

Do You Have a Card?



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I always thought it was a cliché when people said that life seems to go faster when you get older. Maybe it is because you have so much more to look back on and it seems

that another month compared to all the months you already lived is just one more month. I do not mean that in a negative way, it is just that one month when you are 4 years old is a lifetime and when you are halfway through your life it is JUST a month.

Carpe diem, said my high school teacher once to me. I was 14 years old then and I have never forgotten his little reprimand after class. Do not look back, look forward, he also said. But mainly: live your life TODAY. Make every day a celebration. Get the most out of it.

Never leave your home without your card. No not the one from the credit card TV commercial, “business networking meeting \$3, making friends \$0”. I mean the card that makes people remember you. I am talking about your **BUSINESS CARD**. Even if you are waiting for your cards to be delivered from the printer, make sure you have some temporary cards. And let people know they are temporary, because it’s not high quality. Go to Staples or Office Max and buy a package of pre-cut cards and print something at home.

I am totally amazed when one or more members of my local monthly networking group (<http://entrepreneur.meetup.com/883/>) get up and give a 60 second intro, but end with “sorry, I have no business cards...”. In this day and age there is no excuse for not having a card ready to hand out. If you want your business to succeed, go to a printer (there are many of them around) or go to vistaprint.com. Vistaprint offers FREE business cards. Having no money is not even an excuse.

Networking is about building relationships. Ask questions, and when you do, LISTEN. Find out about what they do. Another reason to have a business card to hand out is that you can write a personal message to the receiver on the back to make him or her remember you even better. And on the cards you receive, make notes such as at where and when you received the card, plus some nuggets from the conversation with the person.

Just a little tip I read the other day: *stand shoulder-to-shoulder when talking*. This helps leave room for others to join in. If you are face-to-face, people likely don’t want to intrude, but shoulder to shoulder will welcome others to join in. How you stand is extremely important.

As much as we talk about the importance of networking, many of us don’t really do much connecting. Connect with businesses that are non-competitive with yours and that have clients who are also in your market space. Simple examples are an accountant and a financial planner, or a florist and a limousine service. Figure out which companies are serving the same markets as you and develop relationships with the ones that meet your standards.

Join me at the next Long Island Entrepreneur Meeting <http://entrepreneur.meetup.com/883/> and bring your CARD 😊