

S A ' s • M o s t • I n f l u e n t i a l

WOMEN

i n • B u s i n e s s • a n d • G o v e r n m e n t

*what I know now...
that I didn't know then
from beauty queen
to corporate executive
businesswoman take a break
immediately!*

Women leadership
a recipe for ongoing

BUSINESS

resilience

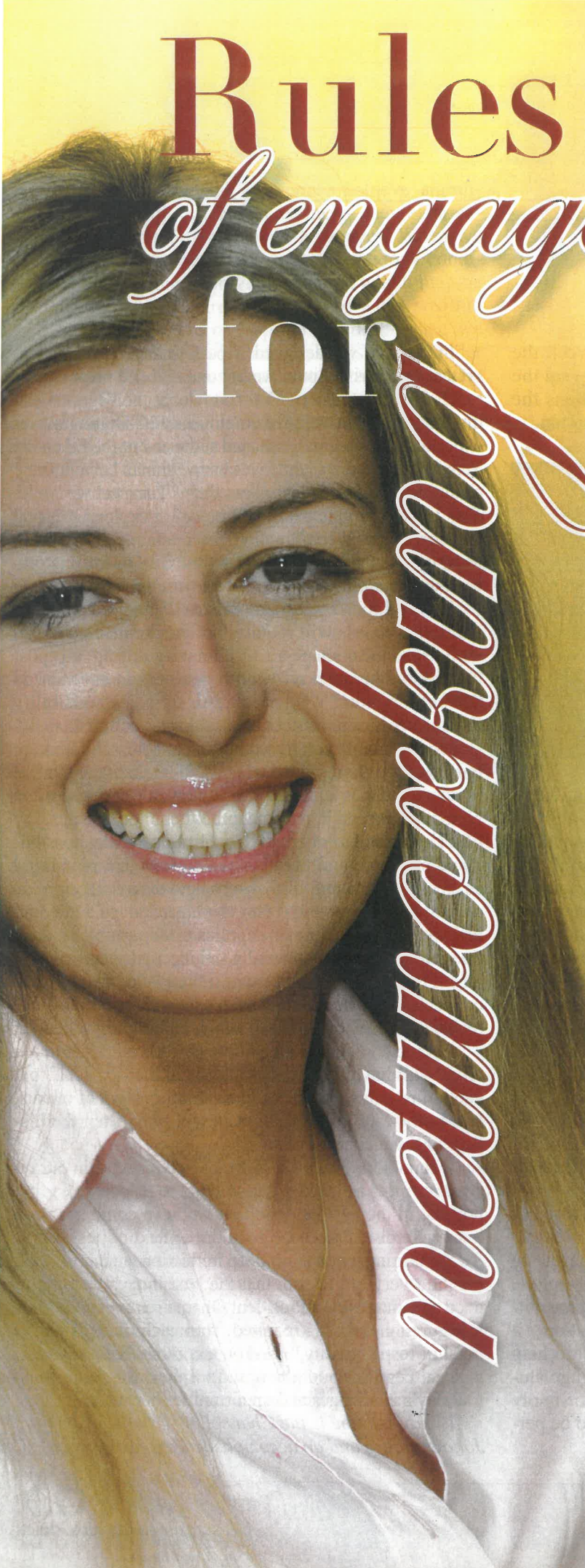


expand your business horizons



celebrating excellence in organisations

cec



Rules *of engagement* for *networking*

Networking is simply connecting with people of like interests for the purpose of uncovering opportunities, increasing knowledge or sharing information. More simply, it's getting to know people and building relationships. Many people are afraid of networking, but the truth is, we network every day – with our family, our work colleagues and at social events.

Over 70% of new business is gained through word of mouth and therefore networking should be an integral part of the marketing strategy of every company that is serious about doing business.

While identifying new business opportunities, networking allows you to share ideas, experience good practice, meet inspirational people or even role models, combat isolation by making new contacts, increase your confidence and self-esteem and build long-term relationships. In the early stages of business it is easy to suddenly become isolated and lose touch with what is happening around you – therefore missing out on opportunities that could be vital to your business.

