

## Leadership Coaching

An effective development route for executives:

- **To acquire gravitas and develop presence** - enabling them to demonstrate the qualities that help get things done incisively and with compassion, but without aggression.
- **To find their purpose in life.** Aware of the need for strategic thinking and a clear vision, leaders of all kinds can nevertheless find themselves caught up in a whirlwind of daily problems.
- **To re-align themselves.** Recognising that they aren't quite achieving what they want to achieve - we look at what led to their success in the first place and what works now. Finding there are better ways of managing situations so they are clearer, energised and more effective.

## Graham Wilson

For the last 17 years, I've worked with the leaders of organisations, and their people, helping create a vision of what their world could be like, and then helping them to achieve it.

Believing in the enormous potential that people have I love to see them discover and tap into this in every aspect of their life.

Whilst both a futurist and strategist, my work has its roots in organisation development and is shaped by my training as a psychotherapist, sports coach, and minister.

You can read more about my background, leadership roles and my books on my website:

[www.grahamwilson.org](http://www.grahamwilson.org)

# BETTER NETWORKING

A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Guide to  
Career Success  
for Today's Executives

## Leadership Coaching

I meet clients at a variety of locations around the country, including London, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Surrey, Hampshire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and the West Midlands. Appointments can be made to suit your timetable - many clients preferring to meet outside their core working hours.

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# Better Networking

*The nature of networks has changed in recent years, but the skills haven't. Once, only salesmen used to "network" and the emphasis was on male preoccupations. Today, any executive who wants a new job realizes that it'll come about through networking not advertising. Younger managers supplement their limited experience with a strong network. Ask most leaders what their weakest skill is and they'll tell you it's networking. Here are a few pointers.*

## 1 Keeping an open mind

Don't judge people on appearance, keep an open mind until you've given them an opportunity to impress you and you've had the chance to genuinely impress them. In a room of people, closed minds can be spotted a mile off; over-dressed, standing alone, sipping wine and checking their watch surreptitiously.

## 2 Adopt an attitude of plenty

Old school networkers can give the impression that networking is based on a "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" principle. This might have been true centuries ago, but today, with far more specialist needs, the ratio of 100:1 not 1:1 is more likely. In other words, for every favour you need, expect to give a hundred. They may not be onerous but they need to be favours. Remember that there's no such thing as a free lunch. Suppose your hourly rate is £240, but you begrudge giving away anything worth more than 5 minutes effort, you'll need to do so 50 times if you're looking for a £1000 favour.

## 3 Adapt your approach to the time and the place

Always separate social activities from business ones, and selling ones from networking. Don't try to do business while entertaining or being entertained. Be clear about why you're there. If this is a business networking event, network - don't hog one person and don't try to sell. Leave behind something of value - a lasting impression of a supportive personality or a memorable piece of material that will be attached in the mind of the recipient with you, your persona, and ideally, your name.

## 4 Have a useful business 'card' yourself and manage other peoples' cards

What do you do with someone's business card when they give it to you? There's a whole technology around transferring the printed information to Microsoft *Outlook*. With tools like Plaxo(.com), there's no need for details ever to get out of date. Make your business card more memorable, retainable, and even useful. A printer had little business card sized books made up; this tri-fold guide is my "card"; check out those clever "Z cards".

## 5 Overcome British 'reserve' and refine the art of questioning

We British are renowned for our reserve. Remember, most 'networking' opportunities are overt and everyone is there for the same reason! Don't hold back. If in doubt, ask one of the Golden questions - "We are all here for the networking, so what are YOU hoping to get out of today?" and "I wonder if there are any ways in which we can collaborate with one another?"

## 6 Prepare your introduction

You never know when you might have to introduce yourself, and there's no better way to create a bad impression than to stumble over an explanation of what you do. So it's important to have two simple explanations - one single sentence and one 30 second intro. Write, practice, learn, fine tune, and bounce them off friends or family. This is NOT your name and job title - it says what you do and what you're looking for. "I help people achieve things they never dreamt they could." "My clients are mostly established leaders in industry - we work one-to-one to help them achieve things they never dreamt they could. People don't just walk up to me and say they'd like to engage me, so I'm here today to sow the seed of an idea, to make myself known to as many people as possible, and to see if I can help other people make the contacts they want."

## 7 Awkward moments

Some of us are natural one-to-one conversationalists, others work well in small groups, a few work a room of a hundred or more people. Whichever, the occasional awkward moment will happen - where you suddenly find the conversation has dried up. Acknowledge it, don't feel guilty or responsible or awkward - just accept it and

move on to the next group of people. Individuals standing apart are either a good way to begin another group or they have terrible interpersonal skills. Try them out and see what happens. You'll either get some good networking done or have made a friend for life!

## 8 Managing your network

Invest in the technology of managing your database. With Microsoft *Outlook* on most people's PC, there's no need for specialist applications, but the more powerful the tool the more important you learn how to use it and most people are frighteningly poorly organised.

## 9 Fastidiously follow-up

So you've made contact now what? This is where the systematic approach is vital. Have draft follow-up notes ready - not standard ones - together with enclosures (photocopies of recent articles of interest or perhaps even copies of these guides), so you can send something today rather than tomorrow. Don't be long-winded - use a postcard or compliments slip rather than a letter. NEVER send corporate literature as an email attachment nor a link to a purely commercial website.

## 10 Keeping in touch

Just because you remember someone it doesn't mean that they will remember you. Even best friends can lose touch. So it's vital to networking to keep in touch. Some will warrant coffee or lunch. Others can be kept up with electronically or by post. Whether you've a blog and point them to each new posting or occasional entries you think will be of interest, send out an email newsletter, a birthday card, or clock forwards/clock backwards cards, you need to plan to do something to keep in touch with EVERY person in your network, regularly. No-one should be left over 6 months or they simply aren't part of a network.

**For details of my leadership coaching, public speaking and other activities, please check out my website:**

[www.grahamwilson.org](http://www.grahamwilson.org)

or telephone me on 07785 222380.

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