

Marketing and Networking For Success: A Heart Centered Approach

**By
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“You may not think that the world needs you, but it does. For you are unique, like no one that has ever been before or will come after. No one can speak your voice, say your piece, smile your smile or shine your light. No one can take your place for it is yours alone to fill. If you are not there to shine your light who knows how many travelers will lose their way as they try to pass by your empty place in the darkness.” Lawrence & Hazel Mahar.

Truly successful marketing and networking of yourself and your business always begins at the causal level, from your true core self, from your heart-center. I began realizing the value of this heart-centered approach to marketing and networking as I looked back over the successes I have had in my professional career over the past 12+ years. I have an extensive background in sales, marketing, and management and have developed and flourished in my own international network marketing business over the last 9 years. Having an undergraduate degree in Behavioral Sciences and Masters in Organization and Management has been an important part in my integrating the personal/psychological aspects of self and leadership with a more business and practical approach. This avenue also has a significant impact on my career as a speaker and coach. However, I attribute the foundation of my success in my professional livelihood to my heart-centered approach.

A heart-centered approach to marketing, networking, management and business in general first starts with knowing, accessing and utilizing the essence, energy, and inner spirit of who you are - your heart center. In referring to the diagram you will see that purpose and personal mission starts first with the uniqueness of spirit and internal radiance that we each are able to contribute to our lives and work. The key word here is contribute. I have always come from a contribution mode as opposed to a survival mode. This applies particularly to marketing and sharing your talents, services, and abilities as well as establishing relationships as you are networking to expand your business. An attitude of contribution involves “What can I bring/give to my customer or client?” as opposed to an attitude of survival which is “What can I get from my client/customer?” or “I need something from them so I can survive or achieve the success that I want.” The focus shifts from taking for the benefit of self to giving for the benefit of the other.

As a personal and business coach, I have worked with many individuals by assisting them in marketing their businesses. First we start out by identifying, building on and experiencing the uniqueness of who that individual is at the core and how they wish to express this in their work. This usually involves exploring, then deciding, what their personal and professional mission is. Then we replace the word sell or sales with the word share. For many individuals, sales involves imposing on another. It can have a

negative connotation to the giver and receiver. Sharing who you uniquely are is bringing your passion and purpose to another's life and enhancing their experience through your service, product and relationship with them.

As you develop professional relationships through networking, (for that is all networking is - relationship building), you can establish a collaborative effort that is cooperative. This means both parties can benefit by sharing resources, contacts ideas, and so on. When we all begin to realize that we are each one of a kind and have our own special gifts to give the world, the illusion of competition, (that there is not enough to go around), will be eliminated or diminished. From this perspective, there is an attitude of celebrating and sharing our talents with colleagues and clients as opposed to withholding from one another based on the belief in lack. This is a win-win approach to marketing and networking. Everyone benefits by the mere fact that we are expressing from our hearts our true inner essence, regardless of the outcome of the "sale". I built my business this way. I was unattached to any specific outcome and my main focus was on the giving because I loved what I was doing and knew that I had a service/product that could benefit them. The result was abundant success, satisfied staff, customers and clients and an expansive referral base. My business began to grow and in a sense market itself because of the energy and intention from my heart.

There can be an ongoing flow from the heart-center to the more practical/tangible aspects of marketing and networking. The diagram shows how the intention of self and service stems from the heart and radiates through spirit to the what, who, when and where, and how of expanding your business. The arrows indicate that each of these aspects are interconnected. The "what" includes identifying clearly your service or product, developing a professional mission statement which can stem from your personal mission. The purpose of your business is often part of your unique expression and intentions for your self.

The "who" is the client/customer and this often involves identifying who your market niche is. The who is also the network of colleagues and contacts where a mutual referral system can be set up. At times I have bartered my services with other colleagues where we assist one another in growing our companies. The important thing is to focus on the people you are servicing and their needs. So many focus on "what are my needs?" As you service and provide for another you naturally take care of yourself without effort as the client is more apt to use your expertise.

The "how" involves marketing and promotional tools and materials. Don't be afraid to be who you are and express that in a creative way that is targeted towards your market niche. Be who you are, not who you think you should be based on others' standards. Take the needs of your client into consideration while integrating your originality and mission into your materials. These can always change as you and your customers grow and develop. The "how" also includes networking from a perspective of collaboration and cooperation instead of competition. This can truly be a win for all involved.

The "when" and "where" to marketing and networking include expressing with enthusiasm who you are and what you do at any time, should you feel inspired to do so. Remember, you get what you give and whether you are a member of an organization, networking group, committee or entrepreneur, the intention and heart-centered approach will make all the difference to your level of success.

An important factor to remember is to have fun. This is a process of discovering through time and experiences who you are and what your unique contribution is to the world and people in your life. This is an ever-changing world we live in and each of us is continually evolving personally, professionally and spiritually in our own special way. This process is not always easy and with the pressures and challenges we often face, it can be difficult to stay centered in our heart and spirit.

In summary:

1. Describe your personal and professional mission.
2. Replace the word "sell" with the word "share"
3. Decide how you can share your unique gifts with others
4. Develop collaborative, win-win relationships with colleagues and clients
5. Express yourself from your heart and remain unattached to outcomes
6. Define who your market niche is
7. Create a mutual referral network with colleagues and friends
8. Express your uniqueness in your promotional materials
9. Share your enthusiasm for your product or services whenever you feel inspired to do so.
10. Remember that you get what you give
11. Have fun and enjoy a sense of discovering your unique contribution!

This approach to business is a new paradigm for many but the willingness to shift perspective and approach can be rewarding on many levels for those who have the courage and intention to serve from their heart, purpose and passion. There is one thing I am certain of based on my own journey, and that is that we are each here for a specific purpose, there are no accidents. To the extent that I allow my inner spirit and essence to shine, I not only bring light to my own world but to all those I come in contact with. It is my divine birthright and responsibility, one I gladly cultivate and share!

“You are here for a purpose. There is no duplicate of you in the whole world. There has never been, there never will be. You were brought here now to fulfill a certain need. Take time to think that over.”

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