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MAVERICK MARKETING:

NO-COST, LOW-COST WAYS TO STAND OUT AND WRANGLE MORE BUSINESS YOUR WAY

1. TURN IT SIDWAYS.

If everyone does it vertically, turn yours sideways. If everyone else is sideways, well, make yours vertical. Remember, the more two things are alike, the more important every tiny difference becomes, and the more impact it can have on setting you apart.

2. CONNECT BEFORE YOU CONVINC.

People don't care about you or your business. They care about themselves. Instead of describing your experience, product or service and focusing on how great you are, connect to something they care about (which isn't you.) Focus on what they want, not what you do.

3. CHANGE YOUR VOICEMAIL.

Don't give instructions. We know what the beep is for and what to do when we hear it. People are so used to hearing the same boring greeting that even a slight variation will have a huge impact. No sales pitches, though. You want them to WANT to talk to you when you return that phone call.

4. TOSS YOUR TYPEFACE.

If you're using Times Roman or Arial, you look like eleventy million other emails, proposals, resumes and companies out there. Computers come with plenty more. Pick one. This one, by the way, is Trebuchet. Pick one. Not a cornucopia of script and serifs and san-serif and icons. Pick one.

5. HAVE A CONVERSATION.

The best marketing sounds and feels like a conversation. A letter from a good friend. Not a term paper or spec sheet. Be conversational in all your marketing messages. Read what you wrote out loud. It should sound natural. Think dialogue, not monologue and practice what you're going to say.

6. MAKE YOURSELF MEMORABLE.

We all know—or remember—a “hat lady.” What can you do to be remembered? For guys, it might be a conversation-starting tie, even a bow tie. (No clip-ons.) There's the woman who always wears a scarf, a pin that is “wearable art,” or a certain color. Or maybe it's a catch phrase. (Blah Blah Blah is pretty much taken, however.)

7. KNOW WHY YOU'RE NETWORKING.

Peers or prospects? Referrals or relationships? Leads or learning? Know one thing for sure: you're not there to sell.

8. HAVE A PERSONALITY.

Your company has a personality, and so do you. It's your unique “voice,” your “brand.” It's the single most effective way you can stand out in the marketplace and from your competition. If you're in a crowded, dime-a-dozen, we-all-look-alike category, it's the only thing. You don't create your personal or corporate brand. It is revealed, from the core of who you are, the value you bring to the marketplace and how you express it. Best brand advice? Be yourself. At all times.

9. BRING YOUR BENEFITS TO LIFE

Benefits attract. Features or attributes repel. A flower does not attract a bee with a long list of pollen attributes. “Attract” means to not just “draw the eye,” (or ear) but to please it, as well. Convert a feature into a benefit by asking “why is [feature] important, personally, to my target audience or decision maker.”

10. BE BRAVE.

What would you do if you weren't a _____? What would you do if you were brave? Go for it.

TERRI LANGHANS, CSP *speaks to business audiences who want to stand out and get better results—in the marketplace and the workplace. Whether it's marketing or motivation, she packs her programs with plenty of laughs, powerful insights, specific strategies and tangible tools people can use right away to be more effective and make a difference. Terri is the author of the book “The 7 Marketing Mistakes Every Business Makes and How to Fix Them,” and is the former CEO of a national ad agency and marketing firm she started from scratch and sold to a Fortune 100 company. As a Certified Speaking Professional, she is one of only 187 women worldwide to have earned the designation awarded by the National Speakers Association.*

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