

Vol. I of the **31 Days To...** series.



# 31 Days To...

*Grow your business in just one month*

## Networking Event Mastery



**Bruce Brown**



Quantum Results Coaching

“You are here to enable the divine purpose of the universe to unfold. *That’s how important you are.*”  
-- Eckhart Tolle, *The Power of Now*

“Your success in life is my purpose and my joy.” –  
Bruce Brown

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## Introduction: The Power of Networking Events

What are your business goals? Are you launching a start up, adding new products or services or do you just want more business? Networking events can help in each case, if you know how to work them. That's why I wrote this book.

I was born to be a networker. I have a natural interest in other people, and am congenitally congenial. In careers as a computer consultant, a high tech free lance writer, and as a REALTOR®, my enjoyment of and appreciation for the power of networking has been a significant factor in growing and maintaining my businesses.

I have found networking events great way to meet people. Beyond just finding new potential clients and referral sources for my businesses, I've also found potential allies and partners for joint ventures.

### *Blog Power*

As a writer, it was natural I would write about what I've learned about networking events in my blog, [www.BeingBruceBrown.com](http://www.BeingBruceBrown.com). I started writing tips about networking events to help people who aren't familiar with them at all or who may not feel confident that they know how to get the most from networking events. I also wanted to share mistakes I've made or seen others make, so my readers could learn faster,

And a strange thing happened. People who read my blog started asking me, "You know those tips you

wrote about networking events? Do you have them all in one place? Could you send me a copy?"

### *A Tip a Day*

That's how this book came about. I wanted to make it short and easy to read, so I distilled 31 tips into their essential elements. You will find more about networking event skills at my web site [www.QuantumResultsCoaching.com](http://www.QuantumResultsCoaching.com), but these 31 tips will give you all you need to get started with making the most of networking events in your area.

You could probably sit down and read this short book in an afternoon – or less – but I recommend you just read one tip a day. Or maybe read it through once, and then go back and focus on one tip per day for a month. And the second time through, take a look at the suggestions and questions on the two pages following each tip. Those added, workbook or journal style pages are there for you to use as you wish, if you want to use them at all, and not all.

And don't just read the tips and answer the questions, go to networking events in your area and apply them! If you read and apply these tips for a month, you'll be well on the road to networking event mastery.

### *The Big Payoff*

And boy, can networking events pay off for you and your business! Even in a mid-sized metropolitan area like Wilmington, NC, where I live, there are a dozen or more events to choose from every week.

Check with your local Chamber of Commerce and other business organizations for sponsored events. You'll also find them listed online and in newspaper calendars; for example, a business paper for the Allentown, Pennsylvania area lists more than 30 networking events in one month. There is no single source for finding networking events throughout the country, but one place to start is <http://NetworkingEventFinders.com>. Based on a rough estimate, there are 8,000 to 10,000 networking events in the U.S. every week.

### *Get Started!*

The opportunity in networking events is there and you'll discover it fun and rewarding to meet new people and establish valuable relationships. It's not rocket science and it isn't hard.

Networking comes easy for me, but not everyone is comfortable walking into a room of strangers and striking up conversations. That's why I wrote this book. If you read the tips in this book and try them out, I think you'll find it's easier than you imagine.

All you have to do is read the first tip, and get ready to make the most of networking events.



*Bruce Brown*



**“Business networking events can be great business builders but you have to show up.”**



## #1 - Show Up (Repeat Often)

Business networking events can be great business builders but you have to show up.

For the best personal result you should go yourself – don't delegate this task, at least not in the beginning, perhaps never. You may decide to bring or send others from your company with you, but the very first step is for you to go.

And it doesn't work to go just once, go home, wait a week, and then say, "Well, *that* doesn't work!" and never go again. Think about it. Networking events can refresh and solidify existing relationships and can also be a chance to meet new people. If you only attend once, don't expect much... except maybe some great appetizers.

**List three media sources that publish announcements of local networking events.**

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**Book four to six networking events on your calendar for the next 30 days.**

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**Who else in your company should attend networking events?**

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**If you couldn't make a networking event you planned to attend, who in your company would be your best replacement?**

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**“Start with your most powerful people attractor:  
your smile.”**

## #2 - Smile (Yes, you can!)

Once you actually get to an in-person networking gathering, there are a few basics to keep in mind. The very first and most important tip is to start with your most powerful people attractor: your smile. It's easy; you don't have to remember to bring it along (like, ahem, business cards), and you needn't worry about interrupting people.

Now, there are a few refinements I'd like to mention about smiling at networking events.

- Smile early and often. People are attracted to people who smile. Make smiling your default expression.
- Look at people when you smile, it increases the attraction power and makes more sense. If you stand and smile at your shoes or the wall, that not only won't work *for* you, it might work *against* you - people may well wonder if you're OK.
- Mean it. An insincere smile looks phony to genuine people - it only attracts other phonies (and that's *not* why you go to networking events). Be genuine; just relax and smile.

(Bonus - Do what politicians, actors, many super sales people, preachers, and reality show hosts do: practice your smile in front of a mirror.)

How do you know when someone's smile is insincere?

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Practice smiling every day in front of a mirror. Do it for a week and record how smiling is different for you after just a week.

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List two techniques you can use to intentionally get yourself ready before you enter a networking event?

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Consciously pay attention to how people react when you smile at them. Record your results here.

