

Grow Everything Interview Transcript: Karl Schmieder and Erum Khan

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KARL: Erum, what's your latest cringe networking story?

ERUM: Recently I went to an event. It was a biotech networking event to explore the startup ecosystem. It was great. I went with a friend of mine and we were introducing our networks to each other because she had some friends that were there, I had some friends that were there and it was a wonderful event. We were mingling, and at one point it was just my friend and I talking and this young entrepreneur comes up to us. They asked me, what do I do? " And I was like, "Oh, I work at a company called Messaging Lab. We do biotech communications. We help entrepreneurs with their stories and their comms, everything from fundraising to thought leadership." This young entrepreneur responds and says, "Do you do pro bono work? Cause I could use that help." And we both smile and laugh and I'm like, "Okay, haha, tell me a little bit more about what you do," because I wanted to find out what type of work they do. Because maybe there's this opportunity there. Let's hear this person out. So they ended up telling the story of their company and it really sounded like it was five companies. There were so many valid propositions being thrown across let's say the life science R&D world.

I responded, "Oh, yes, I can see how you need help on the communication side." Then they started asking me more questions. "Oh, what type of companies do you work with?" And I said, companies across biotech. I mean, yes, in the R&D space. And then they asked, "Oh, can you introduce me to all your clients?" Smiling. And I was like, "Oh, ha ha. No, sure. Okay." I thought it was a joke. And then when you start talking and my friend was telling the entrepreneur she also started a company. She raised money and ventured back. So I'm sure she has some stories to share with you. the entrepreneur was like, "Oh, can you introduce me to all of your investors?"

So there were three asks within five minutes and not one iota of offering something just asking, asking, asking, and so then I did respond and I was like, "Sure, I will do your pitch. I will introduce you to all of these investors and I'll find you clients for free." And then I said that, and we all started laughing because I wanted to be clear, like, you're being a little bit, aggressive, about what you're asking. So we just left it off and I was like, okay, yeah, we'll stay in touch. And then they were like, "oh, can we connect on LinkedIn?" And I was like, okay, sure. You connect on LinkedIn. I love connecting with people on LinkedIn, especially if they are in biotech or life sciences. We don't know who can help each other. And this person is a very smart person. I enjoyed the conversation beyond the asks.

Then the very next day, I get a message on LinkedIn from this person. They proceed to double down on the asks. And they were like, "Can you please introduce me to your

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clients? And here is a scheduling link for you to find time on my calendar so I can tell you about my company.” And I was floored when I saw this message and I was like, okay, It's a young entrepreneur. They were in the lab. They're just starting out in the entrepreneur space. I'm going to have empathy for this person because they're just starting out. They're learning.

So I reply and I was like, “hey, it was great meeting you. The people that I work with are not in the R&D labs, they're usually the CEOs, and I barely have time to talk with them because they're so busy, even though I'm working for them. So, I don't think that my clientele are the right people for you, but let's stay in touch, I'll keep you in mind. Good luck on your entrepreneurial journey. I'll see you around.”

That should have been it. I should have either not heard a response, or say, okay, wonderful, I will talk to you later. The asks continue. “Oh! You connect with the CEOs. That's exactly who I want to speak with. I want to (wait for it.) I want to pick their brains.” Okay, you are a young entrepreneur with 50 value propositions and you want to talk to these CEOs and pick their brains because they're just waiting to hear your genius ideas because they have nothing else to do.

KARL: Well, to this entrepreneur's credit isn't there like saying that the people who are able to ask, are the ones who win? So maybe this person is just one of those people who asks a lot. And many people will just say yes and just be like, “Oh sure, let me help you out.” You never know.

ERUM: There's a fine line, Karl, when it comes to that, when it comes to the ask, best ask is if you can offer something in return.

KARL: Yes, offering value.

