

Turn Your Business Cards into a Red Hot Marketing Tool



Business cards were probably the first business marketing investment you made. You may carry them with you, but have you really thought about them in a while? By following some tricks of the trade, they can become your number-one, low-cost, high-impact marketing strategy. Pull out your card and follow the tips below.

1. Does your card reflect your current practice? Invest in the best quality cards you can afford. Order enough to realize the cost savings on a larger order. This will motivate you to use them!
2. Do you carry your cards in an attractive card case or display them in a nice card holder? If you still have a rubber band around your cards, you are not sending the right message. A bent, dirty or crumpled card does not say "I am a professional" to clients.
3. Never leave home or the office without them. Keep cards in your car, purse, backpack, in your desk, gym bag---anywhere you might have a chance to pull one out and give one away! Don't let yourself be caught without a card---you may be missing out on a potential client or referral.
4. Make the back of the card work for you. For a small additional fee, you can use the back of a card as a marketing billboard. You can use it as an appointment reminder or put a map of your location on it. You might want to list special services you offer, special training you have completed or share a few words about your business. You might even want to put an inspirational message or quote on the back. These suggestions will help make your business card one to keep instead of one to toss aside.
5. Use a tag line on your card to urge the client to action. Phrases, such as, "Relaxation is just a phone call away," or, "Take the chair massage coffee break today," help a potential client remember you and take action.

6. Be easy to reach. List your business phone number, cell phone, e-mail address and Web site. The more ways a client can reach you, the more likely she is to make an appointment.

7. Shy? Use your business cards as a way of introducing yourself. First, this gives you something to do with your hands when approaching a new contact and opens a conversation. Most people will accept the card and stop to ask a question or two. This is a great way to share your story. Most people will give you their card in return, which can lead to a great mailing or e-mail contact list.

8. Better yet, write a short script for yourself that you can practice. "Hello, I am Jennie Grand. I am a local massage therapist who specializes in chair massage coffee breaks for busy offices and businesses." Now that will start a conversation! Practice the script to make sure you deliver your message with enthusiasm and confidence.

9. Approach other businesses that target the same or similar market as you. Ask if you can leave a small supply of your cards for interested customers. For example, if you want to grow your sports massage and bodywork business, you could leave cards at fitness equipment supply stores, running shoe outlets, local gyms that do not have a therapist on hand, karate studios, etc. You need to offer to share their cards as well.

10. Give yourself a weekly goal of how many cards you want to distribute for the week. Track it to see how many you actually gave out. Repeat until this becomes an activity you do consistently and automatically.

Don't be afraid to try something different. If you are not happy with your current business card, you can often find free offers for a few hundred cards. You might experiment with different styles to find one that fits you and your business brand better than your current cards. Making your business card a red hot marketing tool is easy and cost effective.

(Excerpted from Personal Services Power Marketing, a continuing professional education course offered by Patti Biro.)



Patti Biro is an educator with more than 25 years of experience in the design, development and planning of continuing professional education for health and wellness professionals. She is a NCBTMB-recognized provider of continuing education. Biro is the founder of Elder-ssage™: The Art and Science of Massage for the Aging Adult, which emphasizes the cross disciplinary use of massage for the older adult. She can be reached at pattibiro@yahoo.com or on the Web at www.pattibiro.com.