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*“Always keep a supply of business cards with you.”*



### #3 - Bring Business Cards (More than a Few)

Okay, so you may think this way too elementary, but I beg to differ. Always keep a supply of business cards with you, and especially remember to bring a bunch when you go to business networking events. Everyone forgets or runs out at times, so make an effort to stay supplied.

Get extra cards, put stacks in lots of places (office, home, car, golf bag), and always remember to check that you have a good supply.

It's also a good idea to bring index cards and a pen for taking notes, but business cards are a must. So, keep it simple, and remember to bring your cards.

Not long ago I went to an event and left my 3x5 card holder in the car and reverted to taking notes on the backs of other people's business cards (and a few of mine), which is truly bad form, but I did it. Better to have the information than later wonder who was who.

One last note: business networking events are not *only* about grabbing as many other cards as you can. In fact, if you show up and start pushing your card on other folks and asking everyone for theirs cards, you'll come across as selling, which is not what networking, is about. In general, never offer your card; always let someone ask for it. Focus on getting just a few important business cards you will follow up on in the next day or two.

**How many of your own business cards do you have in your current inventory?**

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**What improvements do you need to make to your business card?**

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**When will you order a new supply of business cards?**

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**Where should you keep a good supply of your own business cards?**

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*“A networking event is not the place to go looking for a date.”*

#### #4 - Be Friendly (But Remember It's Business)

For most people this tip is again just oh-so obvious, but business networking events are not the same as social, dating type events. They may look similar and are often held in like locations, such as bars, restaurants, clubs, or cool outdoor settings, but a networking event is not a place to go to get a date.

Sure, it happens that people meet at work or at business events and form more than business relationships, but the primary purpose of a business networking event is to meet people, to be part of the business community, and to possibly find a way to help others there.

Be friendly, go with the flow, and laugh and shake hands, but don't go with the expectation of leaving with someone. Wrong venue, wrong time of day, wrong attitude, just wrong.

**What would you say to someone who started to come on to you at a networking event?**

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**Are you aware of any networking events you'd rather avoid because they feel too social?**

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**Are there networking events you'd rather avoid because they feel too unfriendly?**

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**How would you attempt to break into a group of strangers at a networking event?**

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*“Two or three people are an optimum number of new contacts for a typical two hour event”*



## #5 - Quality Not Quantity

To make the most of the time you spend attending networking events, be sure you set realistic objectives. If an event is likely to have 60 to 80 attendees, it would be great to convert every single one of them into customers or clients for life, even if you've never met before. But guess what? It's not going to happen.

If all you want are names and addresses, use a directory. The highest and best use of networking events is to touch base with people you already know, nurture recently formed relationships, and meet a few new people with whom you can establish the beginning of a solid relationship. My personal goal is to leave each event with the names and contact info of two or three new folks with whom I'm highly motivated to follow up as soon as possible after the event. For me, two or three people are an optimum number of new contacts for a typical two hour event.

A good perspective to use is that when you go to networking events you aren't looking for customers, you're looking for strong future referral sources. Think about people to whom you personally refer others to in various fields. They are generally either people or companies with whom you've had personal experience and therefore trust or people referred to you by trusted friends.

List three people you met at recent networking events who you would like to see at another event.

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Think of three business categories which would likely have good referrals for you.

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**For 30 days track the number of new good contacts you make at networking events.**

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**Who are three people you've met recently for whom you could be a good referral source?**

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*“Consider arriving a bit early or staying after the official end of a networking event as a way to accelerate building new relationships.”*

## #6 - Arrive Early or Stay Late (Maybe Both)

Keeping the concept of “quality time” in mind, consider arriving a bit early or staying after the official end of networking events as a way to accelerate your building of new relationships.

By “arriving early”, I’m not talking about anything more than 10 to 15 minutes (though this can vary by region and by group). If you don’t know the organizers, hosts, and sponsors, this can be a great time to meet them. If you make a good impression, you may find that smoothes your way to meeting other people.

Staying late can also be a good idea, but only if it seems natural. Don’t be the only guest who lingers; that might irritate polite hosts who really just want to call it a day. If it does work to stick around, volunteer to help clean up or straighten out if it seems appropriate.

You also may find yourself involved in conversations that last beyond the posted end time - again, stay aware of the needs of the event organizers and if you and another guest are still gabbing away, consider taking your meeting some place else.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is the "arrive late, leave early" approach, which seems to defeat the purpose of even showing up. I mean, why waste a clean shirt or blouse if you are just going to breeze through - that doesn't make much of an impression (at least not a positive one).

**Identify one regularly scheduled networking event to which you can commit to arriving early.**

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**After you've gone early a few times to a networking event, evaluate the experience and the result.**

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Identify one regularly scheduled networking event to which you can commit to staying a bit late to help out.

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After 30 days, record your experience and results of staying after an event.

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*“Don’t go to a networking event expecting to make a sale or get hired to perform a service.”*



## #7 - Bring You, Not Your Business

Most people don't go to networking events intending to buy stuff or hire people. Don't go to a networking event expecting to make a sale or get hired to perform a service. Go to meet people with whom you'll hopefully build great relationships.

So bring yourself. Don't even consider talking about your business very much. Unless someone starts asking a lot of questions about your business, you're better off meeting a few people with whom you click or have something in common and getting to know them a bit.

