

The 3 P's of Professional Relationships

By Bob 'Idea Man' Hooey

The secret of our continued business success is in the appreciation and application of the 3 P's of Professional Relationships. It is the interaction and relationships with our colleagues, clients, and contacts that positively impact our lives, and helps us succeed in this speaking business. In my experience, it has been the people who have made the biggest difference in my professional career.

Let's briefly discuss the 3 P's as they apply to professional speakers. **These principles apply to many other industries.** Feel free to adapt and apply them to your specific case.

Those with whom we maintain **professional relationships can PAMPER** us. In pampering, I mean helping us to grow, and in teaching us the ropes and techniques that assist us to expand our professionalism and effectiveness. And sometimes they help us through tough times. When my dad and mom died in 1999, I was overwhelmed. Over 60 of my fellow speakers from CAPS/NSA took the time to console me, and share their own experiences and ideas on how to weather this storm. To them I owe an immense debt of gratitude.

Our **professional relationships** also **PUSH** us to expand our comfort zones and our service to our clients. In my case, I've had many speaking friends; clients and associates push me. For example, my friends Peter Legge and Margaret Hope have pushed me, challenged me, lead me, taught me, and encouraged me to fly way past where I ever thought I would soar, and to do so successfully. My involvement in the founding and ongoing leadership in CAPS-BC has pushed me w-a-y past my comfort zone as well, more so now that I've taken on the Presidency.

One of the most valuable benefits to maintaining **professional relationships** is in **PARTNERING** with fellow professionals. This happens in two areas. The first would be in working together for a common goal, such as our CAPS local and national associations. Or in the case of NSA's LA workshop, where Janet Lapp appointed me the official Canadian Ambassador, and gave me the opportunity of leading a group of crazy Canadians in producing and hosting a special Canada night for the workshop. A dozen CAPS members from across Canada jumped in to make this an event that made CAPS look good. We showed that, as Canadians, we did not have to remain in the shadow of our NSA friends. We demonstrated leadership and our ability to be quality hosts.

Or a more productive partnering of having someone who believes in your abilities refers you to a Bureau or client. Alan Weiss, author of "Money Talks - How to make a million as a speaker," recently shared his thoughts on buyers making decisions to hire a speaker. The number one reason for being hired is having personally heard the speaker and being impressed, followed by a recommendation by a trusted peer, subordinate, or trusted third party that the speaker is excellent. The last reason on his list was receiving promotional material from the speaker. He went on to state that this is truly a 'relationship' business. I agree! I've gotten quite a few engagements this way.

Our biggest challenge as speakers is in getting noticed, and in finding the people who will see the value we bring to the stage and hire us. Our time and efforts would be best used in the cultivation and care of our professional relationships. To make sure we take care of our clients, keep in touch with them, and continue to build strong relationships. To make sure we continue

to be active in our industry, in CAPS, and in working with our fellow speakers and industry professionals.

To help our fellow professionals grow and achieve their goals. Interestingly enough, it is in helping others achieve their goals and dreams that the doors are opened to help us reach our own.

My friends, we are in a relationship business - relationships with our audiences, our peers, our clients, and our communities. Make this a productive year by taking care of the important people in your personal life, and in applying and appreciating the **3 P's in your professional relationships.**

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