



# Corsini's Point of the Week™

JUNE 14, 2010

## To Join, or Not to Join?

Today, I'd like to talk about a question I often get asked in my coaching sessions. **People who want to increase the number of relationships they have sometimes wonder if joining a civic group, the local chamber of commerce, a leadership program, etc., will help them achieve their goal and, consequently, grow their business.**

It's a great question.

I know several people who have joined a local civic group only to become disappointed when they didn't get any business from it. When they bring this up, I ask them: *"How many meetings have you attended? Do you get there early and stay after the meeting to get to know other members? Are you involved in the leadership?"*

They usually respond that they often get there late because it's hard to work the meeting into their schedule, and, most times, they either leave early or right after the program. And, no, they don't have time to accept a leadership position.

**I coach that the primary reason to get involved in an organization is because you believe in the cause(s) of that organization.** If you have a passion for helping underprivileged children, then, yes, consider joining an organization whose major focus is helping needy youngsters. **The second reason to join a group is so you can enjoy opportunities for fellowship with other members.** You'll know if an organization is the right fit for you if, when you visit a group, you enjoy being with the members, the atmosphere is comfortable and you are impressed with the leadership. **And then third on the list of reasons to join—and, I believe, the least important reason—is that members might be prospective buyers for your services.**

Debra Benton in her first book, *Lions Don't Need To Roar*, gives the best model for involvement in an organization. **She says the first goal is to fit in with the group. Then, once you fit in, your goal is to stand out in that group.** In a civic group, that means getting involved in a leadership position. And a warning here: If you get involved in some type of leadership—whether it's organizing a fun run or heading up the group's main fundraising efforts—remember that people are watching. **How well you carry out your duties (no matter how big or how small), will reflect directly on you and your leadership skills.** Perform well, and you'll impress people; under perform, and you'll also make an impression on people—but not the kind you want.

## CORSINI'S POINT

Organizations like civic clubs and chambers of commerce perform great services and can be sources for new relationships and

## Quote of the Week

*"When it comes to helping out, I don't believe in doing it for the media attention. My goal is to support the organizations that need help."*

— Paul Allen

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opportunities. But those opportunities don't come overnight, and they require lots of involvement from you. A weekly civic club takes two, three or even four hours out of your work week, when you consider drive time, meeting time and the interruption of your normal work day. You have to decide if your membership is worth 5% of your work week. Get involved with an organization for the right reasons—mainly because you support the group's mission and you enjoy spending time with the members. If you do want to get noticed, go early, stay late and look for leadership opportunities so you'll stand out and prove yourself to others. Any business you get from your membership should be considered a bonus.

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