



JOE SWEENEY'S

NETWORKING
SUCCESS
PLAYBOOK

TIME-TESTED PLAYS FOR SCORING MORE BUSINESS THAN YOU EVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE.

Joe Sweeney's Rules of Engagement

1. Give to others without any expectations or strings attached and you will receive much more than you ever could have expected.
2. Give of yourself and allow life to work its natural course without manipulating the outcome.
3. Networking gives you confidence to interact with others and teaches resiliency.
4. Relationships are what make the world go 'round. We should matter to others and they should matter to us.
5. Touch trumps technology.
6. Act like you belong no matter where you are.
7. Ask good questions.
8. Listen actively, closely, intuitively and to the voice within for opportunities to help others.
9. Take action and be the one who always follows up.
10. Believe and receive. Have faith in yourself and what you are doing.

*"The people you
network with today will
become the superstars
of tomorrow."*

Joe Sweeney, Investment Banker,
New York Times Bestselling Author

Reframe Your Networking Mindset

Networking is about giving, not getting.

This proven process gives you the tools to practice new habits and make networking effective for everyone.

“Joe Sweeney is right. Networking is one of the most crucial aspects of being successful in any workplace. Cultivating personal and business relationships both inside and outside of your workplace will lead to more contacts and greater opportunities.”

Bud Selig,

Commissioner of Major League Baseball

Ask

What you can do for others? How you can grow their business in a style that is creative and persistent.

Listen

Actively, closely and intuitively. Be present. Remember what you hear.

Act

Act without expectation. Participate in everyone's success. Be thoughtful.

Believe

Have faith in yourself. Believe in what you are doing. Believe in positive outcomes for everyone. Success will happen for you. Receive graciously.

Results

Receive rewards beyond your own ambition.

Before You Start, Assess Your Skills

Rate your networking abilities on a scale of 1-5 below.
(1 = rookie 3 = spring training 5 = all-star.)

I have confidence when I walk into a room full of people I do not know.

1 2 3 4 5

I have confidence when I walk into a room full of people who know me.

1 2 3 4 5

The first thing I think about when I meet someone is how I can help them.

1 2 3 4 5

When I meet someone new, I am completely focused on them and listen actively to what they are saying.

1 2 3 4 5

I am consistently aware of my body language and know the message it is sending.

1 2 3 4 5

Before attending a networking event, I create a clear objective and know what I want to accomplish there.

1 2 3 4 5

After meeting someone, I follow up with them and follow through on what I say I will do.

1 2 3 4 5

Get In The Zone

1. What are some ways networking could benefit you in each of the following areas:

Family

Social

Business/Career

2. How do you hear about networking opportunities?

Do you actively network, or does it happen by chance?

3. List three people you know who have a great network and/or seem to know everyone.

4. Networking is about giving, not getting. What ten things do you have to offer others? (e.g. encouragement, expertise, connections, brainstorming etc.)

ASK

The first step to creating meaningful connections and becoming a great networker is to learn the art of asking.

1. Ask with a mindset of giving.
2. Ask creatively.
3. Ask persistently.
4. Make asking fun.

There are two parts to the art of asking:

Part 1: Ask what you can do for someone.

Part 2: Ask what someone can do for you.

The order is important. When you begin a relationship by asking what you can give to the other person, you show that you are and that you are invested in the other person's success. Furthermore, when you ask how you can help someone without wondering what's in it for you or keeping score, you free yourself up to focus on the best possible outcome for everyone involved. When you focus on others, everyone wins. Once you have established a rapport and the person knows you, likes you and trusts you, then you can move to part two and begin to ask what someone can do for you.

Ask What You Can Do for Someone

Connecting with others requires knowing more about them than just facts and one-word answers. Get to the core of who you're talking by understanding their feelings, their interests and their goals. Ask open-ended questions of your contacts and instantly create more meaningful relationships.

Get In The Zone

What can I do to grow your business?

How can I help you make that happen?

What do you need in order to move forward?

"I was very inspired by your approach. I will remind myself of your networking motto, "What can I give?"

