**Top Mistakes to Avoid When Networking Online or Live Events**

**Male Speaker:** Welcome to Build Your Tribe with your host, Chalene Johnson.

**Chalene Johnson:** Hey, guys. Thanks so much for joining me on this episode of Build Your Tribe. Tons of new content over on my other podcast called The Chalene Show. It's kind of a life coaching podcast, so I’m sure you'll find some very relevant topics there. From how to deal with difficult people, parenting tips, you name it. We’ve talked about it on The Chalene Show. So, if you're looking for new content, if your morning routine includes personal development, I would be so honored to be a daily part of that. So, check out The Chalene Show.

In this episode, we're going to talk about some of the biggest mistakes that people make when it comes to networking. Both networking online and networking at live events. But before we get into that, you can feel free to fast forward through this little rant but I have to start this episode off with a rant about phone cords.

Thank you for allowing me to indulge. What's going on here? Cord central. Okay, me, me, me. All right. Cool? All right, enough with the rant now. On to today's content.

Today, I want to talk to you about some of the biggest mistakes that people make when it comes to networking. So if you know people who perhaps you serve, whether it's networking online or networking in person. Some people refer to this as sales, some people refer to it as connections but pretty much everyone needs other people. I want to start with a story.

The second business seminar I ever attended, I attended by myself. The first one I ever went to was when my husband and I were first married, our son was probably one year’s old and we went to a business seminar and I took him and I took my best friend so that I wouldn't have to network with anyone, right. Now my best friend at that time was pretty excited about going. My husband, not so much. He was like, I’ll go. But I took them, so that I wouldn't have to talk to anybody else because as you probably know I am an introvert and so, I really wanted to just go, consume the information, not have to talk to anyone, not have to make any new friends and get back out.

The second business seminar I really ever attended was about 15 years later and it was a seminar called the World's Greatest Speaker Academy and it was with Brendon Burchard, Bo Eason, who I did not know at that time, and Roger Love, who I did not know at that time and really, I didn't know Brendon Burchard at that time either. I’d watched some of his videos online. I loved his energy, I loved the information that he was giving and I decided to go to that seminar and let me tell you why because I knew that he associated with Brian Tracy.

And one of the things I always suggest people do when they're trying to get on the radar of someone else is get on the radar of their outer perimeter first, right so that by the time your name comes up, all of the people who that person who is your target, your goal, your mentor, if you will. By the time your name is mentioned, all of the people who they trust and associate with will have already mentioned your name, right and they will already have said good things about you or at least, you're already on their radar. So, that's the truth. That’s why I went to Brendon Burchard's first seminar.

I went by myself and I was so uncomfortable, so uncomfortable. I didn't want to go there by myself and I really didn’t want to talk to anybody and when I walked in, I thought, I don't look like any of these people. They're all middle aged white men and a few like, I don't know.

I don't want to describe what people look like because then you are going to think, I am making judgments, but like just put it this way. One of these things is not like the other, that's how I totally felt and I was really, really uncomfortable. But, I thought, Okay, okay you know what to do. You know what to do. Put yourself outside of your comfort zone. Pull yourself up by the bootstraps. Make conversation. It's not going to kill you. You’re curious about people, so just walk up and ask those curious questions that you have. I always have the questions. I just don't always want to engage but I always have the questions. Right, so I’m like, Okay, okay force myself.

So I forced myself to talk to this young guy in line. Young guy, he's, I don't know, couple of years younger than me, maybe. I went for the young white guy and said, the old white guy and I started talking to him and having a nice friendly conversation. Of course, at all times, I don't know what it is about me, but when I’m talking to dudes, I try to like make sure it's very clear that I’m not flirting with you. So, I take on this like weird persona. I don't know how to describe it like unless I can tell it’s a gay guy, then I am like, can we be best friends because I love all my gay guys.

