

KNOW OTHERS' NEEDS, JOBSEEKERS TOLD

Successful networkers know the needs of friends and business associates and build relationships with them based on such needs, organizational psychologist and career management coach Wendy Alfus-Rothman told 50 members of New York Women in Communications (NYWICI) Nov. 3.

Small business owners and freelancers are basically looking for a new job every day, said WICI's Rothman.

"Networking is about the other person, not you," she said. Most people, she added, don't think about networking until it comes time to change jobs. This has become a more frequent occurrence, she noted, with the average job currently lasting from three to five years. People in their own firms, who are shopping for clients all the time, are in a sense "looking for a new job every day," said Rothman.

"Nurture, love and build your network," she told the audience. "It's a longterm process." If you save networking for the future, before you know it the future will be here and it will be too late to build anything over the long term.

"You must build the process into the fabric of your everyday life, whether you are looking for a new job, considering your options in your existing company, or just being proactive about your own career management."

One thing that jobseekers should not do, she advised, is to go around and ask people if they know where any jobs are.

"The best jobs are created for the people seeking them – they're not in the public domain," she explained.

The key to successful networking, she continued, is to "know what is important" to the person being contacted.

Networkers should think, "What problems can I help my contacts to solve?"

Build Knowledge of Specialties

Rothman gave examples of PR people who expanded their knowledge of specialties and were able to build new careers.

One PR pro, having lost her job, obtained a job with a recruitment firm placing financial executives. She built up her knowledge of the financial services industry and then landed a job in this industry, making a successful transition.

Having news or information to offer contacts can serve as reasons to call people, she noted. Excellent sources of information about current topics can be found in conference programs which are available on websites, said Rothman. "This information can give you conversational points," she added.

Rothman also distributed her new book "Finding Jobs That Don't Exist in Companies You've Never Heard of", which contains a 45 page bibliography of sources for industry and company information.

