



Conferencing Better

TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS



Why go to a conference?

GOAL SETTING FOR CONFERENCES

I hear this all the time: I invest in conferences, I pay the money then it just ends up as a pile of notes. I have so many ideas. I loved connecting with people and my new friends but when I got home it fizzled out. I don't know how to apply what I learned to my business.

It might be exciting to look at conferences and see all the things people are doing at them and you wonder, I might want to try that, is it right for me? Am I cut out to go to a conference? Is it going to be a waste of my time?

My quick answer is that, if you put time preparing and being intentional about attending a conference, then it will be worth your investment. Because here's the thing... most people who attend don't have a clue why they want to go besides that they think "it will be fun." My challenge to you is be intentional about what you choose, why you choose to invest your time and money, and have a clear goal for why you want to attend.

SOME SPECIFIC THINGS THAT CAN RESULT FROM ATTENDING A CONFERENCE

- ☑ A relationship that forms as a result yields in referrals.
- ☑ The information you learn is implemented into your business, allowing you to grow your list.
- ☑ You find out about resources that save you time.
- ☑ You find members of your tribe who "get it" when you go back home.
- ☑ You land on the map of an influencer – they know you and might be quicker to invite for future events, refer you or mention your work.
- ☑ So if you've been mulling over attending a conference, think about what you'd like to glean from going to a conference.

Be strategic and intentional.

HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS I'D SUGGEST YOU ASK YOURSELF IF YOU'RE CONSIDERING INVESTING IN A CONFERENCE

1. Where do I need help in my business? How will this conference help me get there?
2. Who are the speakers I'm excited to meet and learn from?
3. What other types of people are attending this conference (historically)?
4. What do I need to learn or prepare before I would be ready to attend this conference?
5. What am I excited to learn from this conference?
6. What other conferences might be right for me?

THE INTROVERT'S GUIDE TO NETWORKING LIKE A PRO

Networking. You might love it or you might hate it. It depends on a few different things. If you get anxious in situations where you don't know anybody, that might cause you anxiety. If you get excited and feel like it's an opportunity to meet new people, you might love it. You might hate that people are so surface at networking and what you like to do is connect with people. You might love that at networking events, you get to "try on" new people and see if you jive with them. **Either way, you're totally normal.** Unfortunately, in most industries, networking is a hurdle you have to overcome in order to make connections. While it might seem fun for your peers, you might be cursing them because you find it utterly exhausting. If that's the case, I'm sharing my most effective tips to network like a pro on your own terms!

- ☑ **Get there early.** A lot of anxiety comes from feeling like you're left out, not part of the "in crowd" or that you don't know anybody. When you get there a little early, you can be one of the first people to get to know people as they walk in. Try to shift your perspective from, "I'm the only loser here by herself, to I'm the first person and I get to meet all the other cool people first!"
- ☑ **Get to know the host.** The host is your easy "in" and you can thank her and her team for hosting. You can share a story about how you got to the event, what the event means for you, where you are in business, or you can ask her what she hopes to get out of it. The host is probably busy so you might not be able to chat with you for too long but it's nice to get a chance to tell her your excitement for the event before lots of people do too.

- ☑ **Go with a friend.** Who said you had to go solo? If going to a networking event is just terrifying to you, ask a buddy to go with you. Somebody who can be a little bit of a comfort but also could let you do your thing, once you fit into the groove. Talk before hand and agree on how long you want to stay or what you want to accomplish before you head out.
- ☑ **Gamify your networking.** Challenge yourself and give yourself a mini reward for achieving certain tasks while networking. Collect 5 business cards and promise yourself a piece of chocolate. Talk to 10 people and ask them what their connection to the event is, you get a glass of wine when you get home. Make it a fun challenge for yourself!
- ☑ **Have a goal in mind.** What's the reason you want to attend this event? Is it so that people can meet you? Do you want to make an acquaintance of the event coordinator? Get clear on why you want to attend in the first place. Once you accomplish that goal, you can give yourself permission to leave if you're bored or are overly anxious.
- ☑ **Interview.** People LOVE talking about themselves. Instead of focusing on saying the wrong thing or not "nailing" your elevator pitch, ask people questions about them. What do they love doing? How are they associated with the event? Who are their ideal clients? Have they met anybody who they think you should meet? When you turn the focus on them, not only does it make others feel like they are being heard, it can give you a little more control!
- ☑ **Welcome others.** Be the networking person that you want when you go to network. If you're walking into a room where you know NOBODY, how do you want to be greeted by another person in attendance? Be that person. Wear a smile. Notice if somebody looks anxious and make room for them in your conversation. Just turn to somebody and say, "hey, you look familiar," even if they don't! People want to be included and have a place to land safely!
- ☑ **Be you at 110%.** Networking takes extra effort than you probably want to put in. I encourage you to be your true self and not be inauthentic. But I do also recommend you turning up the energy by about 10%. What I've noticed about introverts is that your shyness or can come across as a different emotion - annoyance, being disinterested, or boredom. You might have to practice wearing more of your heart on your sleeve for the short duration of the event!
- ☑ **Articulate your Rockstar Statement.** One of the things I teach is to nail the rock statement. In this statement, you articulate who you are, what you do, who you serve and what that ultimately helps you to do. It's a beautified version of the dreaded elevator pitch. It really sets you apart and being able to have it come out of your mouth without the hiccups and hesitations is key to showing that you know your stuff!