And when you bring yourself, "be" yourself. Be the genuine you. You likely learned long ago that you won't ever please everyone and you also won't be drawn to everyone either. So be yourself, which should be easier than putting on some kind of fake "show" and see who you connect with.

So it's easy, right? Just be yourself and make the effort to talk about your business no more than maybe 20% to 25% of the time at most.

**Describe your natural, genuine self in one sentence.**

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**With what types of people do you have the most in common?**

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**What are your favorite non-business topics?**

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**How can you gracefully detach from an awkward connection at a networking event?**

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*“You won’t build relationships only by going to networking events. Make a date for coffee.”*

## #8 - Make a Date (For coffee!)

A great way to maximize the effectiveness of networking events is to make follow up appointments. You may be an awesome connector and great at meeting new folks, but any solid networking connection must be followed up outside the networking event itself.

During most networking events, especially those that are well attended, you really can't hear that well, it's tough to take notes, and you also don't want to spend all your time focusing just on one person and his or her business - use the event to meet several people.

If you can leave with two or three appointments to follow up with a coffee or lunch meeting sometime in the next few days (or at most a week), you have scored a major win.

In some groups these follow up meetings are called "1-on-1's", or (if that sounds slightly suspect) "1-to-1's". The idea is to spend an hour or so learning more about the person's business. It's even better if it's not one-sided, if you each take a turn to explain your business or service.

**Who are four people you've met at networking events you want to call for coffee or lunch?**

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**List two ways you can help each of the four people above.**

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**What are three vital pieces of information about you and your business you want the people you meet to know?**

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**What are two ways you can ask people to help you with your business?**

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*“Go to networking events with a strategic partner.  
Introduce each other.”*



## #9 - Don't Go Alone! Take a Strategic Partner

When you attend a networking event, particularly if you don't know a lot of people already, it's a great idea to go with someone else. If you go with the right person and discuss the event ahead of time, you can maximize your time during the event.

Go with a good networker and someone who is confident and social. Don't go with someone who will just cling to you and hang back.

Go with someone who understands that the trade off is that you will introduce each other, in a natural manner, when it's appropriate.

Don't go with someone in your own field. A person in a complementary field can be a good choice, but the best can be someone with whom you already have a strategic alliance.

- If you attend an event with a co-worker or friend, don't spend your time talking together, you can do that at work or in your everyday life. Talk to other people. That's why you're there!

List three people you know who are social, confident networkers.

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Contact each of the three people above and ask them to attend a separate, specific event. List the events here.

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**Write your best strategy for working a networking event with a strategic partner.**

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**Journal or record your “wins” after attending networking events with three different strategic partners.**

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*“Cross pollinate – go to multiple networking events.”*

## #10 - Cross Pollinate (at Multiple Events)

If you only attend one networking event regularly and you “work it” well, that’s great. But imagine what could happen if you attend several each month.

If you’re in marketing and sales or actively trying to grow a business, attending one networking event a week doesn’t sound out of line. Watch out though; if you so love to go to business networking events, it can take away from other vital processes in your professional or personal life.

If you decide to cross pollinate business networking events and want to be systematic about it, one strategy is to allocate a number of hours each month for networking events and determine how many events you'll attend each month in each of three categories:

- Regular events you attend 80% or more of the time.
- Occasional events you’ll show up at once in a while.
- New events. By trying out new events at least every other month, you’ll have a great chance of starting with a new group of relationships.

**How many hours a month do you plan to devote to attending networking events?**

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**List one or more networking events you do or will attend regularly.**

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**What networking events do you attend occasionally?**

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**What new networking events do you plan to attend in the next quarter?**

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*"Listen twice, speak once."*



## #11 - Listen Twice, Speak Once

Veteran salespeople will tell you, “You have two ears and one mouth. Listen twice, speak once.”

The greatest key to successful networking is to be a good listener. Of course, this advice bears well in other situations too, but it fits particularly well at business networking events. If you want to make a good impression in a short time, show up, be friendly, be enthusiastic, and listen!

If you spend all your time talking, you won't learn much. If you show genuine interest in others, demonstrated by listening to them, your networking will become more efficient and draw others to you much more effectively.

**Are you a good listener? Why or why not?**

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**What body language signals that a person is listening?**

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**What body language signals someone is not listening?**

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**What should you do if the event is so noisy you can't hear what other people are saying?**

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*“Don’t just show up at networking events. Have a system and work it.”*

## #12 - Have a System (and Work It!)

It is possible to go to a lot of business networking events, have a great time, get to know people, and yet leave a lot on the table. The way to maximize benefits from attending business networking events is to have a system.

A good system includes:

- Already have a database or contact manager program in use on your computer.
- Be sure to get business cards or contact information from people you meet for follow up.
- Either take notes immediately after or within a day at most about each person on your follow up list, focusing on how you can help them and what you'll do to follow up.
- Decide exactly how you'll follow up (such as email, phone call, coffee meeting, office appointment, hand written note, or greeting card).
- The most important part of your system is to ***work it!*** The greatest system in the world won't do you any good if you don't actually implement it.

**Do you have a good contact management system? If not, will you commit to getting one? By when?**

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**How do you handle new contact info after each networking event?**

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How many times and at what intervals should you follow up after meeting someone?

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How many hours a week do you schedule for follow up?

