

Making the Most of Your Chamber Membership!

Tip # 1

Next time you attend a Percolator Meeting, sit with people you don't know – you can make nine new contacts in one morning!

Kathie Jankauskas of KJanStudio says, “*After being a member for two years, I know many of the Percolator attendees, so looking for new faces to sit with is a great way to start.*”

Tip # 2

Join a committee – it is the best way to meet people within the Chamber in a more intimate setting.

Tom Raczkowski of TP Computer Services says, “*Shortly after becoming a member, I joined the Marketing and Communications Committee in hopes of learning some tips about marketing. While I did learn about marketing, I learned something much more valuable – that creating relationships with business people within a committee is the best way to network because everyone is working towards a common goal.*”

Tip # 3

Sponsor the Cover of Outlook Magazine – the exposure you and your company will receive is priceless.

Eric Blum of 1-800-GOT-JUNK? says, “I strategically planned to sponsor an *Outlook* cover this past March to coincide with exhibiting at the Expo, sponsoring an E-mail blast for April and sponsoring the May Percolator Meeting. I received many comments on the cover from fellow members inquiring about our services and am now working on converting those into appointments.”

Tip # 4

Write an article for Outlook Magazine – share your business expertise with Chamber members by writing an article.

Brad Hoffman from PERSONAbility Consulting recently submitted an article to Outlook Magazine after completing his masters in organizational development. “*This is an excellent way get my name in front of the 1600 plus Chamber members who receive the publication,*” he said. “*And, reading the article gives members a sense of what I do.*”

Tip # 5

Sponsor an e-mail, website ad, ad in *Outlook* – When you sponsor multiple Chamber opportunities, your “Top of Mind Awareness” improves. Once your company name is familiar to others, there is a better chance that they will do business with you.

Frank Ricciardi from CARISMA is sponsoring the Outlook cover in November along with the blast e-mails. Frank says planned to sponsor both opportunities to increase his company’s name recognition within the Chamber.

Tip # 6

Sponsor a Chamber Event – Sponsoring a Chamber event is a great opportunity to put your company’s name in front of the Chamber Membership.

Jennifer Baker New from Baker New Design sponsored a Business Card Exchange and was very happy with the exposure and the contacts that she made through the event. She was surprised how many members came up to her at the event and inquired about her business.

Tip # 7

Follow-up on networking leads – Take advantage of the crisp air and use your newly found energy to put the business cards that you collect at networking events to use. Call the contacts and make an appointment to meet for lunch to see if you two can do business together or refer each other to business associates.

Melissa Wieczorek from A la Maison Personal Chef Service has been a Chamber member for a year and a half and in that time has collected many business cards at Chamber events. Melissa says you never know what will happen when you re-visit those cards and set up one-on-one meetings with some potential clients.

Tip # 8

Make an announcement at another networking meeting – Many Chamber members belong to a number of other networking groups as well. Announce Chamber events at your networking meetings – you never know if someone in the meeting is looking for additional networking opportunities.

Doug Scé from The M & D Group keeps his Le Tip members up to date on all Chamber events at his weekly meetings. Doug says it has definitely resulted in Le Tip members attending Chamber events and even becoming members. And, Le Tip recently sponsored a Percolator Meeting as well.

Tip # 9**Make a plan to have 2 great conversations at the next Business Card Exchange –**

Don't work a room by simply collecting people's business cards. Make it a point to get to know people at Chamber events.

Linda Mitchell – Director of Marketing and Public Relations, Newtown Athletic Club says networking is all about building relationships. If you get to know a few people at a time, it makes the Chamber a great tool to use in the business world. Once you get to know someone you become “top of mind.” They might not need your service now, but will think of you when the time comes, or will refer you to others as well.

Tip #10

Sponsor a booth at the Chamber's Business Expo in March – the event sells out with over 100 exhibitors each year – and attracts up to 400 people!

Peggy Murphy-Kaufman from Sovereign Bank is Chair of the Exhibits Committee that coordinates the Expo. She says, *“There is no better opportunity to market your company to both members and non-members than at the Chamber's Expo. Sign up for your booth before it's too late!”*

Tip # 11

Bring a guest to a Chamber event – it gives you a reason to network.

Jackie Garber is a sales person with WBCB radio. She regularly brings her clients to Chamber events and introduces them to her contacts within the Chamber.

“I find this gives me a new purpose at an event,” says Jackie. *“I can introduce my guest to all of my fellow Chamber members and it helps break the ice with people I haven't yet met.”*

Tip # 12

Utilizing your Chamber benefits actually stretches the investment you make in your membership. The most well-known benefit is the discounted group health insurance rates, but the Chamber offers a number of member benefits including Credit Card Processing Discounts, Member to Member Discount Program and discounted DHL Express Rates with a drop box in the Chamber parking lot.

Tip # 13

The Golf Outing is the Chamber's premier fundraising event of the year – and, the perfect place to do business!

