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Headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA, Sherpa Coaching is home to world-leading educators and researchers in executive coaching. We have trained and certified executive coaches since 2004. We provide coaching services through a global network, and offer workshops and training programs to refine leadership skills.

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Networking Nirvana
by Patricia Gardner

How do you get the most out of your network? Three simple steps: Get up. Show up. Follow up. When it comes to success in your career, opening yourself up to opportunity is half the battle. The simple act of allowing yourself a chance to ‘network’ will result in plentiful opportunities. Never underestimate the value of showing up, being friendly, and building rapport.

These three keys will take you to the next level of networking:

1. Get Up
Networking is really about your mind-set. Developing your ability to realize opportunities is fundamental to building alliances, finding clients, and becoming a success. Start every day with the purpose of recognizing opportunities and you will find more than you can imagine. Remember that networking is ‘all about them’ – not you – and you will be well prepared to begin seizing every opportunity that arises. Start every day with a positive and purposeful attitude and you will be well on your way to success.

2. Show Up
Don’t just network at the Chamber of Commerce meetings, or the obvious, convenient places. Challenge yourself to take the ‘Show Up’ aspect seriously by finding new places to explore opportunity, outside of your company and within it. Explore every avenue available to you. The old saying: “If you want to catch fish, go to the river.” is still true. If you want to mingle with a certain kind of person, go to seminars and special events designed for those people – they are everywhere.

Don’t overlook the assets sitting right on your own front porch. Consider people within your own group of friends or family by networking. Let’s say you have been trying for months to ‘get in the door’ at ABC Company with no success. One day, while chatting over tea with your tennis partner, you find out that her brother-in-law is their VP of Purchasing. Finding this opportunity could result in some serious business for you.

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3. Follow Up

Once you’ve seized the opportunity to network, it is your responsibility to turn potential into reality. Don’t drop the ball late in the game. Take the time to understand the appropriate way to follow through with your contacts. Remember that speed and commitment are the keys. Be clear about your position, your needs, and what opportunities exist for a mutually beneficial relationship. Set up a meeting immediately to lock down the details and pursue your professional relationship.

By greeting each day with the right attitude, being available at every opportunity to network, and following up with an assertive proposal, you can guarantee that success is in your hands. Work with these three simple keys in mind and you can be sure that no opportunity will slip through your fingers.

Patricia Gardner is the Director of Executive Programs at Sherpa Coaching, and author of: The Million Dollar Sale (McGraw-Hill). She can be reached at (513) 232-0002, or at pat@sherpacoaching.com.