

CREATIVE

Networks and Networking

A Profile of Chris Maginnis

The facilitator of the new Meetup® networking group had challenged us to speak about what we don't do in our business as a change in perspective from always describing what we do. It was an easy assignment that turned out to be impossibly hard. Most of us focused on obvious differences that separate our business from competitors. He saved his turn for last, and the minute he stood up with script in hand and a twinkle in his eye, we knew he was up to something. He gave us all a two-minute short course in creative networks and networking as he described what he didn't do. It was masterful.

The facilitator is Chris Maginnis, and the group is Bay Area Networking Circle (BANC). He was on fire.

For every service that he said he didn't handle as a financial advisor with Waddell & Reed, he was able to say, "but so-and-so does, so I refer to him." He identified every person in the group in this way, and was able to describe what each member does. He concluded his spiel with the question, "Without all the people around us, we're of no value to our clients." For Maginnis, networking is not about finding clients but about building networks of trusted referral partners.

Maginnis believes, like most salesmen, that his goal is to identify the needs of someone and then offer solutions to those needs. He stands apart with his belief on what to do once needs are identified. "Ninety percent of the time, you can't fill their need," he said, "but you may know someone who can. Over time, you become people's trusted advisor because of your ability to help. Effective networking involves finding good referral partners."

He arrived to the Bay Area community a couple of years ago. He was in a new community, and working with a new company. Networking serves as his primary marketing and advertising, so it was time for creative thinking and creative problem solving. For Maginnis, that means to join networks if they are a good match and build networks if need be. He started BANC, and he joined 12 other organizations. For many, including chambers of commerce, he "interviewed" them to determine if they were a good match to his needs. He then set out to bring value to each group by being involved, contributing to group success and serving in some sort of leadership role. "If you don't bring value, don't expect to get value," he said.

For those who want to maximize networking for business development, he suggests: constantly try new things because that will take you far; go into each organization, event and opportunity with a networking plan of action with goals and objectives; and, include SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound) with your networking at both micro and macro levels of planning



Christopher Maginnis, Financial Advisor
Waddell & Reed

Creativity Tips from Empowered Creativity Institute

- 1) Join and actively contribute with your talents to groups that include the type of people you want to have as clients and as referral partners. This includes their professions, occupations and interests, but also their personality and character. Make a list of the type of people you like to be around and seek out groups that attract similar types. You'll enjoy every opportunity to network.
- 2) Think quality of connections over quantity of contacts in your overall plans for networking, as well as for specific events. Tip: The way to create quality connections is by listening to others instead of selling yourself.

Creative Solutions From Creative People
By Dion McInnis, [Empowered Creativity Institute](http://EmpoweredCreativityInstitute.com)
Dion@Dionmcinnis.com