

## **Career Rx**

By [Lisa Chenofsky Singer](#)

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### **Social Evaluation**

Think about the impression you make. Are you seen as a nice person, a go getter, a smart business person or something else? How do you make other people feel?

What is your reputation? A reputation is your public social evaluation. It is an important component of your identity. In many professions, such as education, medicine and business, your reputation is critical to your success. As a General Contractor, you must be well perceived to be referred to others. Think about how you have selected your school, your doctor, and the company you work for, or the business you purchase products and services from. Most of us select these based on reputations and from referrals within your trusted network.

So how you are perceived is critical. When you are networking, which, by the way, is always, whether you are running errands or attending networking meetings, you are making and leaving behind impressions based on how you behaved, what you said, your manner and presentation of yourself.

In this job market, most jobs will be found through networking. What reactions do you notice after you deliver your networking pitch? What facial expressions do you observe from others? Are individuals listening, taking notes, rolling their eyes, or engaged in other conversation? What did others hear you say? How will they remember you? How did you make them feel?

Recently, when leading a job seekers networking group, I asked participants to pair up with someone they did not know. The instructions given were to share their marketing pitches, listen for three key words or phrases to share when introducing their new network acquaintance to the group. It was interesting that less than 10% were able to successfully do so. As the participants listened, most were not actively listening. The key to hearing what someone is telling you requires your ability to actively listen. Active listening means you are present in the moment and being able to receive and respond. This is your opportunity to let the speaker know how you feel about their message.

As Franklin D. Roosevelt once said,

*"People will probably not remember what you say to them.*

*People will probably not remember what you do for them.*

*But people will remember how you make them feel about you."*

So when you are networking, think about how you are listening and how effective your engagement is. Each networking event provides you with the opportunity to show your personality. People tend to hire people they like being with. If they like your style, sense of humor and overall reactions to issues, you will be viewed positively. When a job opening or opportunity arises, the individuals you have spent time with, will remember you - impressions left behind that over time formed your reputation. As someone gets to know

you, does their impression change? Are you a resource for them? Do people value what you have to offer? Is what you have to offer relevant to today's market needs?

Remember, one good networking interview is worth a thousand letters. Make your networking efforts enjoyable and the business connections will follow. Keep in mind, your reputation is the sum of impressions held in the "eye of the beholder". So, remember this when you are engaging those around you. You will be remembered for the positive impressions left behind - think about this as you engage someone today.

*This column provides thought provoking strategies for getting unstuck along your career journey. A certified Executive and Career Coach can be instrumental in guiding you in your efforts to gain a new perspective. I invite you to contact me @ [Lisa@ChenofskySinger.com](mailto:Lisa@ChenofskySinger.com)*

*Lisa Chenofsky Singer is the Managing Director of Chenofsky Singer and Associates LLC [www.ChenofskySinger.com](http://www.ChenofskySinger.com), providing Executive and Career Coaching and Human Resources Consulting.*

*Lisa's extensive human resources and coaching experience with Fortune 500 companies, small enterprises, medium-sized firms, and non-profit organizations gives her the unique ability to bring together wide-ranging perspectives on career transitions, executive and leadership development. She has consulted with a wide variety of sectors — consumer goods, financial services, healthcare, media and entertainment, pharmaceutical and life sciences, publishing, professional services, technology, and non-profit. Lisa has a passion for motivational speaking, conducts career forums, and provides executive and career coaching.*

*Lisa's greatest strength is that she enables individuals and organizations to see themselves in new ways, freeing them to achieve their goals. Lisa can be reached at [Lisa@ChenofskySinger.com](mailto:Lisa@ChenofskySinger.com).*