

# The Seven Deadly Sins of Business Networking (and How to Avoid Them)

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## **Sample of Content:**

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The seven deadly sins are transgressions that stymie spiritual progress. But what if these sins were applied to business networking? Follow these tips to make your next networking endeavour a heavenly experience.

**Pride - Arrogant or disdainful conduct or treatment haughtiness.**

*(Source: American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language)*

This sin has been called the most deadly of all the deadly sins. And for good reason. Whoever has pride has an excessive love of themselves. At a networking event, they tend to ignore people or they ignore your business needs. This person is full of self-importance and will talk endlessly about her products, her services and how happy her clients are with her.

Instead of pride, you should be modest. Talk about yourself, but only after finding out what the other person does for a living. You can be successful by crafting a memorable introduction that you can say in 30-seconds or less. Then, take the time to listen to what the other person has to say.

**Greed –“ An excessive desire to acquire or possess more than what one needs or deserves, especially with respect to material wealth**

*(Source: WordNet 2.0, Princeton University)*

In business, we all want to do well financially. Yet, when one is greedy, this can impede on our ability to form meaningful relationships. At a networking event, a greedy person is difficult to spot. He tends to ask great questions and praise your expertise in a given area. But what he is doing is picking your brain to understand whoâ€™s in your network. He knows what your needs are but is afraid to connect you with the person in his network because he thinks youâ€™re going to steal a great opportunity from him. I call this greedy person a horder.

You can avoid becoming greedy by understanding that networking is all about giving. If youâ€™re generous in what you give to others, you will reap the benefits through increased sales, endless referrals and unlimited job opportunities. So, donâ€™t be afraid to connect people together.

**Envy - A feeling of grudging admiration and desire to have something possessed by another .**

*(Source: WordNet 2.0, Princeton University)*

Ah envy. Otherwise known as jealousy, or the green-eyed monster. At a networking event, this person resents your achievements, traits, status, abilities or situation. She thinks that you are luckier, more attractive, smarter or better than her. Often, she tends to insult you with a snide remark such as, “Oh, you think youâ€™re better than all of us because you sold a company for millions of dollars. Letâ€™s bow down to you.” She is jealous of your successes.

Donâ€™t fall into this trap. Being envious of someoneâ€™s achievements will cause you to resent your own. Instead, list your own business-related successes on a piece of paper. Maybe you just landed a huge account, or maybe you just launched your own business. Whatever your achievements, write them down and share them with the people you network with. Someone may be so impressed with your triumphs, they will hire you for their project.

**Wrath - Intense anger inappropriate (unrighteous) feelings of hatred, or revenge.**

*(Source: American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language)*

You've met this person before. He's angry that the networking event he just paid \$20 to attend didn't produce any clients or immediate sales. Or, he's angry that a vendor he hired recently for a project not only did a shoddy job, but also has the nerve to show up at the same event as him.

This type of negativity will do more to scare people away than to draw them to you. You should react with kindness when you're networking. Never badmouth anyone. The business world is a very small world and if you get into a habit of talking bad about anyone, it will come back to haunt you. Instead, if you have a problem with the event you attended, speak directly to the event organizer. Or, if a vendor delivered poor results, pick up the phone and speak to him or her about your unhappiness.

**Lust - To have an intense or obsessive desire, especially one that is sexual.**

*(Source: American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language)*

Business networking is all about gaining new professional contacts. It's not about asking people out on dates or finding out what their favourite sexual position is. You'll find this person at every networking event – she's too horny to focus on business issues, yet too stupid to realize her mistake. She'll start asking if you're married, her eyes will drop down, not only to see the name on your nametag, but to also see if there's a ring on your finger and she'll make comments on how gorgeous your smile looks.

When networking, keep your mind out of the gutter by focusing on safe topics. Talk about books you're reading, the weather, your recent vacation, hobbies you enjoy and goals for your business just so you can keep your mind on –godly– topics.

**Gluttony – The desire to consume more than what one requires. Over indulgence in food or drinks**

*(Source: Oxford Dictionary)*

Who else has met someone who has gotten drunk at a business networking event? I have. He got the free drink ticket at the registration desk, the free drink ticket from the person who admitted she doesn't drink and found one of the tickets lying on the floor. On top of that, he has bought a few more rounds of suds so he can loosen up. His manners have made a quick exit and he's louder than the music that's blaring through the speakers.

Everything needs to be done in moderation, including the consumption of food and drinks at a networking event. Making a first impression is important, but making a lasting impression counts even more. In order to be in control of your mental and physical faculties at an event, stick to just one drink. Better yet, if you go to the event with a buddy, ask him or her to stop you at 1 or 2 drinks. Never attend a networking event hungry. Instead, consume a sandwich or a small salad before you go.

**Sloth – The avoidance of physical work. Idleness, wastefulness, laziness**

*(Source: American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language)*

Part of networking is meeting people, but the real work comes from how well you follow up. Iâ€™m amazed at the number of people who collect my business card, promise to call me the next day and I never hear from them again. How rude and inconsiderate, yet many professionals donâ€™t realize that following up means the difference between having a thriving business and just scraping by.

Be enthusiastic when you meet new people and only collect business cards from people who you know you can follow up with. Treat each business card like a \$100 bill. This will help you to spend each card wisely. If you find that thereâ€™s a mutual benefit to following up with a new business contact, do so no more than 24-hours after meeting him or her. Doing so ensures that the person remembers who you are.

Remember the networking virtues of modesty, generosity, sharing, kindness, humility, moderation and enthusiasm when you work a room. You will gain a reputation for your networking graces and not be remembered for your networking sins.

Leesa Barnes, The Schmooze Coach, helps consultants, virtual assistants, professional organizers, coaches and solopreneurs avoid cold calling by developing a fearless networking plan. Leesa is author of "Schmooze Your Way to Success: 9 Fearless Networking Tips for the Shy, Timid, Introverted & Just Plain Clueless." Go to <http://www.schmoozeyourwaytosuccess.com/ecourse.html> and sign up for her free 8-lesson ecourse called "From Clueless to Fearless: Secrets from the Schmooze Coach."

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## **About the Author:**

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