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*“Look for additional networking events in your area  
and let others know about them.”*



### #13 - Be in the Know About Other Events

Here's one way to tell the difference between a social event and a business networking event. People at parties or social events are focused on having a great time then and there and maybe reciprocating if it's a party in someone's house. But folks who attend business networking events and benefit from them always look for other events to attend.

So be the guy (or gal) who knows. Of course, you don't want to run into an event and start hollering right off in front of the host and organizers about a really cool event across town or across the street (duh!).

Remember that not every great opportunity for networking looks like a business networking event, so if you discover another good avenue, be sure to share that, too. Also, look for business shows and expos that can be good opportunities to meet people from other businesses.

Look for other business networking opportunities and share the information with people who are interested.

**Name two people you know with whom you could exchange information about networking events.**

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**What are your three best online or print resources for learning about new networking events?**

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List two or three local or regional business expos or showcase events scheduled in the next quarter and six people with whom you'll share that information.

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List other types of events in your area that aren't traditional networking events but where you could meet potential clients or referral sources.

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*“Don’t eat or drink too much.”*

## #14 - Don't Eat or Drink Too Much

Keep your primary purpose in mind. You attend business networking events to meet people, refresh relationships, and make an impression. It's called "marketing". Even though there are often great food and ample liquid refreshment, these events aren't the place you go for a meal or a lot of drinking.

Your primary focus should be on meeting and talking with people. If you're consistently in the corner, in the middle of the room, or in the worst case, standing right in front of the food table, stuffing your face, don't expect to make a lot of new friends.

There is one practical reason not to get too hung up with eating and drinking at business networking events: if one hand is holding a drink and one hand is holding a plate of food and you're all standing, how do you practically manage to exchange business cards, shake hands, or even make a few notes on a 3x5 card or notepad? I find at most events I just ask for a bottle of water and even then I often lose it when I put it down to take photos or take notes.

Bottom line: if you're hungry or want to go drinking, save it for after the networking event.

**Make a checklist of essentials to carry with you to networking events.**

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**How would you ask someone at a networking event for permission to take their photo?**

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List three ways you can make a good impression at networking events.

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What's the best way to deal with an important contact at a networking event who has obviously had too much to drink?

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*“Be a connector.”*



## #15 - Are You a Connector?

Do people say to you, "You know everybody!"? If you hear that fairly often, it's a good thing. Now of course you don't know "everybody", but if you do actively work at knowing people, AND if you make a habit of recommending or introducing people, you'll quickly be recognized as a 'Connector'.

Connectors are valued because if someone else is trying to recommend a whatever (insert business specialty here) and can't think of someone they know and trust, they'll make a secondary recommendation to ask the Connector. They might even make an introduction.

Why would you want to be considered a Connector? Well, not only will helping people find others they need or seek be doing a service for those people, which is itself a good thing, but you'll gain points in the networking game when you make a great recommendation or introduction.

It's not hard to become known as a Connector, but if you're not already one (you know it if you are), it takes a little time to get in the habit of meeting and knowing enough about people to recommend them to others.

**Are you a connector?**

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**Who do you know who you consider a connector?**

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**What four traits do connectors have in common?**

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**How can you become known as a better connector?**

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*"If it's not your event, don't try to change it."*

## #16 - Etiquette Do's and Don'ts

The following are some quick behavioral guidelines for networking events:

- Do go along with the program.
- Do introduce yourself to the organizers, host(s), and showcased vendor(s).
- Do thank hosts and organizers when you leave.
- Do stand away from the front of the bar or the food table so others can get access.
- Do make a practice of only making positive comments about people. Any other comments stick to you in ways you won't like and certainly won't help your business.
- Don't play practical jokes at others' expense.
- Don't criticize the food.
- Don't use this type of event to argue politics or religion.
- Don't bring children unless it's made very clear by the event host and sponsor that children are welcome.
- Don't ask to take home food, drink, or other goodies for people who "couldn't make it".

**Can you think of two additional “do’s” for networking events?**

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**Can you think of two additional “don’ts” for networking events?**

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**Should you inform the event host or hostess if someone on the wait staff is rude?**

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**What are two special ways you can thank an event organizer for an exceptional event?**

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*“To get the most from your time, plan ahead and do your homework.”*



## #17 - Do Your Homework

There's certainly nothing wrong with just showing up at business networking events, but if you want to get the most from your time, plan ahead and do your homework.

Make an effort to find out who attends regularly, and for sure make note of the organizers, hosts, and sponsors. You can Google those companies or people in advance or on the day of the event to learn just a little about each one. Also check to see if they're in the news for awards, business or ad campaigns, or anything else noteworthy.

If you identify one or more people that you definitely want to meet, burn those names in your forebrain so that you'll remember to look for them. You can even ask the hosts when you arrive if your targets are there because you'd like to meet them. They may be able to point them out for you, and if you're lucky, will even introduce you in person.

If there's something special about the meeting venue (if it's at a park, or an historic building, or a place of any significance) make note of it as a minor factoid to pass on during a lull in conversation -- if appropriate, because of course you don't want to go into lecture mode when others just want to schmooze over wings and beer.

**If you don't have time to research a networking event before you attend, who can do it for you?**

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**How can you find out what networking events an important contact you'd like to meet attends?**

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**Would you be impressed and more open than usual if someone asked the event host or hostess to introduce them to you?**

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**Would you consider it a waste of time going to a networking event if you knew nothing about it?**

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*“Be helpful.”*

## #18 - Lend a Hand (But Don't Be Pushy)

It's great to help out anywhere you see the opportunity, not just at networking events.

