

The idea of self-promotion shouldn't make you cringe – it's about building a solid foundation for long-term success.



How to self-promote

FOR INTROVERTS ONLY

It's an extrovert's world. A recent study found that those who pipe up in meetings are seen as more competent and gain more influence than others even if they're not actually adding anything. That's hard news for introverts – who like to let their work speak for itself. Nancy Ancowitz, author of *Self-Promotion for Introverts*, offers tips on how the quiet gal can get ahead.

- **Sell yourself** Bragging is repulsive to introverts. But effective self-promoting is different; it's finding the overlap between what you have and what your audience wants.

- **Write** Introverts are more inclined to rely on writing and often excel at it. Position yourself as an expert by writing something for an industry publication. Craft thoughtful cover letters and thank-you notes. Tweet and blog.

- **Host** Organise an event. When we host we get to be seen as a go-to person, and we don't have to reach out as much.

- **Speak publicly** Although it's scary, public speaking is an amazing tool for an introvert. We get to prepare, and then we get up there once and reach lots of people rather than having many conversations, which tires us. (But if you just can't, find other ways of reaching out.)

- **Network** At networking events, prepare some opening lines, maybe based on the news – 'easy conversation starters, open-ended, positive and simple'. Approach people who smile at you or are alone. Consider teaming up with an extrovert.

- **Say hi** 'Remain visible to your boss and colleagues by regularly exchanging niceties and showing interest in them,' Ancowitz says. 'It's a good way to get the buzz about what's going on behind the scenes and can also land you in the right place at the right time when an opportunity is just unfolding.'

OTHER TIPS

1 KNOW WHERE YOU WANT TO BE Setting goals (and they need to be written down) is a determinant of success. Break the big goal down into little steps.

'Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness.' – **WN Murray**, leader of the Scottish Himalayan Expedition in 1951

2 WORK HARD 'Discipline is what helps you achieve your goal in the fastest and most efficient way,' says Annette Kinnear, author of *Your Career Your Life*. The courage to stretch yourself is a more powerful success agent than talent, she says.

Cultivate a presence

Kinnear suggests that successful people:

- don't show strong emotions
- use appropriate body language

Tip: Look directly at people, rather than tilting your head, sit and stand up straight; if you're in front of an audience, keep your arms at your side

- get and keep your attention

Tip: Listen to others; don't ramble or repeat yourself and be brief – say less than you want to say

- don't allow themselves to be rushed

Tip: Think before acting or responding

- avoid unnecessary explanations or apologies

Tip: Admit mistakes or apologise immediately – but then leave it there

- look professional

Tip: Match your style to the dress code for your profession

- set boundaries

Tip: 'Express where your line is and make a request,' says Kinnear. She suggests using Dr Marshall Rosenberg's 'non-violent communication' – (NVC) method (<http://www.cnvc.org/about/marshall-rosenberg.html>)

3 IDENTIFY YOUR STRENGTHS AND PLAY TO THEM

In *Branding & Marketing You*, Donna Rachelson advocates identifying your unique selling proposition (USP). If you are introverted, public speaking may not be your most effective tool; she suggests finding other ways of marketing yourself. ❖

GETTING INTO THE GOOD BOOKS

- 1** *Your Career Your Life* by Annette Kinnear (Penguin) – Kinnear runs IRIE Inspiration (www.irie.co.za), a company specialising in career development, corporate inspiration and cross-cultural communication.
- 2** *What Got You Here Won't Get You There* by Marshall Goldsmith (Profile)
- 3** *Branding & Marketing You* by Donna Rachelson
- 4** *Voice of Influence* by Judy Apps (Crown House)