



Hosting
Collision Events

Your guide to become an influencer in your network

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The Greatest Networking Opportunity You've Never Heard Of

This is your Step-by-Step Guide to Organizing Your Own “Collision Event” - an Unorthodox Gathering That Will Let You Connect With Anyone You Want and Make You the Star of Your Network Overnight

What ‘Collision Events’ Actually Are

Getting in front of people is critical no matter what your goal is for your business - and one of the best ways to do this is through what I refer to as collision events.

Hosting a collision event is a terrific opportunity to put great people in the room, show off your connecting skills, and spark business opportunities without having to sell anything.

It can be hosted virtually or done as a coffee meeting... a breakfast... a lunch... an executive happy hour... even a sweatworking activity...

You don't need a big budget, as long as you keep in mind 4 critical rules.

- Carefully select whom you want in the room (No takers and especially no jerks)
- Have a great plan from start to follow up after the event
- Don't invite no-shows back
- No sales or pitches from anyone, especially the hosts

I've had the pleasure of co-hosting 21 executive happy hours and 1 breakfast event with up to 80 people over the last five years - and every single time I had attendees asking when the next one was.

(Btw, one event resulted in the sale of a \$4 million-dollar company - without any awkward pitches or high-pressure sales)

On the pages that follow, I will give you a step-by-step blueprint to strategically expand your network and become an influencer in your niche by organizing collision events.

The Formula:

5 Key Elements of a Successful Collision Event

1. PURPOSE

Why are you hosting the event? ”

Is it to expand your network of connections, bring clients and potential clients together, introduce potential referral partners, cultivate existing connections within your network, add a spin to a typical open house, etc.?

Knowing why you want to host an event helps guide the rest of your decisions.

2. TEAM

Are you doing the event solo, or will you have a small group of co-workers, business associates, friends, collaborators, etc. to help you with the details and co-host?

If you're doing this solo, then you have full reign. If you're co-hosting it, then consider who will take the lead: delegate what needs to be done and manage the guest list.

3. BUDGET:

Do you have a budget in mind or are you starting from scratch?

If you're on a tight budget then consider a small group of 3-6 people meeting at a coffee shop, your office or other location like a coworking space.

If you have deeper pockets, then happy hour is my second choice as it can be tough for some people to get out of the office at lunch.

The benefit of the restaurant is that you can order off the menu and the servers will take care of everything. On the flip side, the cost tends to be higher when you include a great tip.

Also, a restaurant can be loud at happy hour if you are in the bar - which can be a problem since your guests are supposed to be conversing with each other.

If you host this at an office or coworking space, you can go all out by using a caterer. If you're looking to cut costs then pick up food trays at Costco or your local grocery store. Experience shows people typically don't eat as much as expected.

We've always served beer and wine to keep the budget down and people can serve themselves. We've never had an issue with someone over-serving themselves. If this is a company event, be sure to check with HR for liability/insurance.

4. TIMELINE

Do you have a big announcement to make with a deadline that you want to highlight or are you flexible in timing?

A coffee shop event with a handful of people can be organized more quickly than a happy hour with 30+ people.

Since this is your first event, I'd allow 4-8 weeks from the time you start planning to the day of the event for maximum attendance.

PRO TIP: Keep in mind any events that might be going on that compete. These could be local Chambers or other professional organizations.

One year we had the Kansas City Royals in the Playoff games on their way to the World Series. A third of our confirmed list canceled last minute to go to the game, but this was the event with the \$4m connection!

5. ATTENDEES

Who do you know that needs to know each other?

Deciding who you want in the room will help you to determine the best place to hold the event.

Here are a few tips:

✓ Start on your potential attendee list as soon as possible since it could take time for everyone to review. This way you can send the invite as soon as possible.

✓ For referral partners and potential referral partners, go with low key meetings - coffee shops, lunches or happy hours.

✓ For clients and potential clients, opt-in for a slightly more formal event that could be held over breakfast, lunch or happy hour. Happy hour tends to have the best turnout. My 'business tribe' refers to these as executive happy hours. You could also call them executive collision events. The name alone distinguishes it from other networking events as it speaks to the individuals who will be attending.

The Execution:

How to Pull Off Your First Collision Event in 12 Steps

- 1. Define the purpose of the event**
- 2. Determine who's hosting the event – you or a group**
- 3. Decide your budget**
- 4. Select a date**
- 5. Put together the initial list of attendees and circulate to all co-hosts**
- 6. Confirm the location of the event** with a reservation or on the office calendar
- 7. Select beverages and food**

If the event is at a restaurant, I'd suggest stopping by and talking to the manager to review a menu and discuss your expectations for the event. If you find a restaurant you like then it's ideal to establish a relationship with these folks for future events.

