

The verbal business card

– introducing you and your business



Tell me about your business self...

- We know we need to spread the word about who we are and what our business does
- BUT, thought of introducing yourself to strangers, or introducing your professional self to friends and family is enough to make you consider getting an ordinary job.



There is an antidote...

The Verbal Business Card

- Easy to carry
- You'll never forget it
- Comes in many varieties



The verbal business card: defining and articulating who you are

- Define your value
- Work out where you need to state your value
- The ‘so what’ of a verbal business card
- Getting organised
- Starting a conversation in meetings / social sessions
- Developing a purpose to networking

At one level this is simply about getting your act together so you have self confidence in many situations. But it is also the foundation for planning your business.



Think point: what is your value proposition?

- How do you help?
- What value do you provide?



- Write it down



Next step: develop a verbal business card

Why?

- Visibility
- Being remembered
 - But for the right things!
- Making useful contacts
- Making something happen
- Working out what it is that you
- do

*..And don't forget
– it is important to be yourself*



Before you start on the card – start with knowing yourself

- Do I like to talk or listen?
- Do I enjoy the company of others?
- Do other people like to listen to me?
- Do I have presence?
- Do I make others feel at ease?

We all have different social skills – everyone can do it – but some are naturally better than others, as it is a better fit with their personality



How will you introduce yourself?

- *Hi, I'm Lyn from University of Chichester ...*

Hmmmm Technically OK but:

- What do you want to get across to people?
- What do you tell them so that they say '*Hey that's really interesting, can you tell me more about that ...*'
- How can you be really clear?



A Verbal Business Card (sample only)

Hi, I'm Lyn Bachelor, Senior Lecturer in Enterprise at the University of Chichester...

asked about what I do in my job I could follow up with

... I teach enterprise and entrepreneurship.

or

As you can tell from my accent ...

followed up with

...I work with people to help them define their business ideas and guide them through the skills they need to set themselves up as freelancers, or consultants in their fields.

Which answer would encourage you to keep on talking to me?

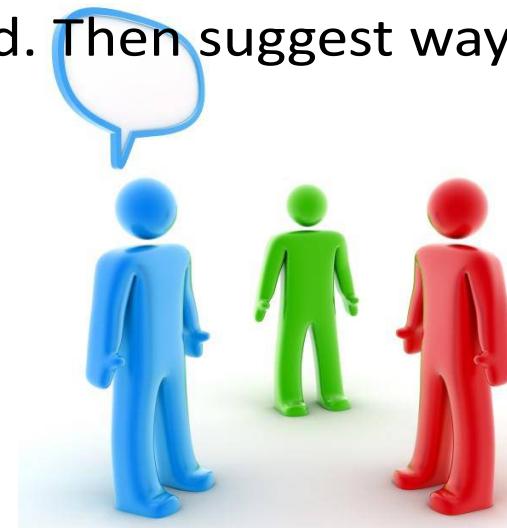
Task: write your own verbal business card.



Use it – You have been invited to the business awards and people will want to know why you are there

Pick a partner

- Stand up and introduce yourself to your partner. Shake hands, be positive and enthusiastic
- Partner: listen carefully and respond. Then suggest ways to improve the introduction
- Then swap roles



Managing a first meeting

- You have arrived at the event and people are gathering with /without a drink. You are given your name badge and then what ? ...
- How do you feel walking into a room knowing no one?
- Approach who?
 - People standing alone
 - Group
- Introduce yourself: use your prepared card
- Ask the first questions – easy ones



Starter Questions

- Where are you based?
- Is this your first event?
- How did you find out about this event?
- I'm trying to make myself meet new people here instead of just talking to the usual suspects. Do you mind me saying hello and introducing myself?



Networking Needs Small Talk

- You need people to be on your side, interested and ‘comfortable’ with you
- Small talk builds up the comfort zone
- Be interested in what others have to offer
 - Talk topics: sport; hobbies; work; holidays; family; books; news; music; films; Check out the BBC website on the day, on the way even ... the website of the organisation
...



Prepare for it!

Networking is a real business and social activity

- Have a plan
- Keep the contact list of attendees if available
- Follow up people
- Keep track of contacts
- Find ways of keeping up with people
- Enjoy meeting people



Networking is just one way to use your verbal business card for introductions

- You need different introductions for yourself in different situations
 - Create 3 introductions that cause people to say '*That is really interesting, can you tell me more about ...*'
 - For a networking event / your friends / meeting a potential client ...



Application – or the *so what?* moment

- Now we have worked out how to tell people about what we do, our next session works with the value proposition aimed at a potential client



Further reading

Goudreau, J. (2012) Do you have “Executive Presence”?

[http](http://www.forbes.com/sites/jennagoudreau/2012/10/29/do-you-have-executive-presence/)

[://www.forbes.com/sites/jennagoudreau/2012/10/29/do-you-have-executive-presence](http://www.forbes.com/sites/jennagoudreau/2012/10/29/do-you-have-executive-presence/)

, accessed 3rd December, 2013.

Read all about small talk

<http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/public/Appointments/article1346396.ece>

