

## **Why handout a business card if you don't want people to contact you.**

I belong to quite a few groups, attend and teach at many workshops, conferences and meetings. In turn, I meet a lot of people and most of the time it is customary to exchange our business cards.

The question I have for you is why would you exchange business cards with someone if you had no intention or desire to connect with that person again? Does it make you feel important? Are you just being polite? Everyone else is doing it so why not you too?

I am so amazed at the number of people who send you their updates, promotional materials, articles, etc. and think nothing of it. They of course are someone you would definitely want to follow and heard from. When you send them information they suddenly have amnesia as to how they got on your list and rudely ask to be removed. Has this ever happened to you? I think these people should handout business cards that will self destruct within one hour of the completion of the event they just attended. What do they think you are going to do with their business? Of course, you are going to add it into your contact database which you use to let people know what is going on with your business and the many opportunities available to all of us. These opportunities need not be directly in association with our own businesses. They may be books or articles we have seen. Trade shows which are coming to town which we think they may be interested in, etc.

The response I truly love is, "You have nothing to offer me that would be of interest." Now doesn't that say a lot about how one dimensional this person thinks we are? This is like saying because I don't stand for my occupation; my middle toe is of no use so let's just cut it off. Meanwhile, the third toe is getting gangrene, I get laid off and the only job I can find is one where I need to stand and have balance. Our toes help do that, they give us balance. With two toes now gone because one was infected and the other had nothing to offer me at one point in time, this job of standing plays havoc with my back simply because I felt that middle toe had nothing to offer me in this life.

We have so much to learn from each other. In life I have found not only have some of my best clients but the greatest business opportunities to come my way have been from places I thought had little to offer me. To discount another person's potential contribution to society and to our own life is not only rude but uncaring and minimalizing in character.

If you do not wish to receive someone else's information or materials I would suggest the following:

1. Leave your contact information and business cards at the office and do not hand them out.
2. Where a name tag. This way people can remember your name and if they want to get in touch with you they need to do some homework.

3. Treat each contact as you wish to be treated. By all means, if you are the type to send the rude emails asking to be de-listed then I am sure you also want to get the rude emails in response to your mailings.
4. After the initial contact, have future emails go directly to your spam box.
5. Have your email provider block the emails from the particular contact you wish to avoid.
6. Accept the email graciously as you hope your email would be and simply hit delete. No need to be rude or hurt anyone's feelings this way. We are all just trying to make a living and the world a better place.
7. If you belong to organizations which have directories, only include the information you are willing to make available for others to use. I always thought that belonging to the Chamber of Commerce or Board of Trade was so the members could do business with each other. Some individuals have informed me otherwise. Unfortunately for me, I still do not understand why you would have your email address in the directory then.

I am sure you can come up with a few other strategies to avoid being listed on unwanted lists.

Knowledge is power and we gain more knowledge, exposure and insight into helping this world become the best it can be by widening our contact base. This happens by creating networks and sharing information with each other. The more we expose ourselves, the higher the probability of solving the issues we face and helping others solve theirs'. That is actually the concept of BNI. I may not need the information but I may know of someone else who does.

Think twice before you cut that toe off today because it may be just the thing you need tomorrow. Be kind, look in the mirror and ask yourself, "is that what I want people to do with my materials?" The answer will say a lot about you and only you can choose the next step.