Katie, small business owner, Minnesota

ASK

Building rapport can happen at the first meeting where there is an exchange of giving and getting or it can take years. It's up to you to determine when to move to the second part of ASK. Really be honest with yourself about your motives and your commitment to the long term success of the person. Networking is not a drive-thru activity. This is where the networking pros learn how to support each other and soon other people are asking them what they can do for them. This takes confidence and you will get there the more you practice these ideas.

Think of some of the best networkers or successful business people you know. What are their qualities and how do they achieve their goals and take action as they are doing business?

Ask what someone can do for you.

When the time comes when you do need to ask a contact what they can do for you, it is not the time to just get something from them. Rather, this is your chance to show them you value them, that you believe in them and that you are truly want to create a win for everyone.

Get In The Zone

Think of a person of whom you have something to ask. What are some ways you can make asking fun or creative?

What are some meaningful ways you can show them you care about them?

Be persistent and don't give up. Being clear on your objectives will help you stay focused. **CAUTION: be careful not to overstep your bounds or you risk becoming a pest.**

What are your objectives? What is your B.W.A.G. (big, wild, audacious, goal) that you are so passionate about?

What outcome will help everyone win?

LISTEN

In networking, listening is about hearing more than what someone is saying to you.

In networking, being a good listener is about four important things:

1. The words a person is speaking.
2. What they are really saying beyond those words.
3. The degree to which they believe they are being heard by you.
4. The ability to get to know people by asking good questions.

Listen to others. Listen to the market place. Listen to your intuition. When you are truly listening, you will discover more opportunities to help people and more meaningful ways to make a difference and deliver what they need.

Get In The Zone

Have you had a recent conversation with a client or new contact and thought you heard one thing but realized there may be something more to what they're saying?

What are three ways you can show them you are present and focused on them?

What did their tone, body language and attitude tell you?

What can you infer based on their tone and body language?

What were the most important points of your conversation? Did you write those down within 24 hours of talking to them/ meeting them?

How have you followed up to show them you heard them?

LISTEN

Ask good questions.

Once you've figured out how to really be listening to another person you will hear ways that you can assist them and move them closer to their goals. And if you're not sure what it is they really might benefit from, you can ask. The power of having built up a good relationship with others is you can connect on a deeper level.

Learning to ask good questions – open-ended questions – will make it easier for you to be an active listener and keep the conversation interesting and focused on the other person.

“There aren't many people who have the heart and mind of Joe Sweeney, and there are even fewer who have his integrity. The ultimate coach, Joe wants everybody to win.”

LESLEY VISSER, Hall of Fame Sportscaster

Get In The Zone

Here are some good, open-ended questions you can ask:

What brings you here?

Tell me about your work?

What are some things you enjoy doing in your free time?

What are some of your favorite places to be in this city?

If there was one thing that I could do to help you with your business, what would that be?

List three more questions you would like to ask to get to know someone better:

?
?
?

ACT

Creating a network that brings you business takes more than just meeting a lot of people. You have to take action and consistently stay in touch.

When taking action to cultivate and expand your relationships, keep these five things in mind:

1. Act with confidence and self assurance.
2. Act as if you belong no matter where you are.
3. Act in a timely manner—always be the first to follow up after a meeting.
4. Act in a meaningful way. Do your research and find out what matters to your connections.
5. Act without expectation. Give for the sake of giving, not getting.

In networking, it's not the little things that mean a lot. It's the little things that mean everything. Prospects, clients and new contacts want to know and feel three things about you:

Do you care for me?

Can you help me?

Can I trust you?

If you approach networking as a place where you can give and not get, you'll be able to answer, "Yes," to those three questions.

Get In The Zone

One of the fastest ways to build your confidence is to network with people who share your interests and passions. It immediately gives you common ground and puts you both at ease.

List 10 places you can make new connections while engaged in the activities you enjoy the most.

List three recent encounters where you met someone new.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Did you feel confident? If yes, why? If no, why?

ACT

Athletes, actors and entrepreneurs have more in common than you might think.

They get on stage or on the field every day and give it their all. The successful ones build time into their actions to take a moment to look at how they are really doing. A key piece of writing things down is to see what you've accomplished and what to improve upon.

