

# *Networking After the Event*



March 2024

We had a great turnout for our first session of Networking at Noon for the 2024 season. Thanks to all who attended. Keep track of the Chamber calendar and communications with information for the next event in this series.

In-person networking with the opportunity to exchange business cards and make a direct connection is one of the most popular forms of networking. Equally important and not to be forgotten is networking after the event.

Attending a networking event is just the first step to building and expanding your circle of connections. One of the most common mistakes networkers make is taking the steps to continue their conversations after the event. Follow-up and follow through are becoming even more important with the addition of virtual networking opportunities.

Here are a few tips to continue your conversations and keep building your network and relationships.

## **Send A Note**

Start with a follow-up email soon after the event while it is still top of mind. Do not be too aggressive – sending this the day after the event is perfectly acceptable. Hopefully, you took some good notes during the event, so you have something to reference specifically about them and their business in your follow-up. Handwritten note cards are a great touch! We are all buried in email and who does not like getting something unexpected in the regular mail.

### **Connect on LinkedIn**

Connect with your new contacts on LinkedIn. In your invite be sure to include a note that says how nice it was meeting them and reference the name of the event. Be careful about asking for connections and introductions too soon. You do not want it to appear that you only want access to their connections.

### **Meet for Coffee**

Offer to meet for coffee. Pick a spot that is convenient for your new connection. No more than 45 minutes to an hour – you do not want to take up too much of their time. Reference something about their business that you would like to learn more about. When it is time to pay the bill if you extended the invitation you should pick up the tab.

### **It is Not All About You**

Networking is a two-way street. To earn a referral or business opportunity you must be ready, willing, and able to share a referral or business opportunity. Remember not to dominate your conversations and let new connections tell you about themselves, their business, and what an ideal customer looks like for them.

### **It Takes Time**

Networking takes time and rarely do you pick up your next big sale at the event. You might never do business with some of these new connections and that is ok. You want them to know you, like you, and trust you enough so they will connect you with someone in their networking circle as a business opportunity. Patience is key to quality networking.

### **Invite Them to Another Networking Event**

Invite them to attend another networking group or event with you as a guest if you think it would be beneficial for them. We are all networkers and helping each other is what we do.