



Monday Monday

Connecting the Dots with Karen Kaplowitz



*Helping you create and reinforce the habits of successful career building,
gleaned from my work as a business development strategist, trainer and coach*

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Blending Family Social Activities with Business Networking. Memorial Day launches a season of “relaxed” entertaining and the challenge of blending family social activities and business networking. You don’t want to violate the social norms by inappropriately interjecting business into events which are primarily social in nature but you want to take advantage of meeting or catching up with interesting neighbors and friends, especially if you have already mentioned some of them to your partners as prospective clients.

It helps to have a willing spouse or partner who can educate you on what any newcomers to your social circle do for a living so you can Google them in advance to prepare to talk intelligently—but casually—about their industry or company. Try to get the names and ages of their children and which ones are friends with your own children. You also need to get all your ducks in a row on the entertaining front, so you are not too distracted by your cooking or bartending responsibilities to engage people of interest. Above all, avoid the fatal mistake of ignoring the spouses or partners of the people who interest you.

Example: Your family is hosting a barbecue to mark the end of the school year. Your spouse alerts you that the father of one child is the CFO of a local biotech company. You don’t do any work in biotech but you check out the company with one of your partners and look at some recent news about the company. You also identify biotech companies that your firm represents. You are ready to have a conversation if the occasion arises. If your interesting neighbor volunteers to help you, take him up on it and install him next to you at the grill, assembling hamburgers and hot dogs or making drinks.

To transition from a purely social situation to business, ask lots of questions, about his family, their vacation plans, and of course, his business. Your questions should reflect your interest, curiosity, and business awareness. He will of course ask what you do too so you will easily have an opportunity to explain what you do. Since he will have told you he works in biotech, you can mention that your firm represents many biotech companies whose names you happen to have at your fingertips!

When everyone is packing up their kids to go home, you have set the stage to propose continuing the conversation in a more peaceful setting, sometime over lunch or drinks downtown, with your biotech partner.

Are you ready to spice up your next barbecue with tasteful business networking?

Enjoy Memorial Day!

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