Invite a potential client to the Chamber's golf outing and close the deal on the golf course. We all know that a great deal of business is done on the golf course – why not support your local Chamber while working on securing that sale?

Or, you can sponsor the outing and receive exposure for your donation.

Tip # 14

Grow your business by getting involved.

Simply joining the Chamber will not grow your business – you have to get involved and work for your investment. Attend a committee meeting to get to know people. Then, when you attend a larger event like a Perc or Business card Exchange, those people can introduce you to their contacts and you can work your way around the room.

“When I first joined the Chamber my entire client base was in New York”, said Dan Bates (Business Marketing Alliance). “Now, 10 years later, all of my clients are either Chamber members or referred to me by Chamber members. It took work, but by getting involved and getting to know people, I have grown my business as a direct result of my Chamber membership.”

Tip # 15

Follow-up with your contacts

What do you do with all of the business cards that you collect at Chamber events? Don't forget to follow up with all of those people that you meet. All it takes is a simple phone call to begin developing a relationship. And who knows, even if you can't do business directly with this person – they may be able to refer you to someone that they know.

Scott Little from 3rd Federal Bank recently spoke at a Sharpen Your Edge seminar on networking. He suggests that you should always be ready with your 30 second commercial so you can readily tell someone about your business and what kind of referrals that you are looking for. Networking does work both ways.

Tip # 16

Attend a Chamber seminar

The Chamber offers many professional development opportunities each month – some free, some at a minimal fee – all as benefits of your Chamber membership. Our monthly Sharpen Your Edge seminars have recently changed from an 8:00 a.m. seminar to a 12:00 noon session which includes lunch and allows for extra networking time. Attend the August event when Chair Person of the Sharpen Your Edge Sub-committee Mike Hilbert (Sales Pros4Hire) will speak about the Sales Funnel Process.

“Changing the Sharpen Your Edge seminars to lunchtime and including lunch has given the event new life,” said Mike. “It seems people enjoy the opportunity to have lunch, network and learn all in the hour and a half time frame.”

Tip # 17

Offer your expertise on a committee

Participating on a Chamber committee is a great opportunity to network your way through the Chamber. You get to know 10-12 people and work with them on a monthly basis on a common goal – marketing, membership, legislative action, etc. Those relationships are the ones that will ultimately lead to business and referrals within the Chamber.

Another reason to join a committee is to offer your expertise. If you are in the marketing field, attend the Marketing Committee Meeting and see what you can do to help out. Once people see you as an expert in your field, they will also be inclined to send business your way.

Tip # 18

Think Chamber First

Whenever you need a product or service, **Think Chamber First** - take a moment to consult your Member Directory and give a fellow member the opportunity to do business with you! Let them know you're a fellow Chamber member and they may offer you a special discount or benefit. By supporting one another, we'll strengthen our Chamber and our local economy!

Dr. Michael Gorman from Gorman Optimal Health Solutions recently turned to fellow Chamber member Dave Margolis from Damar Communications when he needed a new brochure designed and printed. *“I knew Dave from the Chamber and he is also in my LeTip Chapter,”* said Dr. Gorman. *“So, he was the obvious choice when I was ready to work on my new materials.”* Since that original job, the two have continued their working relationship and Dr. Gorman says he values Dave's advice and expertise in the marketing field.

Tip # 19

Use the Chamber as a Marketing Opportunity

If part of your marketing plan includes targeting local businesses, the Chamber is the perfect place to spend those marketing dollars. In marketing, it is repetition that works, so create “top of mind awareness” through advertising opportunities within the Chamber. Combine those efforts with networking, and people will think of you first when they are looking for a particular product or service.

Eric Blum from 1-800-GOT-JUNK? says advertising through the Chamber definitely helps to keep his company top of mind. He allocates a certain amount of his marketing budget to the Chamber each year. *“I take out an ad in Outlook, send out a mailing with the Chamber’s address labels and sponsor an e-mail blast,” Eric said. “What better way is there to reach 1600 local business people? And, each time a member sees 1-800-GOT-JUNK?, it gives me a better chance of them calling me to make an appointment.”*

Tip # 20
Develop Relationships

Networking is the way to get to know your fellow Chamber members and develop relationships within the organization - people do business with people that they know and trust.

Tobi Bruhn from the Bucks County Community College Foundation began attending events and networking at the Chamber as soon as he took working at the college. *“I knew that the Chamber was filled with people who I needed to meet in order to do my job,” Tobi said. “In fundraising and ‘friendraising’, contacts are essential.”* Tobi has developed relationships within the Chamber who he works with on a daily basis. He says the Chamber definitely helps folks like him who are new to the area by getting them up to speed as quickly as possible.

Tip # 21
Make the most of your networking at the Business Card Exchange!

Are you working the room at the Business Card Exchange each month but feel you aren’t getting anywhere while everyone else around you is?

Make the commitment to yourself to engage in quality conversations rather than exchanging business cards with as many people as you can.