The art of networking, networking techniques or effective networking... it seems that everyone is searching for the answer to this well-kept secret. Effective networking comes with practice and as long as you have done some preparation (e.g. develop some questions, a short snappy introduction and remember to take your business cards), and learn to relax, you will find, with practice, that the rest comes naturally.

Tips to help you make the most of networking

Planning

- ▶ Choose carefully the events you go to.
- ▶ If possible obtain a guest list in advance or have an idea of who will be attending.
- ▶ Firstly determine why you are attending the event – for information purposes and networking; or specifically networking.

Connecting/respecting:

- ▶ Treat everyone the same and never make assumptions about the people you meet.
- ▶ If you are not very confident try not to attach yourself to the first person you get speaking to. Remember the person you are talking to, while they might be enjoying your company, probably want to be able to chat to one or two other people as well.

Listen

- ▶ Listen to what other people do first (everyone is interested if you're interested in them) and listen for link words that connect with who you are and what you do.

Talking

- ▶ Keep conversation to neutral topics and avoid monopolising the conversation. Ask questions that require more than yes/no answers.
- ▶ You will create a better first impression if you deliberately copy the pace and volume of the person you are speaking to.

Don't ask, offer!

- ▶ Offer information and contacts to match the links. It provides a reason for follow-up and staying in contact.

To drink or not to drink?

- ▶ Generally, you need a clear head so moderation is the key. Yes it can help confidence but can give others a negative impression.

From familiar to unfamiliar

- ▶ For every person you meet and every hour you spend with them, they will be an ambassador for you and make another 10 recommendations on your behalf

Take notes

- ▶ As a memory aid it can often be useful to make notes about a person on the back of their business card.

Follow up

- ▶ Follow up with people you have met (recap on your notes on business cards, add useful contacts to your database).

Finally

- ▶ If you have tried all the tips and you still don't feel comfortable try again! Practice makes perfect.

Rules of Engagement

Beyond Outsourcing is at the forefront in developing strategic alliances with clients to transform performance in the operational execution of business strategic objectives. Through the deployment of world-class toolkits – generic scalable business processes, enabled by people and identifying value adding technology, we implement measurable, sustainable performance improvements within a specifically identified business unit through to the whole business.

Suzanne Ravenall is the CEO and founder of Beyond Outsourcing, a company establishing a bridge between valuable strategic expertise, and even more valuable implementation of that expert advice through implementation and the provision of ongoing operational outsourcing/co-sourcing services on a long-term basis.

With this, Beyond Outsourcing operates in an environment that is fast-paced information, and the quality of that information must be 100% at all times. There are no auto-pilots for this organisation! Engagement, participation and assigning themselves to be fully present in meetings and the multiple appointments they have. Beyond Outsourcing believes that when an appointment time and date are agreed to, you must be on time, so the meeting can start on time and not keep peers waiting. In addition it is important to always respect the attention of peers and vice versa. To be prepared means come prepared.

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Tips of Business Engagement:

- ▶ Always have a pen and paper for note-taking.
- ▶ First, you respect others who are giving you information by acknowledging it, and secondly you're expected to capture it, and follow-up. Forgetting is not an option.
- ▶ Whatever your role is, you're expected to be the expert in that role. Own it, and don't be shy about it. Stake your claim proudly.
- ▶ When you say you'll follow-up on something, do. If it's not going to happen, say so. People lose confidence or it could impact on their deliverables when you sweep stuff under the rug.
- ▶ Own up to your mistakes and be okay with them. Making mistakes is perfectly fine as we all make them. However, making them the second time and procrastinating about them with excuses and justifications is not fine. Get over it (we already did) and just correct it.
- ▶ Communication is vital to your clients and within any organisation – its staff and stakeholders. Always communicate the right message at the right time in the right way – timeously. Beyond Outsourcing subscribes to the principle of 'seek first to understand and then to be understood'.