

JONES COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE
SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER
A MEMBER OF THE MISSISSIPPI SMALL BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT CENTER (MSBDC) NETWORK.
MSBDC has assisted Mississippi businesses since 1981

NEWSLETTER

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Special Edition on: How to Network to Improve Your Business
December 2003 Issue
Director: Greg Butler
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1. Welcome From The Director
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I would like to wish everyone a very happy holiday season. Please remember our troops in Iraq in your thoughts and prayers, especially the reservists from our area that have been activated. The Small Business Development Center Office at Jones County Junior College will be closed for the holidays from December 20, 2003, until January 4, 2004.

In the Newsletter for this month, I will give you my seven rules to improve your networking skills. To be successful in business (and in your life for that matter) you need to position yourself in front of people who will make a difference. There are many events during the holiday season that make great opportunities to network with people that can make a difference in your business; however, you need to network SMART in order to get results. Seek and ACT on opportunities to meet others that may help your business grow. Look for opportunities to network with these people. Networking is one of the most effective ways for you to make new contacts and generate new business. I hear many people say, "I go to networking events, but I don't get many prospects" or "I wish that I could get more leads when I

network.” If this sounds like you, it means that you are not following the fundamental rules of networking or you are not networking where your prime prospects might be or BOTH. Below are seven tips to make the most of your networking opportunities.

Happy Holidays!

---Greg Butler

NOTE:

Our subscriber list is NOT made available to other companies or individuals. We value every subscriber and respect your privacy. If at any time you wish to cancel your subscription, simply send me an e-mail with the message: “Remove from newsletter.”

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to friends or business associates that may be interested.

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2. The Seven Rules of Networking
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1. Develop your networking skills. Many people go to networking events, but very few actually know how to network effectively. Effective networking can generate a steady stream of referrals and help your business grow.

2. Know how you help. People aren’t interested in what you do unless what you do helps them. Know what problems you can solve, not a bunch of boring things about what you do. Have a succinct “elevator speech” -- a 30-second description of the problems that you solve. Use questions to identify individual’s primary concerns. Asking powerful questions and showing how you help will gain the prospects interest. Gaining interest leads to an appointment, and the purpose of networking is to gain engagement that leads to an appointment.

3. Event selection is as important as networking itself. Select those events that may attract your clients or people who you want to get to know. Don’t overlook social and cultural events as networking possibilities. Step out of your comfort zone and attend events where you don’t know anyone. A good rule to

follow is the “50-butt rule”. If there are more than 50 butts in one room, your butt should be there, too.

4. Target your networking. Too many people rely on serendipity for results. It certainly doesn't hurt to let people that you meet know about the types of problems you solve, but TARGET your networking if you want better results and increased business. Identify the people with whom you want to make contact and make carefully researched efforts to build relationships. This could be with prospects or potential market alliance partners. This approach takes more time on your part, but it gets better results.

5. Never throw away business. If you're not the person for the job, refer them to someone else that is. The benefit of this approach is twofold. First, you will be seen as a problem solver, and second, those people who benefit from your referrals are more likely to provide you with referrals in return.

6. Be aware of time. Don't spend too much time with one person, or you defeat the purpose of networking. Your objective is to take advantage of the entire room. If you spend three minutes with a prospect, you will have a possibility of twenty contacts per hour. Five minutes each equals twelve contacts, and ten minutes equals six contacts. When you are in a room full of prospects, every minute counts. Also, it is very tempting to spend too much unproductive time with friends and colleagues.

7. Practice by doing. Practice the fundamentals and subtle secrets of networking by working a room. If you practice these seven rules, you will have a better chance to succeed at it. All you have to do is – prepare, show up and interact.

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4. Workshop Schedule
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SO YOU WANT TO START YOUR OWN BUSINESS
- Greg Butler, Presenter
(JCJC Campus, Forestry and Life Science Building, Room 206)

Monday, 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

12/15
1/26

3/15

Tuesday, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

12/9
1/13
2/10
3/9

Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

1/7
2/4
3/3

SERVSAFE CERTIFICATION TRAINING

- Regina Kitchens, Presenter
(JCJC Campus, Community Services Building)

December 9 – 11	9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
January 26 –30	5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
February 24 – 26	9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
March 23 – 25	9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

SHOW ME THE MONEY: PROFIT-FOCUSED SMALL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

- Greg Butler, Presenter
(JCJC Campus, Forestry and Life Science Building, Room 206)

February 3 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

IRS TAX WORKSHOP FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

- Greg Butler, Presenter
(JCJC Campus, Library-Projection Room)

March 30 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Fee: \$10.00 (includes lunch)

To register for any of these workshops, please call us at (601) 477-4235 or e-mail us at sbdc@jcjc.edu.

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5. Subscription Management
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You will continue to receive the Small Business Development Center Newsletter automatically. You may unsubscribe at any time by simply sending a reply with the message: "Remove from newsletter." Or if you received this newsletter from a friend or associate and want to sign up, simply send a reply with the message: "Please sign me up for your newsletter."

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6. Contact Information
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A member of the Mississippi Small Business Development Center Network

Helping to Develop the Pinebelt One Business at a Time!

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