In sports it's called instant replays or watching game tapes, actors watch outtakes and business owners review key documents and actions. Take time to review your plans, including your 5-10-15 sheets.

"I have always been a strong proponent of networking and you've expanded my enthusiasm for it. This year has been one of the most challenging sales years I have had in my professional life, and many of your thoughts and philosophies are helping me to keep it all in perspective."

Natalie, Wisconsin

Get In The Zone

How would you change the instant replay of that encounter to make yourself and the other person more comfortable?

How did you follow up with each one afterward and how long did it take?

What are three meaningful reasons or ideas for connecting with them again? (Be creative)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Think of some recent encounters you've had with people in your network. Did you offer to give them something? List three more ideas for how you could make their day or help them in their business, career or personal life.

BELIEVE/ RECEIVE

It takes faith to give more than you get, especially in the way we have been trained about business, sales or business development. Yet, if you believe in yourself and you put this process and these tools into practice every day you will be successful.

1. Believe in yourself and in what you are doing.
2. Go for it with a big, wild, audacious goal that you truly believe in.
3. Keep a running total of how you're doing and track your progress.
4. Keep your hope alive by reaching out and connecting with others.
5. Believe that everything you give will come back to you.

Get In The Zone

Do you believe that helping others will be beneficial to your network? Why or why not?

What fears are holding you back from achieving your goal or reaching out to someone you want to meet?

What simple actions can you take that will help you move beyond those fears?

Listening to naysayers will be one of the fastest ways to kill your spirit and your belief in yourself. List five people in your network who build your confidence and have a positive influence on you:

Has someone you know spoken so highly about another person that it made you want to do business with or connect to that other person? Please list.

Do you have faith in your skills? Why or Why not?

Focus on what you can achieve today. Who can you reach out to today and offer to help?

What is within your reach that can you get done today?

BELIEVE/ RECEIVE

This part of the process is where having faith, being patient and expecting the best can be the most challenging aspect for many. Our minds tend to wander and we think that it will never happen to us. Or it won't happen fast enough. Or we start to look back and keep score and we lose perspective on what we've built through our new networking habits.

Stop that. Get a hold of your mind and know that fear is a natural part of the experience of stretching for what you want. Ask any successful person if they've ever had fear that they might not reach their goals and see what they say and what they do to overcome their fears.

Now more than ever, take inspired action and surround yourself with supportive, honest, encouraging people. The result: Everyone will have more success along the way.

Get In The Zone

What fears are holding you back from achieving your goal or reaching out to someone you want to meet?

What simple actions can you take that will help you move beyond those fears?

Focus on what you can achieve today. Who can you reach out to today and offer to help?

What is within your reach that can you get done today?

How can you keep your efforts fun and productive? You're working towards that BWAG because it's wild, keep the adventure moving.

CREATE NEW CONNECTIONS EVERYWHERE YOU GO

Lunch meetings, the gym, conferences or the sidelines at your child's game—creating meaningful connections can be done anywhere. Here are some key points to keep in mind when introducing yourself to others.

Know the difference between business and social interactions. Networking at business events is expected and it's often acceptable to exchange business cards.

At social events, however, keep your cool, take a personal interest in others and make sure everyone has a good time.

TAKE THE LEAD. The secret to connecting with anyone anywhere is to be friendly and open. Don't hesitate to make the first move by saying, "Hello, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is _____."

MAKE EYE CONTACT. Making good eye contact is important because the eyes are the window to the soul, meaning that your self confidence will be on display.

FLASH A READY SMILE. You look like a happy, confident person when you smile. Make sure you have fresh breath and clean hands and fingernails.

GIVE A FIRM HANDSHAKE. Don't squeeze their hand so tightly that sawdust starts coming out, or so lightly that your hand feels like a wet fish. Give a controlled handshake with a slight squeeze.

KEEP PRACTICING YOUR SKILLS AT CONNECTING

REPEAT THEIR NAME. Learning a person's name not only helps you remember their name, but also shows the person you care about them. Get in the habit of repeating names when you first meet someone and then again two more times throughout the conversation.

