



Never underestimate the power of a “Wingman”

Networking lessons I learned from my dog

Dori Clark once said ‘Never underestimate the power of a Wingman’. In this case it’s a Wing(wo)man. Jules, my Chihuahua rescue puppy, is always meeting new, interesting people (and dogs). And then, of course, I meet them too. She is so good at making introductions. One of her favorites is the postman. Ok, I don’t yet know his name, but he’s very nice. Usually, however, it’s some random stranger – like the young girl, walking across the Broadway bridge, pictured above.

I bring this up because it’s so much easier to go places with a “Wingman” - someone who is outgoing and can make introductions. If you are a busy professional who avoids going to networking events, because walking into a room full of strangers is overwhelming, why not try enlisting the power of a “Wingman”? Here are my top 5 tips for surviving and thriving at network events with the help of a “Wingman”:

1. Go with a buddy aka. a “Wingman”

Agree to introduce each other to your contacts. You will be presented as the expert in your field. This provides instant credibility, elevates you in the mind of the other person and leads to greater success.

Another benefit of attending with a buddy is that seeing a friendly face (your buddy) amongst the crowd as you network your way through a sea of strangers, can create a nice resting place.

2. Make it easy on your buddy.

Give them crisp, clear statements about what you do, for whom, and the results you bring. This makes the introduction easier. It also helps them know who might be the best fit for you or where opportunities may lie.

Also don’t forget the power of stories. Share stories with them about the innovative things you are doing. I still tell the story one of my sub-consultants shared with me about an innovative approach they used.

3. Know before you go.

Find out who will be attending the event before you go. Learn what these people are up to, their pain points or their concerns. When you get there, seek them out. Or better yet, get your buddy to introduce you for that dose of instant credibility. Use what you learned about them as a conversation starter. This can really make time spent at events much more powerful.

4. Don’t arrive hungry.

It is hard to juggle food, drink, conversations and hand shakes. If you must eat, arrive early, enjoy and then focus on the conversation.

5. Have fun.

Networking can enrich your life. You meet interesting people and hear what they are about. Plus networking events are often in cool places. So enjoy the process and celebrate your success!

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