

The 29% Solution

Ivan R. Misner and Michelle R. Donovan

Ivan Misner is well known as the founder of Business Networking International so it should come as no surprise to find that together with Michelle Donovan he has pulled together a solid book on how to improve your networking skills.

The authors take issue with the popular “wisdom” that we are all connect by six degrees of separation. Instead, they argue that only 29% -- hence the book’s title – of us are this well connected.

The book is broken up in to 52 tips (one for each week) related to networking, ten key traits that successful networkers possess, and ten key questions that successful networkers ask.

Taking the time to review the tips, traits, and questions would be a wise investment of your time.

52 Weekly Tips:

1. Set Networking Goals
2. Block Out Time to Network
3. Profile Your Preferred Client
4. Recruit Your Word-of-Mouth Marketing Team
5. Give to Others First
6. Create a Network Relationships Database
7. Master the Top Ten Traits
8. Diversify Your Contacts
9. Meet the RIGHT People
10. Reconnect with People from the Past
11. Talk to Your Family
12. Stop Being a Cave Dweller
13. Join a Web-Based Networking Group
14. Become Magnetic
15. Be a Value-Added Friend
16. Become a Catalyst
17. Find an Accountability Partner
18. Volunteer and Become Visible
19. Send a Thank-You Card
20. Follow Up TODA
21. Be “ON” 24/7
22. Learn to Play Golf or Something
23. Have Purposeful First Meetings

24. Make First Impressions Count
25. Seek Out a Referral Networking Group
26. Join a Chamber of Commerce
27. Sponsor Select Events
28. Host a Purposeful Event
29. Ask Your Own Questions
30. Talk About Benefits, Not Features
31. Become a Profiler for Your Business
32. Become a Motivational Speaker for Your Business
33. Leverage Your Smallest Billboard
34. Give a High-Value Presentation
35. Create an Informative Newsletter
36. Write a Press Release
37. Write Your Own Identity
38. Ask for Written Testimonials
39. Write Down Two Success Stories
40. Write a Personal Introduction
41. Toot Your Own Horn
42. Ask for Feedback
43. Adopt a Host Mentality
44. Follow the Money Trail
45. Write a Letter of Support
46. Ask for Referrals
47. Read the Paper, with Referral Intent
48. Conquer Your Fear of Public Speaking
49. Become the Hub Firm of a Power Team
50. Become a Networking Mentor
51. Recruit an Advisory Board for Your Business
52. Commit to Lifelong Learning

Ten Key Traits

1. Timely follow up on referrals
2. Positive attitude
3. Enthusiasm/motivation
4. Trustworthiness
5. Good listening skills
6. Commitment to networking 24/7
7. Gratitude

8. Helpfulness
9. Sincerity
10. Dedicated to working one's network

Ten Key Questions To Ask

1. What do you do?
2. Who's your target market?
3. What do you like most about what you do?
4. What's new in your business?
5. What's the biggest challenge in your business?
6. What sets you apart from your competition?
7. Why did you start your business?
8. Where is your business located?
9. What's your most popular product?
10. How do you generate most of your business?