LOOK FOR SOMETHING POSITIVE TO SAY ABOUT THE OTHER PERSON. You can comment on how nicely he or she is dressed, that they are looking fit or that they look like they're having fun.

GIVE THEM YOUR UNDIVIDED ATTENTION. If you genuinely want to get to know someone, focus on that person. Shut out the distractions and put away your phone. If you can't do that, it might not be the right time to connect.

PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR BODY LANGUAGE. The way you carry yourself and the expressions on your face speaks volumes about your level of interest in the other person. Be aware at all times of what message you are giving through your body language.

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING. Pretend you're an investigative reporter. Ask good questions and listen closely to everything they have to say. When it's your turn to talk, be aware of how long you're talking and toss the conversation back to them within a few minutes.

SURROUND YOURSELF WITH WINGMEN & WINGWOMEN

Having other people to join forces with for the highs and lows of life and business makes the journey all the better. It also improves your level of accountability, clarity and success. Take a moment to be intentional about who can be an accountability partner for you and help you become more successful.

WINGMAN/ WINGWOMAN:

A HIGHLY TRUSTED ADVISOR FROM WHOM YOU CAN SEEK ADVICE AND FEEDBACK, RELY ON TO WATCH YOUR BACK AND KEEP YOU ACCOUNTABLE AND ON TRACK.

Get In The Zone

Who are your Wingmen/Wingwomen?

Who else would you trust to be your Wingman/Wingwoman? Please list.

When are you going to meet with them? Key Topics?

"I use Joe's networking techniques every day. I've worked with Joe for over fifteen years, and a day doesn't go by that I don't learn something new from him. If you don't learn something from Networking Is a Contact Sport, then your mind is not open and you're not listening."

Craig Leipold, Chairman and Owner of the Minnesota Wild,
one of Joe Sweeney's wingmen

HARNESSING YOUR BIRD DOGS

By definition being in business can be a lonely experience if you think you have to do it all. If you start to build your network of people who honestly want to see you succeed you will thrive. Wingmen and wingwomen are part of being intentional with your network.

ANOTHER CONCEPT IS BIRD DOG: By definition, there are other collaborative networking-minded people who can be another set of eyes and ears in your industry and scout out business opportunities for you. Bird Dogs usually call on and serve your customers in a completely different way, and are willing to network on your behalf.

“Joe Sweeney’s networking skills helped to significantly increase my off-the-field income.”

Brett Favre, Three-Time NFL MVP and Future NFL Hall of Famer

Get In The Zone

Who do you know who would be a good Bird Dog for you?

If you could create an entire team of Bird Dogs, what industry/ industries would they serve, or what type of customer would they serve?

PROSPECT

CUSTOMER

CLIENT

ADVOCATE

THE POWER TOOL: 5-10-15 PROGRAM

For nearly 30 years this tool has been a habit, just like brushing my teeth. It works if you put the attention to the tool. The power of staying connected and helping others is transformational for everyone. It's one of the tools that has helped me build stronger relationships during good times and tough times, help others reach their success and score more success than I ever thought possible.

Get In The Zone

For 30 days use this tool and you'll see results. You'll build buzz and you'll notice a difference in your business and personal momentum. Are you game? Get to the gym and tell us how your experience is going and we'll celebrate your success with you.

DATE: *May 1st, 2011*

5 MEETINGS/ENGAGEMENTS

*Bill Bolger - Helping his son find a job
Kim Eckert - Connected to a financial planner
Steve Smith- Referred a PR lead*

10 CORRESPONDENCES

*Martha Adams- Congratulated on her promotion
Sam Kipling- Thanked for lunch yesterday
Cathy Barry- Great job on workshop
Bill Max- Wonderful to see you at play
Little Joey - Happy 6th birthday
Craig Poulet- Sent article to Kevin*

15 PHONE CALLS

*Jane Patty- Set up lunch with Joe for ideation
Bob House -Free tickets to MN Swarm Playoffs
Joe Welsh-Did you see article on competitor*

Sent 1 gift

JOE SWARMENESS'S 5★10★15 WINNING GAME PLAN

HOW TO WORK A ROOM WITHOUT LOOKING LIKE IT

Let's say you attend a large social event or community mixer with more than 100 people in attendance. With so many people milling about, where do you begin to start networking? Here are several ideas. Ask yourself which part of the process you are using.

