The Business Card Collection

 Ok, you’ve been to some networking events, met some great people, made some initial connections and walked away with a handful of business cards.

Now what?

Many of us will simply take the cards back to the office and add them to our “Business Card Collection”. For some of us that collection may be quite extensive!

But did you know there is important value in those business cards that goes beyond the person’s name and contact information?

When someone hands you their business card, they are also handing you permission to contact them. In essence they are saying “Please feel free to contact me”. I don’t think I’ve ever had someone give me their card and say “here’s my information but don’t’ reach out to me”.

Since you have their permission to get in touch, take advantage of that! Make sure you follow-up within the first 24- 48 hours after meeting them. I suggest you start with an email - this gives you an opportunity to mention the event, remind them of a conversation you may have had, ask a question and express interest in learning more about them and their business.

If they do not reply to the email try calling them. If you have to leave a message make it brief and to the point. If there is still no response send them a text – everyone has different ways of communicating so try as many as you can.

Don’t give up – we all get busy so give them some time to respond; allow 24- 48 hours for them to get back to you.

The business card is also a gateway to establish a relationship with the individual. In order to do this, you need to get to know each other, so in your follow-up invite them to coffee, lunch or happy hour. Meeting face to face is a great way to make a personal association and discover how you can connect each other to clients, business referrals and other resources.

No matter which method you use to follow-up or how you connect with the individual remember: professionalism is key. This is your opportunity to make an impression for your business as well.

So, take a look at your business card collection and start making those follow-up connections today!