If you help the organizers and hosts of an event, especially at the beginning, you might find you get introduced more enthusiastically and also get known as someone who's a helper and willing to pitch in. When you introduce yourself to the hosts or organizers, add a simple, "If there's any way I can help today/tonight just let me know." That could be all it takes.

Sometimes the need for help is so obvious you won't even need to ask. There are probably more opportunities to help at the end of an event than at the beginning. If the meeting space needs to be rearranged after the event (moving and folding chairs and tables, for example, or helping the showcased vendors move out their display materials), that's a perfect time to help and to get to know others.

The bottom line is that being a person who helps others is a great tip for life and can only serve you well at networking events.

**What three tasks can you help with at the beginning of an event?**

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**What three tasks can you help with during an event?**

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**What three tasks can you help with at the end of an event?**

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**Are you already known as a helpful person? If not, how can you turn that around?**

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*“Learn to be comfortable taking digital photos.”*



## #19 - Take Photos, Maybe Videos

This tip is one that bears a bit of caution. One way to meet people, be noticed, and have a lasting reminder of networking events and who attended them is to take photos or videos.

It's not uncommon of course for people to take photos of each other but it's a little less common for someone walking around shooting the whole event. I do it, and if it's not too noisy will sometimes record short headshot video clips as well, but I make a point of letting the host and organizers know I'm going to do it and that I'll also blog about the event.

The point of taking the shots is to capture a record of who was there. If you're also going to blog it's a great idea to take notes on a 3x5 card or the backs of business cards.

If someone asks me specifically not to photograph them, I always comply. But you'll find most people at networking events welcome an opportunity to be noticed.

I encourage you to take a digital camera in your pocket and at least get a few shots of people you spend time talking with. I love to follow up within a few days of an event with a photo of the event or even a card with a photo of the person I'm mailing it to on the front.

**Do you have a small, reliable digital camera? Can you use it to take a quick photo?**

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**Do you have a small video camera?**

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**How could you use a nice photo of an event to thank the organizer?**

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**How would you use a nice photo of an event to follow up with a new contact?**

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*“Consider blogging your network event attendance.”*

## #20 - Blog It in Public!

Think about writing a blog about the events you attend. Blogging isn't for everyone; if writing is a huge, time-consuming chore for you, I suggest you don't do it. But you can get real benefits from blogging about networking events, and it can be free and easy.

Depending how you blog — how often you post to your blog, the tone and purpose of your blog, and the way you write —this type of coverage can be a great way to add value to the whole event for yourself and for others.

One suggestion right off the bat is to send a link for the blog post to the event organizers, hosts, sponsors, and anyone else who will give you their email address. If you send them an email link to the blog post within a day or two, you'll get a fairly high hit ratio by the people on your list.

I do try to include names and possibly business names of individual or small group shots in a blog post, but if I include shots of the crowd I don't get all compulsive about that. I don't always remember to do this but it's nice to have a shot or two of the place where the event was held - it's appreciated by the host(s) and sometimes can even get a link to your blog posted on the host business's blog or web site.

So blog on, networkers!

**Do you currently have a business blog?**

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**If you need help setting up a blog, who are two people you can ask?**

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**Will you commit to starting a blog? If so, by when?**

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**What networking event will you put on your blog?**

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*“Don’t spend all your time with your friends.”*



## #21 - Avoid Your Friends!

This tip might sound a bit odd, or contradictory to earlier tips in which we told you to go with someone else to business network events, but the real deal here is that the primary purpose of networking events is *not* to hang out with your friends, but instead to make new contacts and build on existing relationships. That doesn't mean you won't become friends with people you meet at networking events — in fact the odds are that you will — but spending your time with people who are already good friends will waste the opportunity of the networking event.

If you spend your time in a corner with close friends, that may feel fun and safe and all that, and yeah, you'll be seen at the event, but it will not do as much good for your business as getting outside your social circle and meeting new people. In fact, if others think that you want to stick only to your friends, it can work against you.

So don't really ignore your friends at networking events. Say "Hi"; maybe spend a few minutes, but then move on to see who else you can meet.

A twist on this that can work in your favor is to ask your friends in the room this question, "Who do you know here who would be the very best for me to meet for my business, and will you introduce me?" Then when they introduce you as their best friend or at least a really good friend, if they have a good relationship with the other person, you'll get some of their borrowed trust, which is a great benefit.

**Do any of your friends cling to you at networking events?**

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**Do you have a tendency to hang out with your friends at networking events?**

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**How can you politely suggest to your friends that you split up at networking events?**

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**Who are one or two friends to meet just before a networking event to strategize how you will work the event?**

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*“Use social media to boost your networking.”*

## #22 - Use Social Media Before & After the Event

Do you use social media? Tweeting or updating your status on social networking sites about networking events benefits in several ways:

- It provides some useful content.
- Coverage of networking events benefits the event itself, which is appreciated by the organizers, hosts, and sponsors.
- Your overall marketing presence is increased.

So it's a win-win-win.

Here's what to do:

- Announce the event time and place a few days ahead of time.
- Publish a reminder the day of the event.
- Announce that you are going to attend the event on the day of the event - offer your own contact info if people have questions
- Mention the event after the fact and announce when and where the next one will be held.

