

Facilitating A Social Networking Mixer

By Paul Castain

Here's how you do it:

- 1) Grab yourself a free conference call line on a service like <http://freeconferencecall.com> I'm not affiliated with them always like resources that are truly free with no catch.
- 2) Identify 5-6 people from your network. I don't like more than that because it becomes less interactive and at times just really hard not to talk over each other.
- 3) Set aside a day and time where you'll have 60-75 mins.
- 4) Consider a real simple agenda like:

10 mins of introductions

40 mins discussing a topic of your choice? I provide one in the sample invite letter below. Another thing to consider is checking out the hot topics of discussion in either the LinkedIn groups or the Q & A feature. Tons of material between the two!

10-25 mins of resource sharing.

Note: Resource sharing is when each participant brings (get this) a resource such as the name of a good book, a website, publication, study, statistics, free service etc

- 5) Send an email similar to this one:

Happy Friday!

As many of you know, I'm a big advocate of moving all these "virtual" relationships to real time.

One of the ways I do this is to gather people from my network (no more than 6 at time) get them all on a conference call and have a good, old fashioned discussion (as in the kind that isn't via our computer)

Please let me know if you can join me on (day, date and time two weeks out) for a 1 hour chat and an opportunity for us all to get to know each other a bit better!

Please RSVP by (date that is within 3 business days of the invitation) and I'll be in touch with call in information and a topic for our discussion.

Wishing you all continued success and an amazing weekend!

*Respectfully,
Paul Castain*

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6) Within 4 - 5 business days, send the agenda and call in info:

TGIF all!

As promised, here is the info for our call (day, date and time)

Call In #:

Access Code:

Agenda:

Intro's

Discussion: Social Media . . . Asset or Safe Alternative To Tried & True Sales Methods

Please Bring: 1 Resource (Ideas Include: name of a good book, website, blog, person to follow on Twitter, article, stats etc) on the subject of Social Media

"See" you all on Tuesday!

*Respectfully,
Paul Castain*

7) Within 24 hours of the call, reply all from your sent file with a note reminding everyone of the call.

8) Some tips for a productive call:

- Assume the role of Host/Hostess and call on each participant to introduce themselves. Note: Sometimes people may hold back because they don't want to appear like they are going heavy on the self promotion. That's where you come in. If someone went light on their intro and there's something you can add to make them look good, add your two cents. Something like "Todd is being very modest. He has an awesome blog, company etc." Just give a quick form of evidence so it ascends from flattery to genuine.
- Understand that this call isn't about you, its about them. So be a great conversationalist and shut up . . . long enough for the others to speak!

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- Work on your facilitation skills by asking good questions to get the others to continue. Feel free to call on a participant directly for their feedback. Example: “What’s your take on this Donna?”
 - You rock if you do this: Whenever possible give participants an opportunity to look like a rock star. For example, if we’re discussing a particular topic and I know that someone has a cool war story to share, I’ll bring it up and invite that person to tell it. Oh and did I mention its not about you?
 - Keep things on track & stay within the allotted time. Always better to leave people wanting than being disrespectful of their time.
- 9) Send a Thank You email to all within 24 hours. Consider attaching a recap of key points, the resources that were shared and everyone’s social networking contact info (get permission when you are on the call)
 - 10) If there is additional (non salesy) value you can provide on an individual basis, reach out. This is a great way to let them know that you were listening!
 - 11) Set up a listening station for these contacts by setting up Google Alerts and/or RSS feeds. Subscribe to their blogs and continue to show a genuine interest.

I’ve saved the best for last . . . Patience Grasshopper . . . trust takes time. Stay the course!

Some other cool things you can do right now:

Join our [Linkedin Sales Playbook Group](#)

Sign up for our [free sales tips](#)

And most of all . . .

Please pass this E-book along to your network!

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