Following up

We go to networking events. We chat. We shake hands. We exchange business cards. And then we follow up. Or at least that is what we are “supposed” to do.

Here’s my take: you follow up with whom you want to stay in touch with or want to do business with. Can you follow up just to be polite? Yes, of course. Nothing wrong with it. But if your time is limited, then be selective.

Now, if you are following up, there is a wrong way, a better way and the best way.

The wrong way is like this follow up email I received:

> Hi Deborah:
>
> It was good to hear about what you do for companies. I hope to see you soon.
>
> Sincerely,
>
> (name of person)

The thing is, I never spoke to this guy directly. He got my card somehow. And it is vague. And impersonal. And gives me no reason to follow up with him.

Better is the following:

> It was nice meeting you yesterday. Attached please find a brochure about our company. Please feel free to email this out to other business owners. We are happy to pay a 10% referral fee (minimum of $1,000) when you refer a business owner to us.
> Look forward to seeing you at the next event.

I did meet this person, who is giving me more information about her business. However, there is no personal note. She doesn’t seem to say anything about me.

Best is something like this:

> Hi Deborah,

You had great ideas and suggestions. Thanks for sharing the information.

I'll contact you in two weeks. As I mentioned, I am working on a XXX program for XXX. I'll share with you the structure that I am developing.

Best regards,

A little about me and a little about her. A firm follow up time frame, and something particular to discuss.

What do you look for in a follow up call/email? What are your best practices?

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