**What forms of social media do you use?**

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**If you don't use social media now, will you commit to using at least one form on a regular basis? By when?**

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**If you do use social media now, list two or three upcoming networking events you'll mention regarding your plans to attend.**

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**How will you share your networking event experience on social media?**

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*“Don’t be shy about posting your photos.”*



## #23 - Be a Paparazzi Poster!

If you get some good photos, post them online.

I post event photos on my blog in an entry about the event, but I also typically put at least some of them in a minimum of two other places. I create an album for the event in Facebook, upload the photos, and then tag as many people as I reasonably can. It's amazing how quickly people will find their photos in my albums on Facebook. I've also found that sometimes people find the event and tag themselves, or others will do it, which is also helpful and lets you know people are paying attention to your photo uploads.

I also use TwitPic to post the best photos automatically to Twitter and to Facebook.

Occasionally I'll also put the photos on local social media networking sites, which get a lot of local exposure.

So shoot, publish, and post photos from networking events. It helps others, it's not too time-consuming, and it can surely help your business as well. And, it is free!

**Do you have a small, reliable digital camera ready to go with extra batteries to take to your next networking event?**

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**What are the next two networking events you plan to attend, take some photos of people and verify their names and companies?**

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**If you don't know how to create a Facebook photo album, who can help you?**

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**List two local networking events following which you'll post a photo album.**

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*“Actively blogging about networking events can be part of your branding.”*

## #24 - Blog It! Part 2

If you want to step up to another level in being a person other people know and get introduced to new people, consider writing a blog just about networking events. You could do what I've done with my networking event tips (using ***your own content***, of course) or find another way to approach the topic. Put up a blog and consistently create and post content relevant to business networking in your area.

There is a slight concern with this strategy, with two factors:

- People begin to label you as someone who writes about and knows about networking events and they think that's your primary or only business - which may not be that bad if you're a marketer or business consultant, but otherwise sends the wrong message.
- Running a blog takes time. It might not cost money, but it will cost time and effort  
If you do it, do it well

If you do decide to put up a blog or website dedicated to business networking, please email me the link at [\*\*bruce@quantumresultscoaching.com\*\*](mailto:bruce@quantumresultscoaching.com); I'd love to see it. If you want, you can send me an email with your idea for a blog, and I'll be happy to give you feedback.

**Do you know anyone who maintains a blog about local networking events?**

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**If you were going to blog about networking events, what would you do in your blog to be distinctive?**

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List three potential advantages for your business if you launched a business networking event blog or website.

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If you think maintaining a blog would be too time-consuming, who could partner with you to produce one?

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*“Be on the lookout for ways you and others can be helpful.”*



## #25 - Look for Ways to Help

If you believe, as I do, that all of your really good business comes from relationships, then this tip has special significance. Helping others purely for the sake of helping is nice to do, good to do, and also a surefire way to help your own reputation and business. Boosting your service and finding ways to help others can make life more pleasant and rewarding and may repay you in ways you've never considered.

One easy way to help others is to make kind, appropriate introductions between people. You can also help the organizers, hosts, and sponsors, but look for ways you can help people who attend. That doesn't mean you have to wait on people; as you hear what they say about their lives or their businesses, listen for ways that you can assist them. You will discover that without spending any money and little or no time or physical effort, you often can provide real help.

A common suggestion for increasing business profitability is to increase your level of service. In the same vein, a great way to get more from your business networking is to find ways to take your level of service even higher.

**Do you attend networking events to give or to gain?**

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**Why would giving with no expectation of a return from that person help your business?**

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**Who are two people you know who exemplify the “givers gain” philosophy?**

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**What are three things you can do at the next networking event to be helpful to people?**

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*“Be yourself.”*

## #26 - Always Be Yourself (Consistently)

A key to successful business networking is to be the “real” you and always bring that same person to networking events. Each of us can change, grow, and develop, so we don’t have to remain in the same position or rut, but at the same time our individuality remains.

If people who already know you in your “normal” self see you acting like a completely different person in public events, you could likely confuse and possibly annoy them. For that reason alone you should be genuine, for the last thing you want to do is alienate your established relationships.

Another reason presenting a consistent "off" face is a bad idea is that it can be exhausting - if you have to work hard to maintain a posed persona, not only will it come across somehow odd, no matter how good an actor you are, but it will also wear you out.

The very worst you can do at networking events, at least regarding how you present yourself, is to be wildly inconsistent.

So be real, bring your own self, have fun, and help people; that’s all it really takes.

**How would your best friend describe you?**

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**Would your best friend say you act like yourself at networking events? And if not, why is that?**

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**How would you like others to experience you as a professional?**

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**What will you do to catch and correct yourself at networking events if you're not being yourself?**

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*“Seek allies.”*



## #27 - Look for an Ally

People often feel isolated in business settings, in need of a supportive friend. A customer prospect is a quick fix, but it's still a lonely connection as the relationship is in one direction.

Instead, look for potential allies. They can be advisors, cheerleaders, and ambassadors who generate quality referrals. They become emotionally invested in your success and want you to succeed. Note that these allies can even be competitors; a potter friend of mine says that she finds that other potters at craft fairs are some of the most supportive contacts that she makes, sharing advice about other shows, offering ideas for products or display (and "stealing" ideas from her with her blessing).

