



**AND THE ART OF
LEGAL NETWORKING**
BY: LINDSAY GRIFFITHS OF THE ILN

INSIGHTS & COMMENTARY ON
*Relationship Building
within the International
Lawyers Network*

POSTED IN [LEGAL MARKETING](#)

Happy 8th Blogiversary to Zen & the Art of Legal Networking!

BY LINDSAY GRIFFITHS ON MARCH 1, 2017



I am a couple of days late with this, due to travel, but nonetheless, happy 8th blogiversary to Zen & the Art of Legal Networking! It's a bit hard to believe that 8 years ago I wrote my first post ([Is the Billable Hour on its Way Out?](#) – spoiler alert, it's still dragging on), and the last eight years have been quite the roller coaster ride, teaching me an endless number of things about networking, writing, discipline, social media, and so much more.

Some fun stats for you – eight years has brought us:

- 993 posts (WOW – we're getting treacherously close to 1,000 blog posts!)
- 19 topics covered (about seven or eight of those on a very regular basis)
- Almost 36,500 page views and over 20,000 users

- Our top audience is from the US, but we also see regular readers from Canada, the UK, India, Australia, Brazil, the Netherlands, Germany, and the Philippines!
- My all time most popular post, by a landslide, remains last year's "[Instagram: How Lawyers Can Use it & Get Noticed](#)"
- Most of our readers come either from organic searches or directly, but for those that come from social media sites, you're coming most often from LinkedIn, followed by Twitter

Since I am so, so jet lagged today (traveling for 36 hours door-to-door from Hong Kong with about 3 hours of sleep will do that to a person!), I am going to share with you a top eight that has been floating around in my head today – and that's the top eight things I've learned about networking over the past eight years. Please add your own networking tips in the comments, and I look forward to many more shared blogging experiences with all of you here at Zen!

In no particular order, the top eight things I've learned about networking:

- **It's a marathon, not a sprint.** You can't go to one networking event and expect to get business. While that CAN happen, it's fairly rare.
- **Carry business cards.** While some people will say that business cards are going the way of the dodo, I've found that people do still exchange them. But make them memorable by having one that's unique (try square instead of rectangle), colorful, and has just the most relevant information about you on it.
- **Your elevator speech isn't about YOU.** We've all heard so much about having our 30-second elevator speeches "at the ready." And this is true. But for lawyers (and for other professionals!), these thirty second commercials should explain how you solve the problems of your potential clients. It tells people a) who your clients/potential clients are, b) what you can do to help them, and c) why that person should keep talking to you.
- **Networking is about the pre-, during and post- event engagement.** Don't think that all you have to do is show up at an event to be successful. Have you researched the attendees beforehand and identified your goals for attending an event? Have you connected to potential contacts and joined in on any social conversations so that you have warm connections instead of cold ones when you arrive? Have you set up meetings in advance instead of relying on blind luck? After the event, have you scheduled follow up opportunities, such as in-person meetings or calls? Have you connected to the people that you've met on social media, such as sending them a LinkedIn request that is specific to the conversation you had at the networking event?
- **Social media can supercharge your efforts.** Use social media before an event to conduct research on fellow attendees that you'd like to meet with and join in on any conversations that may be happening around the event hashtag, if there is on. Connect with event organizers and speakers before or during the event to leverage current and future opportunities. Connect with fellow

attendees that you've met after the event, referencing your conversations in your invitation, to keep the conversations going.

- **Act like the host.** Connect with the organizers or hosts of any networking event and offer to be helpful. Passing out name badges will familiarize you with the attendees, and is a way to introduce yourself. The organizers will usually know everyone attending an event, and you can use them as a resource to help connect you with the right people. Get to know the organizers and their needs, and depending on the event, you may be well-placed to become a speaker or resource for future events. Hanging out with the event organizers will allow you to introduce yourself to the influencers and speakers that they are connected to, and hosting, for the event, who are some of the right people that you want to be engaging with at each networking opportunity. Don't be false with your agenda though – work at being genuinely helpful in your efforts as an extra “host” and the events organizers will appreciate your assistance! (As a part-time events organizer myself, I can tell you that we can spot the difference).
- **You have two ears and one mouth. Use wisely.** Epictetus said “We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.” This is essential when networking, because listening allows you to better identify your networking companions' problems, issues, and needs so that you can better assist them. It's also been found that when someone spends time listening to someone, rather than telling them about themselves, the speaker finds the listener to be highly intelligent. Show off your intelligence by doing more listening than sharing.
- **Practice your handshake.** I can't tell you how many times I've recently shaken hands with someone who has a weak handshake. While you don't want to pull someone's arm out of their socket, having a firm grip when you meet someone projects confidence. If you're not sure whether your handshake is up to snuff, check with a trusted friend and get them to help you work on it until you're confident that it projects the image you'd like people to associate with you when you meet them.

And here's a quick bonus one:

- **Learn about cultural differences before you go somewhere new.** You may assume that everyone does things the way that you do at a networking event, but whenever you're traveling to a new city, it's worth doing a quick google search to see whether there are cultural norms that you need to be familiar with surrounding networking practices. Things such as handing your business card to someone from Asia with two hands, and not putting their card away immediately are fairly important. And while Asian business people are savvy enough to understand how westerners handle networking as well, it can show a great deal of respect to research their cultures before traveling there to get the general list of dos and don'ts. This applies for any country you're traveling to.

What are your top networking tips to share?