But like if it's a straight guy and he's kind of attractive, I put on this like, it’s almost like a bitchy type demeanor. I don't know. It’s not very friendly. That's all I can say. Because I don't want to be misinterpreted that I’m flirting because I’m like, I have a ring and I’m not here to meet someone, right but I was still like trying to have this friendly conversation and so, right away, I like always talk about my husband and my kids and try to find out, and I find out, Oh he's got kids and he's married too. I'm like, Perfect and he’s a nice guy and we are just talking in line before the seminar starts and he says, My partner was supposed to come. I have VIP tickets which means I get to sit in the front. Would you like the other ticket?

I'm like, Yes. Okay, I didn't talk to him because I knew he was in VIP, but because I stepped outside of my comfort zone and was just curious about him. I wasn't trying to make any business connections. I was just trying to be curious about him. I was moved up into VIP. Here I was sitting in second row. I'm like, Oh, this is just so perfect.

So, was this gentleman who – he was an accountant that had started an online business that helped people prepare for the CPA exam and then, it was me and then it was an older gentleman next to me. Brendon does some great, very interactive stuff in his seminars and a lot of seminars they do this kind of thing. I'll tell you one thing you're never going to have to do at one of my seminars. You never, ever, ever, ever going to have to massage the person next to you. Ever. No. because I’ve been to too many seminars, where they are like, okay now turn and let the person behind you give you massage and I am always like, oh God, no! no! No, I’m not. No. Right, dude I can't tell you how many seminars now I’ve since been to, where this must be like the how to conduct a seminar manual. I'm like, No. Fine. Human touch is great, but like between myself and my husband. Thank you very little.

Anyways, so the man sitting next to me is this older gentleman. I've already stepped out of my box, okay. I've already made a conversation and I’ve already landed myself in VIP. No new friends, no new friends, no new friends, no new friends. In the words, a great philosopher, Drake.

And I’m thinking, this guy next to me keeps looking at me and he keeps kind of giving me that body language. Like, so, I’m thinking to myself- okay, first of all, he wants to hit on me. There's this older dude just won't stop staring at me so, I’m like not going to give in and I am like…You know when they're like, look for a partner. I am like, you know like I don't see one, right. Then, we do the uncomfortable shoulder massage thing and I’m just like- like he's probably thought, he was massaging someone with the Rigor mortis. And I’m like, ah I just don't like this kind of thing. Man, I do not like that and I’m just not being friendly at all. But there was a lot of interacting, a lot of interacting going on at this particular seminar and so, I had to partner up with him a couple of times.

Just quick little things like you'd run an idea by them and then he'd run an idea past you, as older gentleman. I just was being very frigid. There’s no other way to put it. I was uncomfortable. I didn't want to get to know him. I really wasn't even being curious at this point, because I'm so like, Hey, I already did that. I did that like twenty minutes ago. I'm good.

I really avoided trying to talk or interact or give him any of the wrong impressions because I felt like, I know this guy is like trying to hit on me or something.

Then at one point in the weekend, I think it was probably like Day Two, maybe it's even Day Three. We had the opportunity to stand on stage and deliver a one-minute speech in front of Brendon Burchard, Bo Eason and Roger Love. That was the very first time they'd ever done World's Greatest Speaker Academy.

Now, this is in 2010, so they had no idea who I was and I really didn't have any idea who they were. I was just an attendee who kind of snuck her away into VIP. When I went on stage, I asked, because he's the only one who is there, the man next to me, Would you mind writing down whatever feedback they give me in my notebook, because I really want to take that feedback. That’s why it was so cool to be in VIP.

So, when they gave me feedback, he wrote out their suggestions to me in the things that I should work to improve. Now, it was very kind. Then, later on, we did an exercise where you had to share like a part of your story. You had to run that story by your partner and Mr Accounting turned to his right, which mean I was left going, Okay, it's me and you.

So, I turned to this gentleman who had been super frigid to the entire time and he went first. He shared this story about how he and his wife had run this very successful software company and that they had incredible success. Children, together married, I think, something like forty years. They literally were self-made millionaires. They did it the hard way. Hustle, grind, hustle, grind. They finally had this like the ultimate American success story where they built this software company from nothing and then they sold it. I believe it was the year that they sold it. His wife died of cancer and he broke down crying.

