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Business Card Business

I remember when a business card was white with some black typing on it. They were all the same size, were set up the same way (landscape orientation), had all the same information contained on them and largely you got one from a serious businessperson conducting serious business with you.

Now, business cards come in all shapes and sizes with colors abounding on them. Some are folded and have information included inside the fold. Some include a picture of the person (a really popular choice with real estate agents). I await the ultimate business card: I imagine it will be given to me by a dentist. On the front is all of the usual information I'd expect regarding address, phone number and the like. At the bottom of the card will be 4 small pictures of a set of false teeth. On each visit, the front desk person punches out one of the sets of false teeth so that when all 4 are punched out, my next cleaning is for free. Because the ultimate business card is folded, I would expect the inner fold to contain a list of tips/suggestions/chastisings about what maintaining good dental health involves. I expect that my hygienist would run a highlighter over the proper flossing tip. *I hear that one every time I'm in the chair.* Finally, on the back would be a picture of the entire office of dental professionals, all holding some sort of picking/scraping/drilling weapon in their hands, with a sign in front of them on the floor with my next appointment date on it. Can you tell I recently saw my dentist?

In any event, what should a business card have on it?

In a nutshell, this:

- Your name and position in your business. If you own a shoeshine stand and its incorporated, and you are the President of the shoeshine corporation, say so on your business card;
- Your business name (Use the business name people would best know you for. Some obscure holding company name will only

confuse them later. If you own the Scituate Shoe Shine Stand (say *that* 3 times - fast), put that on the card, not "Jack & Diane, LLC");

- Address and zip;
- Office phone number and fax number (if applicable);
- Website address (assuming you have one - please have one);
- Email address - Make sure the email address relates to the business website address. I would seriously consider avoiding putting an email address on your business card if the address is funnyharold8675309@aol.com;
- Your logo (assuming you have one - please have one); and
- A tagline - If your business has one, use it. If not, get working on one right away. If it is good, it will be memorable. You want the fact you gave someone your card remembered by them.

Optional but possible inclusions on a business card:

- Cell phone number - I realize there are solid exceptions to this, even legal ramifications, but absent a regulatory issue, if I had my preference, I think it should be there. If you bother to do business on a cell phone, anyone with caller ID can see the number. Don't leave them wondering why you never gave them your cell number, they may think themselves second class citizens in your eyes.
- Picture - Clearly there are statistics that reflect it's positive impact on the real estate industry. It has become so standard so as to not draw my attention anymore. Click [HERE](#) for an interesting idea one of my clients uses on their website for pictures of the firm's principals. I guarantee you'd get noticed if you stuck your third grade pic on your business card and put something like "circa 1967" under it. It has to be in the *right* business, however.
- A call to action - If you are a retailer, absolutely no question that your business card should contain some call to act on behalf of the recipient. Use the back of the card to say something like: "Present this card at any of our stores for a 10% discount on your next order **and** a special treat." You sign it to make it valid.

Business cards should reflect the image you want your business to have. They should provide anyone who gets one with all of the information they would need to reach out to you. It is an essential tool of your trade. Think outside of the box to make yours a business bringer.

See you next month.



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