

# **Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce Small Business Forum Summary**

## **Ten Tips for Successful Networking Wednesday, November 11, 2009**

### **THE TIPS**

- 1. Prepare**
- 2. Dress Appropriately**
- 3. Present Yourself in a Positive Light**
- 4. Be Enthusiastic and Specific**
- 5. Take your Time and Get Involved**
- 6. Arrive Early and Leave Late**
- 7. Highlight your Differentiation and Know your Product**
- 8. Get and Give Business Cards**
- 9. Be Confident**
- 10. Follow-Up, Follow-Up, Follow-Up**

### **Other Key Points**

1. “Always network for connections, not customers.”
2. Have fun.
3. Think globally, act locally.
4. Networking is the “back to basics” approach many businesses need during difficult economic times.
5. Research the event – does it match your audience?
6. Develop an effective networking plan.
  - a. What are your goals?
  - b. What contacts are you looking for?
  - c. What events are available? Which match your needs?
  - d. How much time do you have for networking?
  - e. How much money are you able to spend on networking?
    - i. Membership dues
    - ii. Event fees
    - iii. Parking/Transit
    - iv. Follow-up (coffee, lunches, etc)
    - v. Clothes
7. Know your product.
8. State your product.
9. Use social media, blogs and more to expand your network.

## **Panelists**

### ***Gail Zelitzky, Silver-Robins Consulting, LLC***

Gail Zelitzky has owned her own businesses since 1977: first, a multi-state franchise operation; then a worldwide catalog and e-commerce business; and, currently, a business consulting firm that coaches entrepreneurs and teams to achieve the performance they expect from themselves and their businesses. Her proactive no-nonsense approach brings solid solutions to challenges faced by business owners. She focuses on issues that impact growth and creates strategies that increase revenue and profitability. Her expertise includes operations, finance, structure, marketing, sales and service – and of course, networking. Her astute perception of issues and concerns business owners face plus her strategic and creative approach to problem-solving are at the core of her success as a consultant.

### ***Lisa Brenner, Bright Ideas***

Lisa B. Brenner is President of Bright Ideas, a marketing and communications consulting firm in Chicago. Founded in 1989, the firm provides marketing planning, competitive analysis and brand strategy to a wide range of service businesses, including healthcare, finance, technology, education and real estate. Some of the firm's clients include Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, Britannica, Children's Memorial Hospital, Follett Software, Arthur J. Gallagher & Co., Baker & McKenzie, Project Management Advisors and L.R. Development.