I’m like, I’m such an ass. Oh my God. And I felt for him in that moment. Then he told me the reason why he was there is because he wanted to learn to be a speaker and he wanted to help other people. He realized his purpose now was to help others realize that. What was the point? He didn't even have his wife to enjoy it now.

They had worked all their lives and he said, We didn't take vacations. We didn't get to enjoy each other. We didn't get to enjoy any of these things because I kept thinking the next big thing would be around the corner. Now, here I am at the end of my life. I don't have my wife by my side.

And he goes, Forgive me but I just kept staring at you because you look so much like my daughter. I'm such a jerk. So, it gets worse.

I didn't write down his name. I figured out if I remember it. And I don't remember it. I don't remember his name. I can picture him. I can picture his eyes. I remember how in that moment when he shared his story, I immediately was like, That's why I’m here too. I’m figuring it out much earlier than you. Like, I really remember thinking, We have so much in common. This is amazing. I like you. You're not trying to hit on me. You think, I look like your daughter. Like, it was insane.

In that moment, I decided I would never ever attend a conference or walk into an environment where there are other, quote unquote, people to network with the same way ever again. Because it is not about networking. The number one mistake that you can make is networking. Don't network. Ever.

I can't think of a good reason to ever approach something from the standpoint of networking. I don't think you should connect. Just connect with people and because I had a networking mindset, my walls were up. Because I thought, he's going to want something from me. I don't want anything from him, so there's no point to connect.

Now, I recognize that, like every single encounter with another human being is an opportunity to connect. Do you guys ever watch the show Undercover Boss? If you ever notice how on every single episode, it's like, do they screen these people in advance and find like that? Do they only pair them up with people who have a heart wrenching story or like this inspirational story? I don't think so. I think that show really exemplifies how important it is to just connect with people because everyone has a story. But it's listening for the details and seeing how significant they are, how huge their stories are.

The one of the very best things ever happened to me in that seminar had really nothing to do with why I was attending the seminar. It wasn't about public speaking. It was his story and three other people that I connected with after his story, that I was like, Oh, my gosh.

I connected with Lorie Marrero. She's the author of the Clutter Diet and I don't think I would have or anyone else for that. I like my guard was up and I didn't want to network with anyone. So, for me that man, I'm not going to connect with anyone either. But after that conversation, I really, truly felt different about these things.

I want you to know that the next opportunity you have or you're feeling uncomfortable and like you're supposed to network and you bring that extra person so you don't have to talk to anyone else. Don't do that. My number one tip is connect. My number two tip is come prepared. What do I mean by come prepared? Come prepared with questions of interest to be genuinely and authentically interested in people. So, I mean, you have to shut up about yourself and how awesome you are, and trying to make sure everyone knows that you deserve to be there. Just zip it. www.nooneneedstohearit.com and listen. Then, that little question like that why they didn't connect the A and the B, or you're like wondering, was that five years ago or so, did you do that first, and so how did you get-. Every question that pops in your head, ask it.

It's not hard at all, but write some of those questions down in advance so that you don't feel awkward when you're with someone because they feel awkward, too. So, it's just much easier if you're that person. Except if you happen to sit with someone who is also doing the same thing well then, go back and forth and back and forth. Don’t dominate with all the questions.

So, number one, connect. Number two is to really listen and to make sure you’re prepared. You're prepared with the questions that have nothing to do with business and really nothing to do with where you're at for the seminar.

Some other things I want to remind you about is don’t forget to follow up. When you have an opportunity to meet someone who's like really cool, even if you like- well, I don't think that we have that gentleman. We’re not really in the same business. In most cases, people don't follow up unless they think there's some opportunity for us to do business together again. I think it's a phony way to go about things. If it's a true connection, if it's truly someone who you like, and you felt a connection with them, you should just follow up.