☑ **Monitor your energy level.** You have to recognize when your energy is tanking. For introverts that I work with, many of them notice when they can no longer be social and they have to retreat. Before you get to that desperate place, make your exit! It's okay to notice that you're becoming depleted, you need a break and to leave without much of a "goodbye" - except if you came with a friend. Take time you need to take a break, go to the bathroom, go outside to get some fresh air. Monitoring what you need and taking care of you is really important in these situations. If you're an introvert, you recharge by having quality solo time. You like to connect with a lot of substantive conversations in small, intimate groups. You don't love how fleeting the large networking scene can be and how you learn next to nothing about a person. You just want to go home, wash your face and get into your PJs. By following the 10 tips above you will be able to feel more confident, enjoy the experience, and get to meet some others who need you in the networking room!

Get clear on how you love to work. Extrovert, Introvert, it doesn't really matter. It's really about who you want to build meaningful relationships with.

Building authentic and lasting relationships that will grow your business

People often ask me how I've built my business as quickly as I have and my answer isn't some marketing tactic or how I've done social media - it has been one simple and yet complex answer: building relationships.

In 2015 when I started my business, I set out to have as many conversations with business owners to learn about their businesses and how I could support them. It's been the way I've been able to pour into them and find ways to collaborate naturally. In turn, it has given me more leverage, more organic support and publicity - all because I wanted to be able to give somebody else my attention with no strings attached!

- ☑ **The foundation for my business has always been about the creation of community and connection.** I'm a natural giver and it makes it super easy for me to do that. It's not always natural for people but I want to give you the tools to be able to grow your business in a way that's mindful and genuine. In a way that feels really great!
- ☑ **First, I encourage you to get clear on how you love to work.** Most people that I come into contact with in the creative entrepreneur space is we LOVE to give, we are service oriented, we want to connect with others because it can get lonely being in our own offices and studios. Get clear on how you love to work. Extrovert, Introvert, it doesn't really matter. It's really about who you want to build meaningful relationships with.
- ☑ **Think about who you want to get to know.** If you're watching this, it's most likely that you already have a network to tap into - even if they aren't people you know very well, it's not tough to do these things I'm about to lay out. Think about who it is that you want to get to know and what you might be able to help them with!
- ☑ **Go with a giving heart.** It feels icky to go into a relationship to try to sell something. What I've learned is that whenever I go in with a giving, service centered heart, where I'm genuinely curious about what I can do to serve them, people are more likely to ask me how they can work with me than when I'm outright pitching them on services.
- ☑ **Invest in people.** Invest in people's services, conferences, events, webinars, interact on social media. Spending money or time will show them how invested you are in them and believe in what they have to offer. Don't try to buy people's attention but invest in things that really resonate with you.

Choosing a conference that will boost your business

Attending a conference has so many possible positive impacts for your business.

I'm guessing that the first you think about when you read about conferences is how expensive it is and that you cannot go. I'm not here to convince you that going to a conference is for you or not, but I'm going to make a case for why it's a good investment and how to make the most of it.

YES, It's an investment! As with any investment you make in your business, it's a calculated risk. My challenge to you is, when you look at a conference, don't think of the money as the deciding factor. If you go in with the mindset, "how can I make this happen?" and "Is this going to yield results in my business that I want?" Make the money part of the decision but not the whole reason.

It's an investment of your time to step away from your business. But if your work is important to you, as I know it is, it's crucial to work **ON** your business, not just **IN** your business. If you don't take the time to grow as a business owner, your fast pace won't get you to where you want to be going. So commit to figuring out what tools you can use to grow.

Investments are worth making if you can articulate what the return on the investment (ROI) will be for your business. Here are some ways you might see ROI from a conference in your business:

- ☑ You might **learn something** at a conference that ultimately helps to create a new income stream in your business.
- ☑ You might **meet an accountability buddy** that needs exactly what you need so you can support one another.
- ☑ You might **meet a mentor** who you click with that is a few steps of you in business and helps you to explore new options for your business and how to do the work you do.
- ☑ You'll **meet influencers and make an impression on people** who are possible decision makers about future opportunities that could help to catapult your business. (this is my favorite one!)
- ☑ You'll **meet a tribe of people who are just like you** and will help you to feel less alone when you get home.

How to pick a conference that's right for you

Don't throw your money at any old conference that's out there. **I'd really recommend that you do your research, do some soul-searching, have conversations with people and articulate what is important to you.**

1. I recommend that you think about your business and how you want to see it grow in a year.

- ☑ What are the possible puzzle pieces that will help to grow it?
- ☑ Do you need information, people, money, connections, courage - what is it that you want?
- ☑ Once you know where you need to go and the pieces of that puzzle, see which conferences have people who might be able to be part of that.

2. Do your research.

- ☑ Most conferences will put out speakers and cost out front. Before you say "no" because of the price, look at what the possible opportunities are by attending the conference
- ☑ Does the conference you're investigating have a few influential people in your industry that you can't wait to learn from?

3. Have conversations with people about conferences.

- ☑ I'm pretty sure you're part of at least one facebook group (like the [Fueled with Heart Facebook Community](#) – if you aren't, you gotta join!). Ask these bosses if they have found great information, connections, networking opportunities, etc. I'd recommend that you be open minded but also critical of the possibility that people have different goals for attending conferences.
- ☑ And finally, reach out to the conference organizer whether it be through social media or via email – to send them a quick note letting them know that you're super interested and what you hope to gain from the experience.

You're on the path to building a business that's Fueled with Heart.

When you choose your own adventure and your own destination, you're bound to create a life that's full of sunshine and doing more of what you love and making money by helping people.

Can't wait to keep cheering you on. See you inside the [Fueled with Heart Facebook Community](#) to keep this conversation going!

XO,
Reina

POST YOUR WORK ON
INSTAGRAM AND TAG ME
@REINAANDCOMPANY

#fueledwithheart

