



# The very profitable card trick

BY WILL KINTISH

When we attend business events it is often happens within moments of meeting someone for the first time they're thrusting their business card in our hand. I feel they're saying to me, "Look, look you need to know all about me. This is my name, my job title, my company, my email and postal addresses, my switchboard, direct dial and mobile numbers, my website and what we do."

Hey come on we've just met ; slow down let me get to know you the person first before all this other information is shared . I never give my card to anyone unless they ask me for it. My business card has never sold anything for me. If after meeting someone the other person feels he wants to contact me, in the modern electronic era, he or she will find me.

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*... " always ask for the other person's card BUT only if you want to follow up."*

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## The card trick

For me the trick is to always ask for the other person's card BUT only if you want to follow up. From an etiquette perspective however when people ask me for my card, out of courtesy, I will request theirs. But if I'm not going to continue the relationship, the card gets binned. So unless you list amongst your interests 'collector of business cards' why bother getting theirs?

When someone says something which makes you think "There could be an opportunity here to move our relationship to the next stage" here is what to do.



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*... if you attend events, spot an opportunity and don't follow up why bother going?"*

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1. Casually ask for their card
2. Read the card, both sides. Never just put it in your pocket, bag or wallet- that's rude
3. Comment on the card; you will always find something to say
4. Then ask the most important question in the conversation you will have just had. "Remember a few moments ago you were saying ( something like) you weren't fully satisfied with your existing advisors , how do you feel / would you mind if I gave you a call next week to arrange for us to get together and continue this conversation?" If you have created a good impression and have shown genuine interest they will nearly always say yes.
5. When they do get your pen out and suggest a day(s) when it might suit them for you to call.
6. Important bit. Suggest you write down the date on the back of their card so you won't forget. and ensure they see you write it down. It shows you're organised, professional and you can safely assume they will be expecting your call.
7. When writing down the date always ask, 'Which would the best be to get you on and is there any time of the day you'd rather I didn't call?' When you are given a mobile or direct dial number it is virtually certain that at that moment they believe ( and you believe!) they want you to follow up. After all if you attend events, spot an opportunity and don't follow up why bother going?



8. When it's time to go shake their hand, look them in the eye and say something like, "Well Prospect (don't call them prospect, they won't like it!) It's great to have met you this evening; I promise I'll call you next xxxday to arrange for us to get together. I avoid using the word 'meeting' I believe at this stage in the relationship it sounds too formal and I think too presumptuous. There's a long way to go generally before you get the business. Use the word 'promise'; you're not promising them you're promising yourself. You will make that follow up call...won't you?"
9. If they don't ask you for your card do offer it to them as you leave. But remember, that little piece of paper in itself won't get you any new business.
10. It's the call that might so put the date in your diary as soon as you leave the event.

***The author of this article is Will Kintish, leading UK authority on effective and confident networking both offline and online. If you'd like Will to speak at your conference or training workshops, call him on 0161 773 3727. Visit [www.linkedintraining.co.uk](http://www.linkedintraining.co.uk) and [www.kintish.co.uk](http://www.kintish.co.uk) for further free and valuable information on all aspects of networking.***