

# 11 WAYS TO BUILD SOLID, STRONG, LASTING BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS

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## 1. Be Authentic

This is pretty simple. Be who you are and accept others as they are. It's easy to create a false persona, especially online, but that is not the way to start a relationship and short lived when we start qualifying people and companies. Find people and companies you feel a natural connection and ease of communication with and things you both have in common. The authenticity of connecting personality, beliefs and point of view can accelerate relationships.

## 2. Identify Shared Goals and Values

We seek out people in life we like, share similar goals and values with. Are they honest, kind, knowledgeable, helpful? How do they treat others? This is about moral character. Do we respect them? I have sadly seen too many people present themselves one way only to take advantage of people, once they have their trust. We may not always share the same point of view with everyone, but the shared values are a must.

## 3. Develop Mutual Respect

I find this takes time, unless someone is referred to you by a trusted connection. We prove ourselves over time and through different activities and experiences. Join a chamber, professional group, or online community which are all great environments to develop relationships. Be patient, selective and watch people in action. Building mutual respect is an essential for growing relationships.

## 4. Share Some Vulnerability

We are human and sometimes that means sharing and supporting people through difficulty, challenge and change. Showing our vulnerability is part of our authenticity. One word of caution: this is best shared with a select few rather than more publicly. Use good judgment here.

## **5. “I’ve Got Your Back”**

Let people know that you have their back as a way of showing loyalty to them. I have been at way too many events where gossip and unnecessary conversations go down among people that simple shouldn’t be doing that. As tricky as this can be, I have selectively addressed certain people directly and respectfully asked them to reconsider those conversations and choose not to continue interacting with them.

## **6. Make Meaningful Connections for People to Network with Each Other**

The greatest compliment in business is a referral. We should be thoughtful, have the right motives and be connecting people for the right reasons. Not all referrals work out. It takes two to make it happen and work, so don’t be doing all the work.

## **7. Get More Personal**

If you really want to get to know people, ask them to go for coffee so that you can talk more personally, one on one. Be willing to share experiences, ideas, points of view and simply learn more about each other’s story, family and professional history.

## **8. Plan Something Fun to Do Together**

All work and no play makes us dull! Be willing to go out and do something fun together that may not have anything to do with work. Music, art, entertainment, meet ups and community events are all fun things to do to see different sides of people. Not to mention some random and memorable conversations and laughs that can come out of it.

## **9. Let Go of Expectations**

Always go into relationships with an open mind, realistic expectations and never assume. People are only who we think they are based on what our interactions have been with them. One of the best pieces of advice I got from a client was: accept the way people are not as you want them to be. If we have preconceived expectations of people, then we are setting ourselves up for disappointment.

## **10. Schedule Brainstorming Time**

Block out dedicated time to brainstorm, engage and do business together. Best to set a regular time, a time limit and an agenda for what you want to accomplish in it. Leave some time unexpected discussion.

## 11. Offer Something Before Asking for Something

In 2010, Trendwatching.com came out with a trend brief that highlighted “serving is the new selling”. They put a name on what we were already knew was the trend shift in sales and marketing and now it is the norm in business, social media and content marketing.

When we educate, help and inspire others with our experience and expertise, we are building the foundation for trust that underlies relationships that endure. When we blog, create content, speak, do a workshop, webinar, write an e-book, go to events, we are serving and helping.

When we get more serious and engaged on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and other social media where community gathers and exchanges ideas, we are serving and helping . Serving and helping builds trust like nothing else.

Trust is the one ingredient that builds strong, long lasting business relationships.

If you put in the time and work, you will be rewarded. TRY IT!

<https://smallbiztrends.com/2015/06/build-lasting-business-relationships.html>