



The Reluctant Networker's **52 Networking Tips**

Making Connections...
...with Confidence



Lose the Jargon

I've always said the best thing about a 30-second commercial is that it's short. You don't run the risk of boring people too much. Personally, for networking events, I prefer something that is closer to five seconds. Even keeping it that short, though, won't keep their minds from wandering if you cram that time full of jargon.

"Eschew obfuscation" was the advice from my high school calculus teacher. Avoid confusion. Keep it simple.

I know, I know. The words and phrases you are using are remarkably straightforward and shouldn't confuse anyone. After all, if I say I work on "server-side cloud-based middleware solutions", you'd know exactly what I mean, right? To tell you the truth, I don't either.

Listen. Even the most basic terms in your industry will go over your audience's head. If you are ever in doubt whether a term is too technical, it is. Trust me.

What's the danger in being too technical? If someone doesn't understand, they should just ask, right? After all, you are more than willing to help out. Unfortunately, most people won't ask. Instead, they will feel uncomfortable, because you are making them feel stupid. Even if they are polite, they are really just waiting for you to go away.



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Second, you are going to come off as an insufferable snob. It's OK to be knowledgeable, but you need to convey that knowledge in a way that your audience can comprehend. Even if they asked the question, the answer has to be at their level, otherwise it will be useless to them and you will have wasted both your times.

Finally, if they don't understand what you do, even if they are willing to continue to put up with you, they aren't going to be able to refer anyone to you. After all, they really have no clue what you are talking about.

Remember, at the end of the day, jargon is there to help you get your job done efficiently.

Unfortunately, it doesn't make for good networking.



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Recommended Resources

The website: <http://www.thereluctantnetworker.com>

The blog: <http://thereluctantnetworker.blogspot.com>

Our workshops: <http://thereluctantnetworker.com/content/workshops-and-training>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Reluctant-Networker/397296726083>

Background and Testimonials

Originally a computer programmer, Greg Peters understands the challenges facing every reluctant networker. He also knows, however, that networking is a learnable skill. In 2009 he founded The Reluctant Networker, LLC and has since worked with clients in technology, finance, and sales to help them build networks of powerful connections. He is the author of the blog "The Reluctant Networker" and contributes weekly networking advice to local radio and news outlets. He also presents to larger groups to spread the word that, performed properly, networking is the most powerful way to achieve success and significance in our lives.

"Just wanted to say THANK YOU for being our speaker for our January Grow Your Business Workshop. The time, energy, and effort that you provided was greatly appreciated. We have received some tremendous feedback from those who came (and even those who wish they would have). Thank you for helping us in our efforts to build a strong Downriver community! We would love to have you come back to speak



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for us again anytime!”

~ Mark Tremper, Downriver Community Federal Credit Union

“Greg opens doors. By inviting me to a special networking event, Greg enabled me to make a crucial connection leading to a new position. Thank you, Greg! You are a powerful speaker, and an even better networker.”

~ John Arenz, Trust Officer, Wealth Management Group, United Bank & Trust, Ann Arbor, MI

“For a self-proclaimed 'nerd', Greg is a sensational person who happens to have a knack for putting others at ease with their fears and provides a steady approach for networking. I recommend seeking Greg's expertise if you have any hesitation at all regarding networking and speaking in public; his methods have greatly helped me get out of my own way.”

~ Rich Austin, Associate, Sandler Training Center - Ann Arbor