

“Make sure they know you mean business.”

Building a thriving business, no matter your niche market or unique services, hinges on some basic disciplines including communicating your mission statement - ‘Your message’. Think of your message as the reason that you and your service are valuable to customers.

No matter the occasion, anytime you meet someone and have the opportunity to speak about what you do, your message must convey at a minimum:

- ? who you are- name and company name
- ? what you do as a professional – niche market and services- what’s valuable and different
- ? how that might be a benefit to them or someone they know – fast fact or statistic
- ? when you’d like to speak with them further- at a more convenient time to talk business - *set a follow-up appointment for a call or a visit*

Like many professionals, you may have a variety of interests and ideas on how you can develop clients; however, to **build credibility**, you must have a concise message.

Write a ‘working message’ and practice out loud frequently throughout each day so that your confidence and professional focus will shine through each time you make an introduction. **Remember, you only have one shot a first impression.** Review and revise as needed.

Your concise message does *not* have to tell in detail all that you are and every facet of your services; however, it should include a **brief description** of ‘**what’s valuable or different**’ about your service and **how that is an advantage to the consumer.**

You will have an opportunity to address details in your follow-up conversations and through the use of a **professional bio and presentation package or brochure.**

Begin by **practicing your message** on your existing Sphere of Influence, professional contacts, family, and friends, right away. As you chat with each person, remember to set an ‘appointment’ with them for follow-up action such as a brief visit to deliver relevant information and your business cards, or to call again in a few days for the name of a personal referral.

You might find it handy to have your message ‘scripted’ in front of you, such as on a sticky note on a notepad or on your pda or daily planner. Be sure to have your calendar ready to jot down that follow-up action appointment in your pre-set appointment time slots, on the spot.

They’ll know you mean business when you are proactive and attentive enough to ask for the next action step or appointment and actually schedule it in their presence. Plus, demonstrating your willingness to take the communication to the next level helps increase the contact’s confidence in your ability to actually deliver on your services. +

October 2005

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