

CONFIDENT LADIES

— starting over in style —



Business Networking and Rules of Conduct.

www.confidentladies.co.uk

What is the Confident Ladies network?

We champion you and your business through our network we provide encouragement, problem solving, share experiences, focus on making new contacts, peer support, business leads, motivation and new learning opportunities.

Up to 70% of new business is gained through recommendation and word of mouth. This is why, we believe, Networking is so vitally important to anyone in business. The power of networking comes from the fact that behind every person you meet at an event there are hundreds of potential contacts that they know and may introduce you to.

Remember, when communicating with others at one of our networking events, act as if you are addressing the hundreds of people in their network. A professional approach is so vitally important and why, if done successfully, being a great networker can be so powerful to your own success.

As the saying goes 'It's not what you know, but who you know.'

Why a woman's networking group?

Women are generally natural networkers we like to chat and share with each other and are good at building relationships; which in essence is what networking is all about.

Confident Ladies Networking:

Specifically for women run by women, we aim to consider the wider demands on a woman's time and our speakers aim to tailor their topics to the needs of women. Women often feel more comfortable to voice issues, concerns and problems in a woman only environment, especially about how to balance the professional and personal elements of their lives. You may often meet potential customers directly through our network. You may often meet with other businesses, which you are able to develop a positive and viable business relationship with. The women you meet and interact with have a base of contacts and will continue to grow that base in the future. Once you have built a relationship they may well have the opportunity to recommend your business and/or refer you to people who would be customers or a strategic partner. Our Values of empathy, integrity and willingness to share means that mixing with our group of positive, vibrant and success focused women can often mean that some of the inspiration brushes off on you, so that you go back to your office and business with new ideas and motivation.

Just take a break! Let's face it; sometimes we just need a break and what better way than to socialise within a positive environment with a group of talented and supportive women; a great way to combat feelings of isolation; particularly for anyone who works for themselves, by themselves. Share your ideas and experiences with like-minded women who understand the particular challenges of being a successful woman, mother, entrepreneur etc.

We provide speakers and experts usually from our Business members who speak on subjects that we understand are directly relevant to our members. Practicing your networking skills and meet other like-minded individuals, who may be facing the similar challenges, will help boost your self-confidence and esteem. When you meet and listen to other women who operate in different business environments it is a great way of increasing your overall business knowledge and acumen and helps with understanding different perspectives.

We have an open business policy (more than one type of business can join) you may worry what can be gained by networking with others in the same business? Your competitors even! We feel these are just some of the benefits.

- Exchange of 'good practice' techniques
- Keeping up-to-date with industry news
- Opportunity to build personal reputation amongst peers

- Opportunity to identify potential strategic partners

How to become a successful networker

We understand that for some the thought of going along and actually networking fills them with dread and fear. Networking is basically getting to know others and building long-term sustainable relationships that are mutually beneficial and most women are great at this.

Just like friendships, networking is a mid to long term strategy that requires commitment and patience. Don't just come along to a couple of events and expect to walk away with a small handful of clients from them. You need to get to know others and show more of an interest in them than 'sell' yourself to be effective. The number of networking events you attend will be different for everyone, depending on your goals and strategy. However, networking should be viewed as a key element to the marketing strategy for all businesses and needs to be committed to. It's too easy to forget to go along to events when the weather is bad or you are tired. Consider them as important as a meeting with a potential new customer and stay committed.

Successful Networkers'

Remember for networking to work you need to build relationships so that others feel comfortable either hiring you themselves or recommending you to their network. Successful networkers turn up again, again and again! They proactively connect people. People within their own networking group and people they have just met. This isn't done with only a view to making a sale, but can simply be connecting two individuals who they think would get something out of meeting one another. They actively look for opportunities to refer and connect because they know that by doing so they are building deeper relationships. They are organised and keep details of the people they meet and stay in touch. They **don't try to sell to you**. They understand that the power of networking comes from building relationships. They keep their word! If they offer to create a contact or send you information they DO it.

Consider it part of your job

Create systems to help you remember details such as names and companies. Follow up after an event, preferably the same day, **without trying to sell**. Enter the dates and times of events in your schedule in advance and make the same effort to turn up as if it was any other important meeting. Understand the importance of building relationships with those around you. Never prejudge the person you are talking to might seem like an unlikely new customer, but you have no way of telling who they know and / or who they might meet in the near future that might be able to help you and your business. NEVER sell to someone at an event unless you are invited to. Never judge on numbers Large or small - all networking has benefits. Larger events can bring a higher number of contacts but perhaps fewer opportunities to start to build a deeper relationship. Smaller events have less potential contacts but more opportunity to build deeper relationships.

Effective Networking

Consider it part of your key marketing plan - whether you are marketing your business or yourself as part of a larger organisation. Take time to schedule events into your diary and make them a priority. Follow-through on promises - make sure you send on information or make any introductions you said you would, preferably within 24 hours. If you don't, your reputation will not be worth much and others will be less inclined to help you in the future. Become known - turn up at events regularly. This is how relationships and trust are built up. We are all more comfortable recommending someone we have met more than once. Be interested - seek first to understand others then to be understood yourself. Yes, you are there to let others know about you and your services, but they are much more likely to listen if they feel that you are genuinely interested in also. **Remember to give first, receive second** - actively look for opportunities to help others you meet. Don't only expect the leads to come towards you. Don't try to sell. Networking is about building relationships, not about direct selling. Certainly the opportunity to sell your services to another member of the same group may arise and that is fabulous - but it shouldn't be your sole aim.

Rules of Conduct for meetings.

- Unless requested by the speaker, no discussion of the topic or ideas until the speaker has finished
- Please write down any points during the presentation for discussion at the end.
- Only one person at time talking, everyone must have a fair chance to speak and not be overwhelmed by another. Remember two ears, one mouth! Used in that quantity.
- Keep discussion on topic, and focused.
- If you agree to do something, do it.
- Never 'Sell' to someone unless they ask you to.
- Our meetings aim to be social and relaxed but please also remember we are there for business reasons. So it is important to behave in professional, businesslike manner and respect others feelings at all times.

We have fun being the best and the happiest we can be!! Join us today [click here.](#)