

The Business of Creating Enduring Business Connections

excerpted from ***Get Along with Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere--8 Keys to Creating Enduring Connections*** by Sandra Strauss and Arnold Sanow, Nautilus Communications, 2003)



Enduring Connection: *a valuable relationship, long-lasting in nature, created with intent to honor needs and sustained by choices to respect them.*

Feeling connected and valued within the workplace is vital for creating the right climate that brings out the best in employees—making them happier, energized, primed to put their potential to work and more satisfied as a result. A cooperative business environment cultivates the expression of excellence along with good feelings that carry over to a company’s clients and customers, too. “Get-along power” works wonders on the job!

Whether as colleagues, customers or clients, when our needs to be appreciated, respected, recognized, validated and valued are honored, enduring connections are constructed. Good communication is the conduit, a powerful connecting force. The combination of what we say, how we say it as well as what we don’t say, all make impressions with the potential to sustain and strengthen our relationships or to weaken or even destroy them.

The impressions generated in our business relationships are long-remembered, and sometimes even recounted to others years later. We recall how we were treated, how people made us feel, whether our needs were satisfied, what we thought about those we interacted with, what the overall experience was like, along with other aspects of the experience. When those impressions are positive, the flow of good feelings gains our loyalty, generates referrals, boosts the bottom-line and builds an enduring connection. Likewise, poor customer relationships are bound to cost a business plenty—its customers, its reputation, and ultimately, its ability to sustain a profitable market share. The stakes are high when businesses are disconnected from what others seek. It pays to connect and collect all the benefits from doing so.

We may rather quickly forget neutral experiences that don’t leave an impression on us one way or the other. While the memories linger far too long from negative experiences we wish we could forget. But it is the compelling nature of our positive interactions that forge enduring connections—compelling vibrations of dynamic power and vibrancy, created in an ideal connecting environment I call “The Connection Zone.”

What does it take to create an enduring connection? An unyielding commitment as a Conscious Connector, extending respect in each interaction via your words, actions, and attitudes. The words you speak, the gestures you make, the attitudes you project, and the actions you take, all make an impression and determine whether or not people are interested in continuing a

relationship. Often we're presented with split-second choices as to how to respond to someone. With a commitment of entering interactions with positive intention, you respond to others in constructive ways, serving your best interests and honoring the needs of others. Enduring connections are built upon a collection of actions and attitudes which project respect and trust.

When you're focused on what people want, need, and value in all your business relationships, you gain and keep their trust and respect. If you're not, you may find yourself out of The Connection Zone and miss out on all the benefits within that influential space.

So keep a vigilant eye on the quality of your connections because your success and well-being are directly linked to them. Regularly assess whether you're infusing an enduring value into your relationships to make them thrive and flourish:

Are you making good connections a daily priority?

Do your words and actions usually prompt positive responses from others?

When problems arise, do you seek solutions that hold the greatest possibility of satisfying mutual needs?

Do you claim your fair share of mistakes, misunderstandings, or other misbehaviors and seek to repair them?

Do you constantly monitor what's important to people in every arena of your influence and explore ways to honor those needs?

Can people count on you? Do you keep your promises?

Do your business associates realize how much you appreciate their talents, friendship, support, and investment of their personal energy? What are some ways you might acknowledge how much you value them and their contributions?

Is there any relationship that's not working as well as you'd like? What might you do to improve it?

Do you have a special way of adding your personal signature of uniqueness to your working relationships—special things you do to create good feelings with your colleagues and customers? If not, how might you add your own special signature for creating an enduring impression? What might further fortify your unforgettable nature that reinforces your values?

What legacies are you creating in your business relationships that reflect and reinforce your character and your values? How do you want people to think of you and your business, and are your actions supporting that perception?

The investment of your time, energy, and effort in creating enduring connections with intent produces a priceless legacy—a combination of how well and how often you've listened, encouraged, and supported others; empowered them to express their best; recognized and appreciated their gifts, talents, and contributions; respected their feelings and honored their ideas and opinions;

preserved their trust by keeping promises; acted with integrity; and valued them so they know their well-being is your priority.

Creating the Connection Zone experience is invaluable for making enduring impressions with our customers and clients, as well as sustaining critical connections with our coworkers and colleagues. Connect-ability matters on all business fronts, because every business connection counts. Getting in “the Zone” is all about deciding the quality of relationships you want to build and harnessing your connection power to enjoy them!

© 2003 Sandra Strauss and Arnold Sanow

Readers Note: In their book, *Get Along with Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere--8 Keys to Creating Enduring Connections*, Sandra Strauss and Arnold Sanow detail the actions and attitudes that build and sustain quality relationships for business and beyond.

Reprint Rights: Sandy Strauss's articles are copyrighted so if you would like to reprint them please contact Sandra Strauss for permission and include the following: "Reprinted with permission by Sandra Strauss, communications strategist and co-author of *Get Along with Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere--8 Keys to Creating Enduring Connections*, 2003, www.SandraStrauss.com.

20 Tips for Creating Enduring Connections:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Boost good feelings in others | 2. Communicate with care |
| 3. Project a positive presence | 4. Be attentive |
| 5. Build trust; mean what you say, and say what you mean | 6. Act in ways that make people feel valued |
| 7. Seek to understand how others see a situation | 8. Listen |
| 9. Be responsive | 10. Respect differences |
| 11. Praise positive behaviors | 12. Give people credit for their ideas |
| 13. Express a dazzling attitude, even when it's difficult | 14. Accept responsibility; avoid playing the blame game |
| 15. Monitor and master your emotions | 16. Light the way with laughter |
| 17. Project a cooperative spirit | 18. Express enthusiasm |
| 19. Model the behaviors you want others to express | 20. Handle every connection with care and keep them all in good repair |