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Does In-Person Networking Beat Social Networking? Yes, If Done Correctly Says Expert Lenann McGookey Gardner

Albuquerque, NM – Social networking online has its benefits, but networking in person can yield much stronger business connections if done correctly, says sales and marketing expert [Lenann McGookey Gardner](#).

The problem for many people is that they're too self-conscious to be effective at working a room. That's generally not an issue when networking online, so people rely too heavily on social networking even when they are unable to cite a single example of that effort turning into new business for them.

"The key to making a good connection in person is to forget about yourself, focus on the other person, and ask questions that can help that person open up," said Gardner, author of [*Got Sales? The Complete Guide to Today's Proven Methods for Selling Services*](#).

Gardner's top tips on successfully working a room include:

- Don't be distracted while chatting with one person, looking around for others to approach, or pushing buttons on your BlackBerry. Stay focused on the person before you.
- When you make a connection, use the person's name, and make sure he or she hears yours.
- Ask a question about them.

"It doesn't have to relate to you or what you have to offer – just a question that they can answer, said Gardner. "What did you think of the speaker tonight, Mary Lou?" is a fine question. Or, if you happen to know something about their organization, ask about it, such as, 'Fred, I've seen Acme Enterprises in the news recently, haven't I? You're involved in that new X project, aren't you?' is an even better question."

- When you get an answer to your question, pay attention to it.

"Everything you say next should relate directly to what the other person said," explained Gardner. "For example, the person you've met says, 'Good speaker. Controversial.' So you say, 'You're feeling the message was controversial, Mary Lou. May I ask what part of the message struck you as being that way?' This is much better than beginning with an outdated 'elevator speech' and can make a real connection."

Gardner continued, “When do you talk about yourself? Ideally, when you’re asked! And follow up promptly on any in-person connections with a note, an email, a link to a helpful news article, or a phone call to help foster this new relationship.”

Lenann McGookey Gardner has worked with professionals from over 45 countries around the world and in 32 U.S. states, to help them massively improve sales results. She is an award-winning salesperson and marketing executive, a winner of the *NM Business Weekly*’s 2010 Top Performing CEOs Award, and winner of the American Marketing Association’s state Professional Services “Marketer of the Year” award. Her website is www.YouCanSell.com. She also offers executive coaching through www.YouCanLeadCoaching.com.

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