I think the mistake that most people make is they only follow up with people who they want to have a future business relationship with. So, they only follow up like, Hey, you know what? I take you up on that offer to have me featured on your podcast. So, what's the best way to follow up is just to stay in contact.

Here's a great Periscope example, Alex Khan is one of the nicest, coolest, genuine people I’ve ever met. I swear. I met him on Periscope. He came to California. He lives in Germany. Follow him, if you don't follow Alex. He came here to the house and he went to a football game with us and he's cool. But after that date, every couple of four or five days, I get a quick either text from him or a Twitter DM. it's things like for example, when he was here, I was talking to him about what we do and some contacts and things I could help him with. He had something that he's done in his past businesses that would really help our business. He's followed up with me three times and said, Chalene, if you're too busy, let me know who I can help on your staff because I think you've got this great opportunity in your business to do this and I want to definitely thank you and let me know who I can help and give this information to one of your staff.

He's followed up with me like saying, not how can I help you, but here how I know I can help you and even if you're too busy, let me help you, which is awesome. That's one example.

Another example is another perhaps even more popular Periscoper, who when I followed up with them, crickets and simple things. Not asking for something just simple things. But they've reached out to me, two or three times when they want something for me to feature them on this or to share that or to announce this on Facebook.

So, that leads me to my third and final point and it's this. Harvey MacKay is the author of a book Fill Your Well Before You're Thirsty. I had the opportunity to meet Harvey MacKay and he's awesome. He's such a cool guy. Read the book, Harvey MacKay. I know you guys are asking who that other Periscoper is. I ain't gonna tell you. But let's leave it that.

Harvey MacKay wrote the book, Fill Your Well Before You're Thirsty. The gist of the book is how important it is to make sure you've taken care of other people long before you're thirsty. Because, too often, just as was the case in the example I gave you, where a top Periscoper continually reaches out to me to either promote them or do something that's good for them. They haven't done anything for me, but he keeps reaching out because he's thirsty. Where is the relationship with Alex Khan who's- I’m using these two examples because there are people who I’ve met via social media, so that social media networking versus social media connections.

So, then with Alex Khan he just keeps filling the well. My suggestion to you is that- This is really important. I want to write this down. If you are always filling other people's wells, I hope that you'll never be thirsty. You won't even have to ask for water because if you're filling other people's wells without the intention of a payback, I doubt that you'll ever be thirsty.

He who helps the most gets the most. That is so true. Brett and I and our team, there are people and programs and books that we promote. Very rarely do we get a reciprocal. By reciprocal, I mean, in this industry, it is the industry standard that it is send for send, and that's just the truth. That is the industry standard. So, that when somebody agrees to send for your book, there's an industry standard expectation that you will then send for theirs or they will then send for yours. It’s reciprocal.

In fact, so much so that in a lot of affiliate marketers, a lot of affiliate marketing people with big lists, they will say, I will promote your program to my list. So, let's say, I have a list of five hundred thousand people. This other person has a list of say, two million. When I send, we send to say a hundred thousand or we send our whole list which is a half a million, then they'll only send a half a million and it's like, I will give you exactly what you gave me.

I don't operate that way. I don't like that. I don't think that way. I don't believe, in my opinion, it doesn't feel right for me. I could be wrong and I know it frustrates the heck out of people. I know it can frustrate our team, oftentimes, because they know if I am going to promote someone it is because I believe in it. I wanted in the hands of other people. I want other people to find it. I want other people to take notice and I believe it's going to help somebody. That’s going to help the people who are in the same position as me and so, that's the only reason why or it has to be both, really, and I really like the person. I really like the person.

But you just can't do that and then when you have something that you're promoting you can't be discouraged or jaded when they don't reciprocate. Because if that's the case, then you're keeping score. You were doing it for selfish reasons. You just have to say, Why am I going to do this?