We selected a restaurant in Kansas City that had a bar space with lots of room, great happy hour prices and the serves always did an outstanding job. It was an ideal spot for 20-30 but we outgrew it and moved the events to a private office after that.

- 8. Invite guests at least 4 weeks in advance** for events with over 8 people to make sure you get the folks you want in the room

We found a combination of a phone call from the person extending the invitation and followed up with an email works best. We also tried Evite a couple of times but it did not get a good response.

As mentioned, the event lead will be the best person to manage the attendee list. You can manage the list on an Excel spreadsheet and be sure to track the following: Name, Email, Company, Describe Their Business, LinkedIn profile link.

AN EXAMPLE OF AN INVITATION

Hello (name),

My business alliance (could be colleagues, referral partners, etc) and I are bringing together a group of business owners and leaders who recognize the value of connecting with like-minded people. The agenda for the event is simple - expand your base of meaningful relationships. That's it. No program. No pitch. Once we know who is coming, I'll send you a list of names so you can see the other business owners we've invited. Our goal is to add value by making introductions to further opportunities for all. Details are below and I hope you will be able to join us

(your name)

9. Send a confirmation email or Evite to all guests a week before to remind them of the event.

Also, send the guest list with names and company (no contact information) so they can see who else will be in the room and ask them who they want to be sure to connect to. If you are doing this with a group then share the names with your co-hosts so they are aware of the introductions that need to happen.

(This is why no shows are not invited back)

10. Name tags and guest list

You'll want everyone to have a name tag and these can be purchased at many places. Bring markers too. Print off the excel spreadsheet with names and company only so you can check folks off as they arrive. You may have a few people who don't RSVP and show up so be sure to capture their information too. This same list will be sent to people afterward with everyone's contact information so make sure you leave with it!

11. Arrive at least an hour ahead of the start time to allow plenty of time for last minute room changes, food, and early arrivals.

Also, plan to be there an hour after the time stated on the invite as some events will run longer due to great conversations.

12. Facilitate connections.

People tend to show up and talk to people they know instead of making new connections, especially if networking events make them uncomfortable (introverts for eg). Your role is to facilitate connections.

Facilitating connections is just like speed dating. Here's the process:

Give folks 5-10 minutes to chat with each other and then whisk them off to make another introduction.

Doing a little homework on each person in advance will give you additional insight as to why you feel they should meet.

This step is what will set your event apart from every other networking event!!!

The Follow Up:

A Tactic to Set Your Event Apart and Make Everyone Excited for the Next One

Now that the event is over, it's time for each host to send a follow-up email to their guests, along with the excel spreadsheet you created that has everyone's contact information and LinkedIn profile links.

I use Bitly.com to shorten the links – it's free.

There will be some guests that didn't have a chance to talk to each other or forgot to exchange business cards, so this little gesture will set your event apart.

The email can be as simple as...

Hello (name),

Thank you for joining us at (name of the event) last night. The goal of the event was to expand your base of meaningful relationships.

We hope you made some great connections and to ensure you have everyone's contact information, you'll find an Excel spreadsheet attached complete with LinkedIn profiles. Be sure to reach out to everyone.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if we can help further those connections.

Thanks again!
(your name)

Time to Take Action:

Ready to Organize Your First Event?

As you can see, it takes a lot of effort to put together a great event. But, it is worth it.

If you are not well-known within your niche, one collision event will change that. And if you are already an influencer, adding this to your arsenal will make you a celebrity (sort of).

If your company has been hosting traditional gatherings, these steps will make the next one stand out from the rest!

Now is the perfect time to start working on your first collision event. You get to choose if you want to host it virtually or in person. And of course, don't forget to reach out and let me know how it went.



My name is Joyce Layman and I'm an all-in-one business coach for entrepreneurs, coaches and course creators who want to create a solid brand foundation so they can stand out online, sell more services and make a bigger impact.....without the overwhelm. For more than a decade, clients have ranged from solopreneurs to CEOs and companies of all sizes in a variety of industries. I'm on a mission to help experts like you get your business running online while saving money, time, and most of all – your sanity.



Looking for more?

>>> Join my private Facebook Group

The Online Entrepreneurs & Coaches Collective is a place for AMBITIOUS entrepreneurs and coaches who are ready to level up their business. You'll have access to weekly live training, resources, and more.

If you'd like to skip the wait and chat about how my team and I can support you in monetizing your expertise, Book a complimentary call with yours truly! >>>**Schedule your call.**

Get ready for some big wins, friend.

Joyce