Building Relationships: How to Kick Them Off and How to Maintain Them
Barbara Shuck, FSMPS, CPSM

I hate sales!!!!!
I don’t like small talk.
I am uncomfortable taking to strangers.
Did you hear me? I hate sales?
I’m not chatty.
I don’t know what to talk about.
Are you deaf? I HATE SALES!!!

What’s hard about starting professional relationships?
It’s easy

PREPARE WELL  BE CURIOUS  BUILD VALUE

Barbara Shuck, FSMPS, CPSM

Architecture/engineering/construction industry veteran
BA – Journalism & French
MBA – International Marketing
Strategy | Persuasion | Clarity
Ambivert
Why client relationships matter

- Reputation
- Referrals
- Trust
- Respect

$\text{Know Respect}$

Starting points
( alongside or on your own)

- Project Meetings
- Company events (hospitality suites, open houses, etc.)
- Conferences (trade show booth)
- Organization luncheons
- Lunch & Learns
- One-on-one meetings
- One-on-one lunches
Prepare Well

Do your research

- Study their business
- Understand their clients and employees
- Online research
  - Websites
  - Social Media
  - LinkedIn
- Events
  - Who will be attending?
Warm up the connection

- *No one* likes the cold call
- Ask for an introduction
- Use your networks! (Hint: NAWIC...)

Clean up

- First impressions count
  - Clean and pressed attire
  - Brush your teeth
  - Grab a breath mint
  - Check for spinach
- Business cards
- Hold off on the brochures
Be curious.  
(Hint: It’s all about them.)

Extend a warm greeting

- Start with eye contact
- Firm handshake or elbow bump
- Ease into the discussion (small talk)
Ask questions

- Weather
- Sports
- Entertainment (movies, books, local restaurants, music, TV shows)
- Food
- Work
- Hobbies
- News & current events (stay away from controversial news or politics)
- Family
- Travel

Conversation Starters

- It's a nice day, don't you think? I thought it would rain.
- Looks like you brought the beautiful weather with you.
- Can you believe how cold it is? I thought this was supposed to be spring!
- Is the weather here much different from where you grew up?
- What climate do you prefer? Why?
- If you could live anywhere based entirely on the weather, where would you live?
- So, are you a sports fan?
- Did you watch the game last night?
Conversation Starters

- What's your favorite dish at your favorite restaurant?
- What do you love to cook?
- What skill do you most often use in your work?
- What is your favorite aspect of your job?
- What is the most recent new hobby or interest that you've tried?
- Do you have any children?
- Where is your family from?
- What's the best vacation you've ever had?

Interesting Questions (IQ)

- What is going great in your life right now?
- What is the weirdest thing that has happened to you lately?
- What were you like in high school?
- What was your first job?
- What is the best advice you've ever gotten?
- Which app on your phone do you use the most often?
- What's a movie you didn't enjoy that everyone else loved and vice versa?
- What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?
- What's your guilty pleasure?
Interesting Questions (IQ)

- If you could talk to anyone in the world, living or dead, who would it be and why?
- Are you more of an introvert or an extrovert? What preferences make you one or the other?
- I noticed that you ____. Tell me more about it.
- What made you decide on a career in __________?
- Do you have any pets? If so, what kind? If not, why not?
- What is your biggest pet peeve?

80/20

- They talk 80%. You talk 20%.
- Follow up with conversation extenders.
  - Tell me more.
  - And then...
  - So, you (repeat what they said)
  - Uh-huh
  - Keep going....
  - Wow!
  - Cool!
- Share stories & examples, not facts and figures
- Next step
  - How often to stay in touch?
Build value

Thank them for their time

- Text
- Email
- *Handwritten note*
- Tailor materials to them
- Remember what they care about.
Stay in touch

- Initiate “touches’ to show them you value them.
- Go beyond the transaction.
- Share interesting news and information for their interest, not yours.
- Make an introduction.

Go beyond maintain

- Show them their business matters to you.
- Address their problems.
- Be obsessed with their success.
Don’t maintain. *Protect.*

Building and maintaining *protecting* client relationships is easy when you focus on them, not you.

Thank you
Barbara@everestmarketingservices.com
602.686.4616