So look beyond just referrals and develop contacts who can become true allies. The good feeling will last a lot longer, and your business is likely to be stronger for it.

List three people you would like to cultivate as allies.

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How would you approach a potential ally with a win/win proposal?

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**How will you cultivate relationships to form strong alliances?**

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**Who do you know in business who has strong allies and could provide you guidance in forming your own alliances?**

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*"Be your brand."*

## #28 - Brand Yourself (Tattoo Optional)

In your networking, just as in your business, it's a great idea to develop a powerful brand. Elements of your brand can include your business name, logo, slogan, mission statement: anything used in your business identity, advertising, and marketing.

Any time you or anyone else from your business represents the company in public, use your brand, promote your brand, and while it may sound silly to some, "be" your brand.

For example, if your company provides insurance products, conveying your unique brand with a message of protection and security is important. Or a personal coaching company that focuses on helping clients make great strides in business could find an image that captures the theme and use it consistently.

There are countless ways to convey your brand at networking events. A lapel pin can be a start, but handouts, business cards, goodie bag giveaways, and sponsored event displays all make strong statements. If your business brand captures the sense and even the emotion of your mission statement and you "talk the walk", your branding at networking events can be a trend-setter.

**How do you define your brand?**

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**List all the tools you use to convey your brand.**

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**What's missing in your branding program?**

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**List six steps you need to take (with deadlines) to strengthen your brand.**

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*“Develop a signature element.”*



## #29 - What's Your Signature?

You've heard of a signature drink in a bar or a signature meal in a restaurant, or maybe a signature gift box from a jeweler. You can also have personal signature elements when you show up at networking events.

What are the elements of an appropriate and effective signature piece? It needs to be consistent, noticeable, and most of all, appropriate. For example, wearing red glasses frames would certainly be noticeable and consistent, but not appropriate for a profession that is expected to be conservative

For some, a pocket handkerchief in a distinctive color or pattern could be a signature. Or it could be having a supply of distinctive pens that you give away freely.

Just remember that a signature element works best when it's distinctive, is used consistently, and is appropriate for your business.

List three people you know who have consistent personal signatures.

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List two ideas for personal signature elements that would be good fits for you and your business.

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**What one signature element will you incorporate into your branding?**

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**Name the next networking event where you will commit to introducing your personal signature.**

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*"Team power!"*

### #30 - Power Up with Power Teams

This tip is most useful for larger events, where you can't possibly meet everyone, but there may be some folks who would have loved to have met you.

So here's the scenario: You're going to a big event and know that you can't possibly meet everyone, but that's OK, you already know that leaving with contact info for two or three great people to follow up with and get to know better is a win. However, there may be some folks that would have loved to meet you and vice versa but the sheer size of the crowd and the lack of time make it impractical for everyone to really know who they might have missed.

The solution: go with a **power team**, a group of two or more people in related but non-competing businesses in the same field. For example, a REALTOR®'s power team might consist of a lender, an attorney, and a decorator.

Agree ahead of time with your power team that:

- For this event, you will act as a team.
- You'll carry each other's business cards and collect cards for each other.

The core agreement is that you will actively be on the lookout for *great* contacts for each other.

**What business categories make up your power team?**

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**List three candidates for each business category on your power team.**

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List two events you'll attend with members of your power team.

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After each event with a power team, ask the team for feedback and list planned improvements.

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*"Spice it up!"*



### #31 - Spice It Up!

This tip can add fun and energy to networking events and power up your own presence at events. Networking events can get stale, so be the person who comes up with fresh ideas.

I'm not suggesting you run your own networking events. You might do that, but will that really serve your business? However, you can contact the organizers of local events, after you've gotten to know them of course, and suggest some variety.

You don't have to go over the top with your networking because the primary focus is still people meeting other people, but you could suggest ideas like:

- Speed networking
- Elevator speech judging
- A business hot seat

If you keep the ideas simple to understand, easy to set up and run, and related to the primary purpose of business networking, it can help the event, help others, and help you. Win-win-win.

**What's the most effective activity you've experienced at a networking event?**

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**List two networking event organizers who would be open to new ideas.**

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**List two ideas you'd suggest to networking event organizers to energize their events.**

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**Poll your networking associates and list their top suggestions for improving networking events.**

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## Go Get Started

Okay, so that's the list; 31 tips in 31 days to make you a stronger networker.

If you read the whole book through from beginning to end (and, yeah, I know some of you did), that's fine, but now, to really get the benefit from the 31 tips, go back to the beginning, read the first one and focus on it. Repeat for 31 days, one day per tip.

And lest you think that just reading a book of strategic tips will make you a super networker, please do yourself a favor and add three more steps after you read any of the tips:

- At least think about the questions or suggestions following each tip.
- Go to a networking event.
- Implement the strategy.

You know what? Some of these tips may not be right for you. Some may work immediately. You won't know till you try them in real life.

Go to networking events. Implement the tips. Repeat. You'll get better. Do them over and over until they're second nature.

And have a great time. If you have a good time at networking events, they'll work for you. I promise.

## About Bruce Brown

Bruce Brown describes himself as a serial entrepreneur with a chronic networking condition.

From his earliest days of networking in kindergarten in Lewiston, Maine to his present day high visibility in social media and ubiquitous presence at business networking events in the greater Wilmington, North Carolina region, Bruce has always been drawn to meeting and getting to know people.

