

Marketing Munchies Podcast Transcript

Episode #26

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Announcer: Welcome to the Marketing Munchies Podcast series hosted by Dr. Bridget Behe. Each week Bridget and her guests will share information, insights, research-based findings, and her 30 years of experience to help your horticultural business connect better with current and future customers. Now, let's join our host, Dr. Bridget Behe.

Dr. Bridget Behe: Hi, and welcome to the Marketing Munchies Podcast. I'm your host, Dr. Bridget Behe. This week I would like to continue our discussion of marketing yourself.

Last week I talked about developing your elevator speech. That could be used when you are meeting someone for the first time whether it is on an airplane, at a dinner with business colleagues, or especially at a trade show—like *Cultivate 18* that was held just a couple of weeks ago in Columbus, Ohio. It is hosted by American Hort. If you have never been to *Cultivate* before, I would encourage you to make plans to go next July, because it is really a great place to see old friends and meet new people and learn so much about the horticulture industry.

Let's talk about networking just a little bit and being able to ask good questions. If you want to market yourself well, you are going to appear to be an interesting person. Interesting people listen more and ask good questions than they really talk about themselves. If you can imagine meeting someone for the first time, at their booth in a tradeshow like *Cultivate*, you might want to walk up and give your elevator speech after you shake hands or as you are shaking hands. To continue the conversation, I think the best thing to do is to be able to ask some good questions.

Obviously, if they are working in a booth, they probably are working for the company. You might ask a question that enquires about their role in the company and how long they've been working with them. That's going to help you understand a little bit more about how they interact with the company and some of the things that they are doing. Another good question to help market yourself is to ask them about something that is new: what is new in the booth this year, or what have you recently introduced? I really like this question, because it helps you learn about something new that the company has released—whether it's a new chemical or a new plant. You can really pursue this line of questioning, because you could ask about how they brought it to market or how long, if it was plant, how long the trialing process was or who did they see as the primary buyer of that.

Asking someone that you've met for the first time, especially at a trade show, asking them about something new can be a really fascinating line of questions. You might follow up with a line of questions that helps you understand them and where they're headed in the company. You might ask about where they had been before they worked for that company or if they had a role in the company prior to their current job title. I think that really should lead to where they see themselves in a few years. It can give you a really good idea about the potential for mobility in that company—for upward mobility or promotions.

Thinking about asking them where they see themselves in a couple years really can help you understand some things about the company. In marketing yourself, it's really important, especially on a tradeshow floor, that you have a couple of questions in line or in hand that you can ask someone when you meet them.

When you are finishing the conversation and you don't want to monopolize somebody's time when they're in the booth, you want to make sure you trade business cards. That's how professionals communicate. If you don't have a business card, you really need to get one, because that is how we exchange communication information. What I would suggest is not getting a business card necessarily from everyone, but collecting cards from companies and individuals that you find interesting, that you think might help you develop your career path or people who currently have jobs that you might want to have someday.

Then, in the 2-4 weeks after the tradeshow, I think it's a great idea to send a follow-up email to tell them how enjoyable it was to meet with them and talk with them. You might share one or two details about the conversation. That will help to jog their memory of specifically who you are. Then you want to try to keep in touch with them maybe once or twice throughout the year.

This is especially true if they have a job or are working for a company that you would like to work for or the kind of job that you would like to have. Then, when you go back to that tradeshow or you see them at another show, you can reintroduce yourself, reacquaint them, jog their memory with having met them, let's say, at *Cultivate 18*. Then you can continue that conversation. It's a really important idea to develop that set of questions that you can have on hand to continue developing your network.

Well, that's it for this week. Thanks for listening!

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Announcer: Thank you for joining us on this week's Marketing Munchies Podcast. For more information or to download the transcript of this podcast, please visit, connect-2-consumer.org. That's C-O-N-N-E-C-T, dash, the number two, dash, C-O-N-S-U-M-E-R, dot, C-O-M.