

Summary Handout

How to Get a **10X Return** on Your Next Conference

with Guest Jenn Lee

Introduction

In this training session, I interview Coach Jenn Lee. Jenn Lee is a small business strategist, conference expert and high-energy motivational speaker. She is also VP of Sales and Marketing for Travel Planners International.

Jenn Lee speaks at tons of conferences every year. Over time, she's compiled a list of do's and don'ts for both extroverted and introverted conference attendees.

How to Pick the Right Conference

Start by understanding why you want to go to a conference. Do you want to network? Get out of the office? Meet new prospects? Get specialized training? Know your main objective and then choose a conference that will help you obtain it.

Make sure the conference "feels right." Do you like their approach? How will they deliver information? Who will speak? Will your target audience be there?

How to Get the Most Out of a Conference

Pitch yourself as a panelist. Participating on a conference panel gives you exposure and elevates your credibility.

It takes minimal preparation because you're mostly speaking to your own experience.

You can also volunteer as an assistant or timekeeper for a breakout session. It's an easy way to develop a relationship with the panelists and the moderator.

To pitch yourself, go to the conference website and following their application process. Keep your focus on what you can do for them and their audience. Talk about your experience. Let your personality come through.

Contrary to what you might think, conferences are always looking for people. You don't have to be a guru or published author.

Things to Do BEFORE a Conference

1. Reach out to vendors. Reach out to all the vendors on the conference schedule that interest you. These vendors could have products you're interested in or be potential collaborators. Have a conversation with them BEFORE the conference. Then, during the conference, visit their booths. They'll want to learn more about you.

2. Reach out to speakers. Reach out to all the speakers that interest you. Start a conversation via LinkedIn or Twitter. Then, when you're at the conference, continue the conversation in person. You want to know about them, and they'll want to know about you.

It's usually easier to get time with someone at a conference than during a regular workday. Speakers often have time to kill because they don't plan to attend all sessions. They're there to connect with people.

3. Reach out to attendees. Follow the conference's hashtag. Retweet and contribute to some of the conversations. These people could be potential collaborators or clients. It's much easier to connect with them at the conference because you already have a relationship via social media.

Things to Do DURING a Conference

1. Get there early. You never know whom you'll meet. It's also a conversation starter.

2. Sit in the front row during breakout sessions. Be prepared to ask a question. Asking a question gets the attention of the speaker and makes it easier for others to approach you afterwards.

3. Look for other opportunities to start conversations. Often, you'll have to line up to talk to a speaker after a session. While you're waiting, talk to the person next to you.

4. You aren't there to sell yourself so take the pressure off. You're not there to land a new gig on the spot. You're there to have conversations and make new connections.

Things to Do AFTER a Conference

Follow through on all the groundwork you laid before and during the conference. Maintain the connections you made. Implement any plans you made to reach your objectives.

There's no perfect formula for keeping in touch with people. Share information that might interest them. Take an interest in what they're doing. But be genuine in your interactions and don't overthink it.

When you really make the most of a conference, you don't have to attend dozens of them every year.

If you do them well, you only need to attend one or two every year to make good connections.