It's kind of like loaning money. So, when Brett and I- first we're on position where we could truly help people without being any hardship for us. We could loan people money, because they were in need. We would always ask ourselves, Can we loan this money and be okay if we never get a dollar back? If we never ever hear from this person again, are we okay with that?

If the answer is, Uhhh- It would cause some problems, or it would cause some friction or it's too much money. If the answer is, it would cause some problems and we don't loan the money, it's not the right reason.

so, that's how we evaluate anything that we're going to promote is we say, If we never hear from this person again, we'll be bummed because we thought there's a connection, but if they never send for us, if they never get behind us, if it was just a selfish relationship on their side, then so be it. That's not how we saw it. But we will operate by doing things because we like the person and we think it serves the people who are most like us.

My recommendation is fill other people's wells and lead with that. So, that you never are to see people will tend to reach out for you. They won't say, what can I do for you? They will already know enough about you. They know how they can help you and that's pretty huge.

Just a couple quick tips about networking in person because most of the examples I’ve given for you relate to networking online, which again, I don't love that word. I wish we could call it just connecting online. I can tell you this, most people say, I’m not interested in doing that because I don't like to ask people for things. I don't like to push. I don't like to sell. If you look at the top people, name your organization. It doesn't matter whether it's dōTERRA or Beachbody or Amway, it doesn't matter, what it is.

Look at the top people. They all are really good at connecting with people. They're not pushy. They don't sell. They're not looking out for them. It's a common trait amongst the top people in any organization. They don't sell. They're not the ones who are looking for a hashtag and then underneath it going, Hey, I noticed that you posted something about a workout here. My name is Chalene Johnson and if you'd like, I can help you meet all of your health and fitness goals. Nobody is reaching out to you for that because there's no connection.

So, the top people in all organizations know to connect. That's the key, is not looking at is networking but as in connecting and serving people. Now, let's talk about when we're at a person and event. So, a couple of things I want to help. Make this a little easier for you because I know a lot of you are going to be coming out here next week for SMART Success.

Number one, don't leave with your resume. Leave with questions. Mention what you do a little bit. But then zip it and ask questions.

Number two, don't overlook people who don't look like you. Never overlook those people. In fact, I would rather you seek them out. Seek out people who don't. They're not your age. They’re not your race. They’re not your height. They don't dress like you. They don't look like you. Sit down with them and figure out what their story is. It's just like that show Undercover Boss. All of these people have a story and I wanted to be your goal to uncover it because that's where we find true connection.

Then lastly, make sure that you walk into a situation like that where you're feeling uncomfortable with a different mindset and the mindset is should not be self-centered, self-focused like, Oh, boy. Everyone is looking at me. People think I don't belong here. Everyone else has been here before. Everyone else knows what they're doing. They must be looking at me like I don't know what I’m doing. I don't know how to dress. I’m not on the right stage. All those things that go through our head when we're feeling insecure in just about any environment, whether it's a party or a seminar.

That is thinking that's really focused on ourselves. Its selfish thinking. The best way to enter that scenario is to imagine that you're the most confident person in the room and everyone else is freaking out that you are judging them. Just you.

So, if every conversation you approach it like this, I'm going to make this person feel so comfortable. I'm going to make this person feel at ease and relax. I'm going to make this person realize I like them. I’m going to take care of them.

So, if you enter into that environment thinking, I’m going to take care of people. It's crazy how your anxiety level will drop. You’ll feel better about yourself. People will connect more with you. You let your guard down. You’re more of yourself and you probably have a really great time. But don't forget to write down the person's name and my very last tip is this. You probably will want to follow up with this person. There's a right way and a wrong way to do that.

The wrong way is to when you're not- sometimes you're just like you've been hanging out the whole time and you're like best friends now. You’re braiding each other's hair at lunch. Swapping shoes. Like you're besties. You're already on the same plane.

But when you're not sure, you just had a few conversations, I would suggest you say, I’d love to see, we should stay in touch. Just say that.

