goals, dreams and vision for your life with others. If you are keeping your goals and plans for your life to yourself and you're having a "conversation" in your head, you are not creating the opportunity for those dreams to come true in the world! Power Networkers practice sharing who they are and what they are committed to so that it manifests in the world!

I: Intention. Putting intention into your networking activity allows you to focus on what you are committed to no matter what! You may not feel motivated...so what! You may feel discouraged. That doesn't stop you from pursuing your goals. Your circumstances, fears and considerations don't dictate to you how things are going to go! You do! A Power Networker is grounded in their intention. They take the actions that support their commitment and that's that!

J: Journalize. Whether you are networking using technology or you have a face to face encounter, memorialize your interaction. Jot down the nature and outcome of the interaction. Did an employer request that you follow up in two weeks? Did you have a conversation with a potential partner to collaborate on a particular business activity? A Power Networker actively listens for opportunities and memorializes that information.

K: Knowledge. Information gathering is key to power networking. What information can you access to expand your knowledge about your career? Are you researching industry trends or social media platforms that you can utilize to enhance your networking skills? Do you want to know how to meet and attract key people like Mentors, Accountability Partners and Prayer Warriors? Power Networkers are life learners. We know there is always more to know, and we take action to build our knowledge base.

L: Listen. Active listening skills is key to Power Networking. Listening for what's important to another; listening for what's missing (i.e. cohesive team, trained staff, employees who take initiative, someone the employer can count on, etc.), "Listening" to body language. Power Networkers "listen" with their ears, eyes and heart!

M: Miracle. Power Networking brings forth the Miracle of Abundance! The more people you connect with, the more likely it is that you will access a greater number of opportunities and leads. Your blessings are also multiplied through the generous act of giving and ensuring that others fulfill their dreams and passion! Power Networkers know that miracles live in the sharing between one and another!

N: Now. You don't want to wait until you are in a crisis situation to begin Networking. You want to always be networking (ABN!). Like, right now! In the past, you may have had negative experiences with networking. Maybe you didn't get support from someone who you thought could have written a recommendation letter for you or maybe you were not well received by an employer during an informational interview. Don't allow these past experiences to deter you from doing what you must do now! Power Networkers focus on being in the present, leaving the past in the past and recognizing that life is happening now!

O: Outcome. Prior to engaging in a networking activity, be clear and committed to a specific outcome without being attached to it! Do you want to build long-lasting relationships? Are you interested in sharing information about yourself and/or others? Are you committed to scheduling meetings with influencers? At the end of the day, assess whether you've achieved what you set out to accomplish. What went well? What can you improve upon? What were the lessons learned? What can you do differently next time? Power Networkers recognize that not being attached to a desired outcome has us take actions that are bolder than we even thought possible!

P: Preparation. The preparation required for effective networking includes having the ability to powerfully be with a "Yes" or a "No". With a "Yes" comes a commitment to back up everything you promised a potential employer: having a great attitude, working well on a team, being reliable, taking initiative, going above and beyond the call of duty. Being prepared for a "No" calls for a strong sense of who you are; Not taking things personally, not interpreting a No to mean, I'm not worthy, I'm never going to get a job. (You know how we can take it there!) A Power Networker is prepared to manage whatever response comes their way. A NO truly means what's the "Next Opportunity!"

Q: Quality. When networking, it's important to take note of the quality of your presentation. Is your attire professional? Do you feel like a million bucks? Are you comfortable with the way in which you present yourself? Can you communicate who you are without saying "umm", "you know", "like"; Have you assessed the quality of the questions you plan to ask the hiring manager? (i.e. Do your questions reflect an interest in understanding who this person is and what's important to them? Are you asking open ended questions?) Power Networkers focus on quality not necessarily the quantity!

R: Resilience. When networking, you will experience ups and downs. It's the "downs" that sometime stops us in our tracks. The networking event you were looking forward to attending gets cancelled. You make an amazing pitch to a potential client and you don't get hired. You notice a huge error on your business card and as a result you are reluctant to hand it out. A Power Networker finds ways to go under, above or around the roadblocks to success. Power Networkers know that resilience breeds results!

S: Self talk. What messages do we tell ourselves about our worth, our goals, our desires? Some of the things we say about ourselves is so negative, we would be embarrassed to share these thoughts with those closest to us. Our internal dialog can do a number on us! And these thoughts are lies! Empowering self-talk is birthed in empowering conversations and by engaging in empowering activities that ultimately have us take powerful actions. Power Networkers accept that our internal dialogue is like a machine! It has no soul or spirit! And therefore, no truth!

T: Team. Networking does not have to be a solo act! Build a team of support around you. Your team could include a Mentor, an Accountability Partner, or an Industry Expert, just to name a few. Recruiting others to support you in your networking activities can provide you with a positive and productive networking experience. Your Team will help you stay focused and on track, recommend actions that you may not have thought about taking, offer valuable information and/or resources and cheer you on! Power Networkers build Success Teams and benefit from their generosity, insight and amazing contribution!

U: Universe. The Universe provides! Even though we may not "see" it right away, we can manifest our dreams and goals! What actions are we taking to support our desires, wants and commitments? What supports do we have in place to empower us and hold us to account? The Universe awaits! Power Networkers recognize that the Universe lovingly holds all our wants and desires. These blessings manifest in the powerful actions that we take!

V: Vulnerability. Are you uncomfortable with "letting people in"? Are you overly concerned with "doing it right"? Do you feel you have to project a certain image to "get respect"? Effective networking calls for some degree of transparency and vulnerability. People hire people who they like! Power Networkers see vulnerability as a powerful way to forge bonds.

W: Win. Often when we think about our "wins", we believe it has to be some huge achievement. We landed a job. We got an article published. We earned a graduate degree. Wins are subjective. A win can be making a call to someone you've been reluctant to reach out to. Or it could be creating a to do list and completing it. Or how about putting an appointment in your calendar as opposed to trying to remember it! Power Networkers look for the "small" and the "big" wins in every situation!

X: X Factor. The X factor is hard to describe because it's an energy! That special somethin' somethin' that stands out about a person. The X Factor conveys: "I'm special", "I'm gifted", "I will give you more than you bargained for", "I am who you are looking for". Power Networkers seek to tap into, hone and promote their "X Factor" and seek this unique quality in others!

Y: Yesssss!, Yipeeee! Yaaaaaay! Acknowledge and celebrate at least 1 thing every day! You woke up and got out of bed! Someone said something off the wall to you and you did not lose your ever-loving mind! You laughed so hard at a joke that tears came to your eyes. You've been contemplating exploring career options and now you are ready to start the process of job seeking! A Power Networker looks for opportunities to cheer themselves on! Yesssss! Yaaaaaay! Yipeeeee!

Z: Zig Zag. Our lives unfold in a zig zag pattern. We take steps that have us move forward, backwards and from side to side! Don't let the zig zag fool you into believing that you're not making progress! There is an amazing breakthrough at the end of every "wrong" turn! Power Networkers go along for the ride knowing that as long as we are in action, standing inside our commitment to achieve, our breakthrough will be waiting for us with open arms!