



## **The A-B-C's Of Strategic Networking**

As I'm sure you already know, networking is one of the best ways to develop your business. Often I hear sales people ask the same question with regards to effective networking, "How can I make the time I spend networking even more productive?" The answer is simple, but as with most things in life, it involves a little extra effort to reap the rewards. The following is a simple and effective way to improve your networking performance.

1. First, ask yourself "Who am I looking to meet?" and then take a few moments to write down what you consider to be your best prospects and potential strategic partners. This way you will be one step ahead of the game in finding great leads when your out there in the crowd. For example, if you are a real estate agent, you would focus on people looking to sell property, buy property or who know people that need these services. In addition, you would target those individuals who know these potential prospects, like real estate attorneys, mortgage brokers and appraisers. When you look beyond what is right in front of you, there are often many untapped opportunities to connect with these strategic partners.
2. Next, rate the prospects that you meet into three categories. These are the A-B-C's of networking. After receiving a card from someone at a networking event, take 10 seconds as you walk away to rate that individual as a potential prospect by writing an A, B or C on their business card. The A's represent the cream of the crop - someone who really needs what you do or would make a great strategic partner for you. The B's are those prospects with whom you should share a cup of coffee or at least speak to over the phone to see if there's a connection. Lastly are those in the C category, or those people who probably aren't going to make the most effective use of your time. This isn't to say that connections can't be made with C's. Just make sure that if you agree to meet with a C, it's someone that you immediately liked upon first meeting them.
3. The final step to successfully using the A-B-C process is to remember the single most important point about networking...**FOLLOW UP!** Your time might as well be flushed down the toilet if you don't make the calls after the meeting. Call your A's and B's within 48 hours after the networking event while they are still fresh in your minds and suggest a sit down over a favorite beverage.

If you've ever met with someone who tried to hard sell you on their product or service, sat across from someone you weren't sure why you were meeting with in the first place, or just wished you could sneak away after five minutes, using this A-B-C process will make your networking experiences much more enjoyable and productive.

*© 2006 All Rights Reserved – Do not reproduce this document without written permission from Steve Fretzin at Sales Results, Inc.*

*Steve Fretzin is the owner of Sales Results, Inc. and The Executives Profit, LLC. Prior to owning these businesses, Steve worked for over 16 years in the field of sales, management and business development.*

*Mr. Fretzin's goal over the next 5 years is to help over 200 business owners double their sales. Mr. Fretzin produces results for his clients through his dedication and commitment to their on-going success.*

*Article Source: [http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Steve\\_Fretzin](http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Steve_Fretzin) <http://EzineArticles.com/?The-A-B-Cs-Of-Strategic-Networking&id=593137>*