

“One of the best books of its kind that I've ever read!”

**Councillor Neil McEvoy, Deputy Leader, Executive member Economic Development
Cardiff Council**

“This guide is for the brave and not the faint hearted. It is dedicated to uniqueness; the courage to own one's differences whilst respecting that of others within the marketplace. It is intended to help us to explore the many layers of what it truly means when we say that, “people buy **you** first and then **what** you are selling.” Hopefully, it will lead us into understanding, packaging and “selling” our personal and company You Prints™ whilst engaging in the new advertising... networking!

Networking doesn't come naturally. Hence, the skills need to be learnt and practised like any fine craft. It is not by any means an erroneous belief that everyone can become an effective networker. The key is to identify the networking road blocks which are usually unique to individuals and to help them to manoeuvre comfortably around them.

We will find that when embarking on networking there is great value in having the ability to laugh at yourself, not to take yourself too seriously, and to use potentially embarrassing situations to your advantage. I use my distinct and to some, uncultured accent to my advantage in networking, as it distinguishes me. It is an immediate ice-breaker as it begs the question of where I am from, and as most people have either been to or would love to go to the Caribbean, it makes for great conversation. On the telephone I also have an edge as my voice is easily recognisable, and so coupled with charm, it can be an effective way around the most ardent “gatekeeper”... officially known as a personal assistant!

I am sure we would all agree that networking is unfamiliar territory to most. Networking speaks a different language from banking, printing or the legal industry. We each have to learn the language of networking in the same way I had to learn (having just relocated from Bradford, England) that my staff member's train being stuck in **Mountain Ash**, did not mean we just had a natural disaster of extreme proportions in Wales! For the benefit of those not familiar with Wales, **Mountain Ash** is the name of a town!

The sobering truth however, is that networking is expensive and takes a great chunk out of one's marketing budget. It is therefore of the utmost importance to get it right. This type of mental pressure, however, unfortunately tends to result in individuals taking a one-dimensional approach to networking... which is making a sale or winning that all important contract!

I am not going to do the predictable preamble and define "networking"! I will just cut to the chase and explain what I mean by "Two-Faced" Networking™. Firstly, let me disabuse you of any notion that "Two-Faced" Networking™ is about:

- Hypocrisy
- Faking it/giving false impressions
- Making false promises and then delivering nothing

"Two-Faced" Networking™ is successfully balancing the "face" of our business identity with the "face" of the individual persona, with its own unique attractive endearing qualities, to gain prospects and win business. Each "face" must be genuine, credible, authentic and attractive. Each persona must operate simultaneously and intelligently within your chosen marketplace. If we use these "faces" effectively, we will win and retain loyal referral partners and clients.

Introductory excerpt from Bernie's Handbook

So how do we do that you might ask? I daresay it is as simple as taking **all** of **you** to work. It is not leaving behind that personality that endears us to our friends and families, when we don our work suits and personas, jump into our wonderfully polished (or if you are like me, much dishevelled and abused) cars and hurtle out into the rollercoaster world we call big business. Think about the last person you met where you thought, 'Wow, what a lovely person! I would really enjoy talking to them again.' Then ask yourself, "What was it that made me feel that way?" I can guarantee that their great job title or their six figure income wasn't the only reason, if at all.

However, might I hazard a guess that it just might be one or any of the following reasons?

- Their ready wit
- They made you feel important or special
- They were interesting
- They listened attentively to what you had to say
- They seemed like somebody from whom you could either learn or gain value.

Herein lays the essence of "Two-Faced" Networking™. It is extremely important to be interesting as well as interested in others when you network. Professionalism and integrity are paramount, but if we forget that we are humans and require that genuine and subtle personal engagement, our networking successes will be nominal, if at all"...