

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP TALK

Human-centred leadership training
Award-winning | Effective | Empowering



Do you feel awkward networking? Read this!

Be honest.

When you hear the word networking, do you picture forced smiles, awkward small talk and conversations that feel more transactional than meaningful?

You are not alone.

Many capable professionals hesitate when it comes to networking. Not because they lack value. Not because they lack confidence. But because they associate it with being pushy, self-promotional or uncomfortable.

Yet here is the truth: If you want to grow your impact, career, business or influence, networking is not optional. It is essential.


Your network is your net worth. — Porter Gale

But perhaps it is more than that. Your network is your learning circle, your sounding board and often the bridge to your next opportunity.

Leadership does not grow in isolation. It expands through conversations, shared insight and mutual value.

Keep scrolling!
Martin



Leadership does not grow in isolation. It expands through conversations, shared insight and mutual value. This short reflection explores how to approach networking in a way that feels authentic, purposeful and aligned with human-centred leadership. 

Networking as a leadership skill

Networking is not about collecting business cards, delivering polished elevator pitches, or selling yourself.

It is about building genuine professional relationships that create trust over time.

Avoiding networking rarely looks dramatic. It often shows up as avoiding or postponing events, staying within familiar circles or convincing yourself that “good work speaks for itself”. While quality work matters, visibility and connection amplify its impact. And it doesn't always need to be about your professional network - it could be networking at an extended family gathering or sports event to connect with others in a way that might help or benefit you in the future.

When done well, networking creates:

- New opportunities
- Fresh ideas
- Support during challenges
- Visibility and credibility
- Long-term collaboration

But most importantly, it creates *community*.

As I shared in my recent blog, simple habits can make networking feel natural rather than forced. Things like:

- Preparing 2-3 meaningful questions before an event
- Focusing on listening more than speaking
- Following up within 48 hours
- Looking for ways to add value first

When you shift from “What can I get?” to “How can I contribute?”, everything changes.

Awkwardness disappears.

Confidence increases.

Conversations flow.

If you would like to explore more practical tips, you can find them here:

🔗 **Connect with ease: Simple networking habits to grow your reach and impact**
[<https://profoundleadership.com.au/connect-with-easy-simple-networking-habits-to-grow-your-reach-and-impact/>]

Networking becomes far less intimidating when it is reframed as service, curiosity and contribution.



Reflection

“Where might I be holding back from meaningful connection because of an outdated belief about networking?”



Support that meets you where you are

Leadership development works best when it feels relevant, practical and human.

Feeling hesitant before walking into a room full of strangers? Below are some ways I support leaders who want to become more confident at networking.

Quick win [leadership tip]



The 60-second networking confidence reset

Feeling hesitant before walking into a room full of strangers?

Try this simple 60-second reset:

1. **Shift your focus outward** - Instead of worrying how you appear, get curious about others.
2. **Set one clear intention** - *“I will have two meaningful conversations.”*
3. **Give yourself permission to leave early** - You are not trapped. You are choosing to be there.

Often, fear comes from pressure.

Remove the pressure and keep the purpose.

Bonus: Practical networking scripts

Stop forcing conversations. Start building real connections.

Sometimes the hardest part of networking is simply knowing how to begin. To make this easier for you, I am giving you a complimentary one-page toolkit: **“Networking scripts that don’t feel scripted.”**

It includes natural, professional conversation starters you can use before, during and after events.

These prompts are not about memorising lines. They are about reducing hesitation and helping you move into genuine conversation more confidently.

👉 [Download your free one-pager here.](#)



If you would like a deeper, more structured approach, the full **Networking without awkwardness** ebook is available [here](#).

Group training for leaders and teams

Networking is not just an individual skill. It is a leadership capability. When leaders network effectively, they:

- Represent their organisation with authenticity
- Build strategic partnerships
- Open doors for their teams
- Strengthen their personal brand

That is why we offer a group training session:

[Click on the image tile to access the 1-page workshop outline.]

PROFOUND Leadership

EMBRACING THE ART OF NETWORKING

Build powerful connections for long-term success

Successful individuals understand that their networks of trust, equity and their extraordinary outcomes are achieved through strong relationships and collaborations. By establishing interpersonal connections, we build the foundation for success.

This interactive session, led by award-winning facilitator Martin Zobel, will deepen your understanding of professional networking and boost your confidence to connect and build robust relationships. You'll learn how to leverage your network to enhance growth and create win-win opportunities.

Equip your people with the skills to confidently connect, communicate, and collaborate to grow their professional network and open new opportunities.

KEY OUTCOMES

- Break the ice and initiate conversations with ease
- Strengthen trust and rapport in professional settings
- Communicate authentically and with influence
- Grow your network through purposeful engagement
- Build a personal brand that aligns with your values

IDEAL FOR

- People required to grow their visibility and personal influence
- Individuals seeking to develop long-term, mutually beneficial relationships
- Team members wanting to connect confidently in networking or professional settings
- People wanting to improve communication presence and impact

WHAT YOU GET

- Engaging, interactive and thought-provoking training session with real-time insights and activities
- Option to tailor this session to a length other than half-day
- Carbon-neutral training

Ready for the next step?

- FIND OUT MORE [profoundleadership.com.au/networking-grouptraining]
- ASK FOR A PROPOSAL AND QUOTE [info@profoundleadership.com.au]
- BOOK A SESSION TO DISCUSS YOUR NEEDS [profoundleadership.com.au/exploretraining]

Embracing the art of networking

This session can be delivered as a half-day workshop or adapted into a practical *Lunch & Learn* format.

Participants learn how to:

- Overcome networking reluctance
- Build confidence in professional settings
- Start and sustain meaningful conversations
- Follow up with purpose
- Position themselves as value contributors

If you would like to explore how this could support your organisation, have a look here:

<https://profoundleadership.com.au/lnd-program-workshop-embracing-the-art-of-networking/>

Or simply reply to this email and we can explore your goals together.

NEWSLETTER | February 2026

If you are exploring other professional development options for your team or organisation, you can [download the full group training catalogue](#) for an overview of all available workshops and formats.

If any of this resonates, explore what feels most useful right now. There is no rush and no pressure. Leadership growth is not a race.

As always, if you have questions or simply want to talk through options, reach out. We are on your support team.

Dare to make a difference!
Martin



[0421 936 313](tel:0421936313)

martin@profoundleadership.com.au

PROfound
Leadership
HUMAN-CENTRED LEADERSHIP TRAINING