Adam J. Kovitz, chair of the Chamber’s Member Recruitment and Retention Committee, and CEO & Founder of The National Networker, says that when you network you have to pay attention and work on building a relationship with that person – to build Financial Capital, one must first build Relationship Capital. One of the best ways to do that is to ask questions to learn about that person and their business like “what are you working on?” and “what do you need next?” so that you can refer clients their way and ask that they do the same. Even if the two of you can’t do business together, you can always give each other referral business. By focusing on selling *through* the members and not *to* the members, results will follow.

Tip # 22

Make a Business New Year's Resolution

Begin the New Year with a new focus on your business. Use the New Year to take a look at your business plan and determine what is and is not working for your company. If you do not have a business plan – it is never too late to create one.

Doug Scé from The M & D Group says that every company needs a business plan. He suggests consulting with a professional who can help not only with creating the plan, but also with focusing the plan on specific critical points. This can help avoid costly mistakes in the future.

Doug provides the following tips to help get started with a business plan:

- State the mission of the company and reason for its existence
- It is important to research the history of the industry you intend to pursue - describe the size of the market, provide demographic information about its customers, identify industry trends that may affect your business
- Include a Marketing Plan to determine your target audience - how you will gain market share and how you will actually market the company?
- Describe your products and/or services, and explain why there is a demand for your products and/or services and how you will capture market share

Tip # 23

Sponsor a Chamber Event

Sponsoring a Chamber event is a great opportunity to put your company's name in front of the Chamber Membership.

Pam Mirabile from Migu Press Inc. recently sponsored the Marketing & Communications Committee's Media Workshop. *"It was a great opportunity to get my company's name in front of 50 plus Chamber members,"* said Pam. *"I told the audience all about my company and gave them bags filled with Migu items. You can't beat that for exposure!"*

Tip # 24

Advertise on the Chamber's Website

Start out the New Year with an online banner ad! The Chamber's web site averages 2,300 hits per month and banner ads are located on the left rail of the site.

Bob Harris, Director of Public Relations, Lower Bucks Hospital says, *"There is no more effective way to reach 1600 plus business people than to advertise on the Lower Bucks County Chamber of Commerce's web site. Once again the Chamber proves its worth!"*

If you are interested in web site advertising, contact Lisa Kruse at Angelmark Associates, Inc. at 215-860-3090. Check out the ads at www.lbccc.org

Tip # 25

The Golf Outing is the Chamber's premier fundraising event of the year – and, the perfect place to do business!

Participate in the Chamber's Golf Outing by inviting a potential client to the event. The golf course is the perfect place to close the deal! We all know that a great deal of business is done on the golf course – why not support your local Chamber while working on securing that sale?

Your company can also sponsor a sign at the outing and receive exposure for your donation.

Tip # 26

Purchase Chamber mailing labels to support your next marketing campaign.

As a member benefit, Chamber members can purchase a complete and current address listing of Chamber member companies and representatives on self-stick labels, or electronically.

Gary Balakoff from Bucks First Federal Credit Union recently purchased mailing labels for a marketing campaign looking for new customers in Lower Bucks County. It was an easy and affordable way to do a mass mailing," Gary said. "And it was the perfect way to hit our target audience."

Contact Marie at the Chamber for more information on purchasing Chamber mailing labels.

Tip # 27

Sponsor an E-mail Blast as part of your Marketing Campaign

Your company can sponsor the Chamber's weekly e-mail message which is sent to 1,300 plus Chamber members. What better way to market your company than to deliver a message directly to the decision maker's in-bin? The sponsorship includes a link to your company web site, a 50-word description and a photo or logo.

Jennifer Ritorto from the Lower Bucks Family YMCA recently sponsored an e-mail message. "It was a very inexpensive way to get our message out to a large number of businesses in the area," Ritorto said. "We are definitely planning to sponsor more e-mail blasts in the future."

Contact Nicole Mandel Kelliher at the Chamber for more information.

Tip # 28**Follow up on networking leads**

Take advantage of the beautiful weather and use your newly found energy to put the business cards that you collect at networking events to use. Call the contacts and make an appointment to meet for lunch or coffee to see if you two can do business together or refer each other to business associates.

Jessica Strom from Beacon Senior Resources has been a Chamber member since January, and in that time has collected many business cards at Chamber events. Jessica says she has been working on following up with the people that she has meet to see which ones she can convert into clients. She says you never know what will happen when you re-visit those cards and set up one-on-one meetings to get to know people a little better.

Tip # 29**Advertise on the Chamber Wall**

Promote your business to hundreds of people who come to the Chamber every month! This new opportunity allows you to display your framed advertisement on the walls of the Chamber's lobby. Your business cards will also be displayed in a special holder allowing for easy pick-up of your company information.

When marketing consultants talk about a successful marketing plan for businesses, they say to use the rule of seven – it takes seven contacts to move someone to action – however, most people stop at five. Ed MacConnell of EMA Group Inc. is one of the advertisers on the Chamber's lobby wall. He says it is a great way to reach that rule of seven as he combines it with event sponsorship, *Outlook* advertising and more.