Don't say this, Hey, can I get your number? This doesn't matter if it's a same sex like it doesn't even matter if it's like a purely platonic thing because, you know what I mean, like my number is sacred. In fact I got two numbers. I got a real number and I got a Google number. Give a Google number just in case somebody asked you but then you've got this like, Uhhh-- That awkward moment like I don't really want to get my number or your e-mail address.

Don't ask for something that's going to put that other person in an awkward position especially when it's someone who they feel like you're probably trying to network or status climbing. When you meet someone who's like, I really want to be on your podcast. I really want to do a Facebook shout out. I really want you to mentor them. And you're like, it's not appropriate.

I think the best way to make that introduction is like the way you would on a date. Do you guys ever watch dating shows? Whenever the guy is like, Can I kiss you?

I was like, Oh, God. Date over. That is the worst thing ever. That is hashtag don't ever do it, hashtag dorky.

I’m sorry, I can't stand that when I see one of those dating shows, I’m like, Oh, my-

Would it be okay if I held your hand?

I’m like, Dude, that's not confidence. Just grab her hand. If you're not sure then don't do it.

Say this, we should do this again. I love when they said, we should do this again. It's what I like to think of as a bid or like an invitation. It's like a, Hey.

But when you're in kind of like a fight or a tiff or a disagreement with your significant other and you haven't apologize yet and then you get that little text that it's not a lovey text, it's not an I’m sorry text. It's what I call a bid. It's like an invitation to see where you are right now.

So it's, How's it going?

Then you're like, Oh, okay. I see where you are. You know I mean?

It's the same kind of thing where it's like, We should stay in touch.

And the other person will then say, Yeah, we should. Let's exchange emails.

So, don't throw them up against a wall and say, Are we having a second date? Can I kiss you? Or, like, You're going to have me on my podcast or what?

Just give them a bid and don't forget to take notes. Write down what you remember about them. What their name is. Their kids, family, all that stuff, so that the seminar or the event you go to becomes that much more special. Not because of the content but because of the people in the room.

You guys every live event that you go to, it is not the content that’s being taught. It is the people around you that will change your life. But you have to be open to it because the right people are there. There is no coincidence that somebody very special who is going to change your life is going to this very same event on the very same day and meets you. That's huge. You have to be open to that. You have to really like receive and be interested in people because that would be like way better than any of the content that you're going to be. I don't care who you're listening to. It will be way better than any of the content that you receive is the connections that you make when you're at a live event.

So, to my introverts, here is my call to action. Here’s my challenge to you. Schedule two events this year. Two events where the right kind of people- when I say the right kind of people, people that are moving up and lifting up. Schedule two events where you're going to meet some of those people, because that will change your life.

This episode has been sponsored by courageousconfidenceclub.com. It’s a club that I’ve created specifically to help people who struggle with confidence and insecurities in social settings, and just standing up for themselves. Being yourself and feeling good about it. All of us could benefit from having more confidence. I’d love for you to just experience a taste of it, so please be my guest by going to Chalenejohnson.com/confidence tips. Now, if you don’t feel like writing that web address down or remembering to go there later, all you have to do is, while you’re listening from your phone, send me a text message. The number is 949-565-4337, and that is for US residents. Then just send me the word confidence and I will send you access to this video.

This video will help you to eliminate self-doubt and just feel more confident in any situation, whether it’s work or personal, or just your social interactions. Every one of us can benefit from having more confidence. There you’ll submit your email address and I will immediately send to your inbox my latest training video. Where I teach you step by step how to feel more confident in just about any social setting. I think you’ll find this incredibly useful, whether it’s business, or personal, or just in your everyday interactions.

Confidence is something that makes life easier. It helps you to raise more confident, self-efficient children. It allows us to speak our minds, to stand up for ourselves, to do the things that otherwise we are paralyzed by fear and we just allow our own thoughts to stop us. By learning how to overcome self-doubt and fear of success, you can become that confident person that others are attracted to. The person you want to be. The person you deserve to be. The person you know is inside of you. So thank you for checking out my free tools by going to chalenejohnson.com/confidencetips.