ASK:LISTEN:ACT: BELIEVE/RECEIVE

1. MAKE ONE ROUND OF OBSERVATION AND START IDENTIFYING PEOPLE YOU'D LIKE TO MEET. Pick out about ten individuals with whom you would like to touch base. Make them your target audience. Be careful not to "stalk" the room like a predator looking for prey. Rather, subtly examine the scene and make mental notes of who you know, who you recognize and who looks like an interesting person to meet.

2. DO NOT INTERRUPT CONVERSATIONS. Be subtle and strategic about how you greet someone. Do not butt into conversations. Instead, make your rounds saying hello and tipping your proverbial cap to people you recognize as you see them. If you want to engage a specific party already engaged in conversation, saunter by and perhaps grab a shoulder or make eye contact, then keep moving. Let them know you are there and that you will reconnect with them later when they are not tied up.

3. EXERCISE PATIENCE AND MAKE YOUR MOVE AT THE RIGHT MOMENT. You may need to make eye contact from a distance a few times before there is an opening in conversation. Other times, the person you wish to speak with will be momentarily free. Be ready in those moments to greet them.

KEEP CHECKING IN ON YOURSELF

There are so many tips to share, so here are a few more. After you've read them all please go back through and ask yourself which part of the **ASK:LISTEN:ACT:BELIEVE/RECEIVE** process you are using. Also after you go to an event with one of your wingmen or wingwomen, ask them for a debrief of how you did. Feedback makes the learning process go faster.

4. AFTER EXCHANGING PLEASANTRIES, BE PREPARED TO ASK AN INTERESTING QUESTION. Conversation starters like the weather or the local favorite team are predictable and boring. Instead, come up with a question that relates to the person's work. For example, ask what trends are they seeing in their business or ask what they think is the cause of a specific trend in their industry.

5. LISTEN TO THE ANSWER, AND THEN FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR NEXT QUESTION. If you are conversing about a topic that is of obvious interest to the other person, keep following that trail while keeping the focus on them.

6. KEEP IN MIND THAT PEOPLE LOVE TO BE ASKED THEIR OPINION ON SOMETHING. When you ask someone for their "take" on something in the news, it's an opportunity for them to give an "expert" opinion. So go ahead and ask what they think, then listen to them without turning the conversation into a disagreement.

7. WHEN TALKING TO SOMEONE YOU'VE NEVER MET BEFORE OR WHOM YOU KNOW LITTLE ABOUT, FOCUS ON THE TWO CONVERSATION TOPICS EVERYONE LOVES—THEMSELVES, THEIR FAMILIES AND, ESPECIALLY, THEIR CHILDREN. Ask about their golf game, if their children's school is going to the playoffs or what their plans are for the summer.

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

Social media does not replace face to face connection.

Social media does expand the numbers in your network, but it doesn't replace the connections you make in the moment. Show them the whites of your eyes. Write down why you use these tools and whether you give more than you get and why and how?

"Touch trumps technology"

Joe Sweeney



FINAL CHECK

Now that you've adopted a whole new mindset for networking, let's review your Networking Plan.

WHERE WILL YOU MAKE NEW CONNECTIONS?

WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN YOU FIRST MEET NEW PEOPLE?

WHAT CAN YOU GIVE TO OTHERS?

HOW WILL YOU FOLLOW UP AND NURTURE THAT RELATIONSHIP?

HOW WILL YOU RELY ON YOUR WINGMEN/WINGWOMEN/BIRD DOGS?

WHAT WILL YOU DO TO BUILD YOUR CONFIDENCE AND RECORD YOUR SUCCESSES?

JOE SWEENEY'S WINNING GAME PLAN GRID

		MONTH 1	MONTH 2	MONTH 3
SIMPLE PROCESS	WEEK 1			
5-10-15	WEEK 2			
WORKING A ROOM	WEEK 3			
WINGMAN / BIRD DOG	WEEK 4			
TIME TESTED PLANS...				