Voted most versatile by his high school classmates, Bruce was President of his class at the University of Connecticut where he graduated with a B.A. in English. He also has graduate degrees in psychology and in counseling.

Bruce has always been interested in learning about new businesses and meeting the people who work in them. In his varied career he has worked full or part time as a tobacco field hand, librarian, warehouse worker, truck driver, travel agent, high school English teacher, therapist, hypnotist, real estate agent, computer consultant, free lance writer, leather craftsman, business consultant and coach, waiter, machinist, aerobics instructor, and personal trainer. He has also worked in appliance, electronics, and mens' clothing sales.

Bruce taught on the graduate level at colleges and universities, in fields as diverse as counseling, education administration, computer applications, and statistics.

In 1990 Bruce co-authored with Craig Stinson *Getting the Most Out of IBM CURRENT* published by Brady Books, Simon & Shuster. *IBM CURRENT* was one of the earliest PC-based personal information management programs.

In 2007 Bruce and his wife Marge wrote *Ready, Set, Invest!* published by Lulu Publishing, a guide for beginning real estate investors.

From 1985 through 2004 Bruce wrote literally thousands of articles about personal computing. For much of that time he was Contributing Editor for *PC Magazine* and *Computer Shopper Magazine*.

Bruce currently maintains several blogs, including [BeingBruceBrown.com](http://BeingBruceBrown.com) – which he uses to document his travels and activities, networking events, and works in progress.

Bruce is a real estate Broker with Coldwell Banker Sea Coast Realty in Leland, NC, [ColdwellBankerSeaCoastRealty.com/BruceBrown](http://ColdwellBankerSeaCoastRealty.com/BruceBrown).

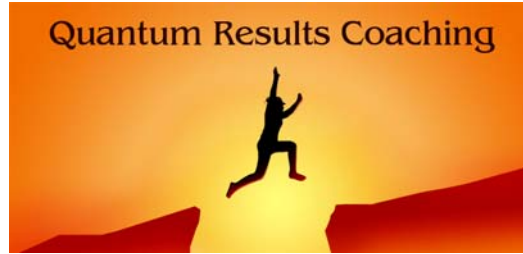
Bruce and Marge are also Senior Managers with SendOutCards. Their independent distributorship, Fat City Cards, can be found at [FatCityCards.com](http://FatCityCards.com).

Quantum Results Coaching is Bruce and Marge's coaching and publishing company. In addition to writing the *31 Days to Mastery Series*, of which this is the first volume (12 volumes are planned), Bruce also works with entrepreneurs and triathletes who are seeking rapid, significant improvement in their

businesses or sport. [QuantumResultsCoaching.com](http://QuantumResultsCoaching.com) is the web site for Bruce's coaching and workshops, publications, and speaking. Bruce and Marge are both certified Facilitators for Enlighted Alliance's Passion Test Workshop, which they also offer via Quantum Results Coaching.

Bruce and Marge co-founded the Leland Business Attractors Chapter of BNI in Leland, NC and are also both very active with the North Brunswick Chamber of Commerce. Bruce can be found at many networking events from Wilmington, North Carolina to North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Bruce and Marge, who met on a blind date in 1970, were engaged in thirteen days, married four months later and recently celebrated their 39th anniversary. They have three children, two grandchildren, and a 100-pound Giant Schnauzer.



## 31 Days to Business Mastery Series

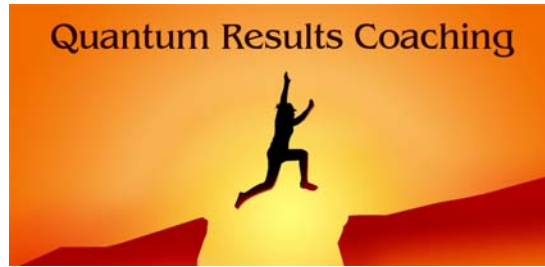
I hope you've enjoyed reading *31 Days to Networking Event Mastery* and that you find it of immediate use in growing your business.

I also have an audio version of *31 Days to Networking Event Mastery* available in MP3 download format. This download includes all the content of the print copy and additional discussion and comments for some of the 31 tips. Each tip is a separate audio track for easy reference and navigation.

To order the audio version of the book, go to [www.QuantumResultsCoaching.com](http://www.QuantumResultsCoaching.com). The price of the audio version is \$7.95. North Carolina residents are charged 7.75% sales tax.

Additional titles in the 31 Days to Business Mastery Series are planned. To be informed about the availability of future titles, please go to [www.QuantumResultsCoaching.com](http://www.QuantumResultsCoaching.com) and sign up for our free weekly e-newsletter.





## Coaching, Speaking, and The Passion Test Workshop

Bruce Brown is an experienced coach who works with high-energy, high-achieving entrepreneurs who are seeking significant positive change in their businesses. He is also available for speaking engagements on topics of business and personal development.



Bruce and Marge Brown are certified Passion Test Workshop Facilitators. Bruce also does one-to-one coaching based on the Passion Test.

For information about coaching, workshops, or speaking, contact Bruce directly at (910) 297-8753 or [Bruce@QuantumResultsCoaching.com](mailto:Bruce@QuantumResultsCoaching.com).

For information about The Passion Test, go to <http://www.ThePassionTest.com/?af=44973>