ERUM: Offering value. What is the value? Do you have a very unique company? Cause I didn't hear anything unique from this person's company. Everything sounded like an existing company. There was one part that was a little bit unique. But they didn't focus on that part. So, a transaction could have been, I would love to talk to you about this new innovation. I would love a knowledge exchange, but that wasn't even offered. I think that if there was an offer there, or even some time, a little bit of time, a little bit more interest in myself, a little bit more questions to me about what type of companies tell me a little bit more about this company, what kind of challenges, more curiosity, more time to develop a relationship to show that they are interested and then I'd be like, “yeah, sure. I'll introduce you to 1 or 2 people.” Of course, but this was just full asks. No interest in really what I was doing, unless they mean, of course, they're interested because I had access to people, but they didn't ask questions. It was just more like “introduce me to CEOs and investors.” What's your target? Is there a certain market you're looking for? Let's talk about this industry.

KARL: All CEOs.

ERUM: All CEOs? Yeah, sure. Let me call up Tim Cook and I'll figure that out for you.

KARL: All right. So we're doing a different kind of episode today, we're talking about going to networking events. Because we often talk about the networking events we go to, Erum and I are skilled networkers. We've got pretty good networks. We go to events fairly regularly. Going to events is a big part of the sales process or the lead prospecting process at Messaging Lab. It's also, we bring people together and create community. So we thought it would be good to do an episode on the skills and tactics and strategies that you can use when you go to an event. Did I miss anything, Erum?

ERUM: I'll just add that conference season's always happening. Networking is a part of business. Networking is a part of life. We are living in this world where we need to work together. We can learn a lot from biology and the core of this podcast is about biology and cells communicate with each other, organisms communicate with each other, there's a collective consciousness. So really thinking about how we speak to people so that we can either get them on board with what we're doing, so we can create a collective to aim and achieve a goal, or how can we help other people that have that vision?

So it's a part of biology that we humans are organisms. We need to work together. We've been working together. Being able to build these tall buildings and build society and build a bunch of things that really make us human, but we need to continue that endeavor. So how do we network? And how do we nurture relationships for the long term?

KARL: Yeah. And I think it's worth it to say that the life sciences is a very small community. It might seem like it's really big. I think a UNESCO report back in 2013 said that the total number of people involved in all research is something like 8 million people. That's 0.1 percent of the global population. So it's a very small ecosystem. If you're in a city where there's a life science community, it's probably pretty easy to get to know everyone. If you go to certain conferences, if you're very niche focused, let's say you're a microbiologist who's focused on some rare extremophile, there's probably only a few dozen people in the world that have that same kind of focus. So there are going to be events and I think events are really a great way to not just meet other people but advance your career.

ERUM: Another reason why we want to talk about this, too, is that there are different types of people in the life sciences. There's people that are extroverted. There's people that are introverted. There's academic entrepreneurs, or they're just academics who live in the lab and their whole life at the lab. So you have to step out of the lab and interact with people in business. People in business have a certain way of interacting, where academics have a certain way of interacting with each other. So how do you bridge the gap when it comes to interacting with people that have different goals, different agendas, different ways of thinking? And so we're hoping that we can talk about a few tactics, and we can share some insight from our own experiences that can help you grow your own networks.

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KARL: Do you remember, Erum, the first networking event you ever went to?

ERUM: Oh my gosh. So I've been networking since I was a kid. I mean, I was in girl scouts. I participated in a lot of clubs in school. I played a lot of sports. I sold lemonade on the corner. I was always in some type of business, I was president of my sorority in college. I volunteered after college for some society groups. It just doesn't end. And like now I'm part of parent groups, I'm always networking. I'm always creating communities. My husband called me a professional conference goer because I'm always going to a conference or an event and my network's pretty big. I'm sure some people listening have big networks and you're experts in this. So we would love to also hear from you. But yes, my first networking event, I would say Girl Scouts. But if you want to say professional?

KARL: Professional post college networking event.

ERUM: At the end of college was the American Chemical Society conference, I presented my thesis, which was, the formation of GDNA, which I don't think it's called that anymore, but it's telomeres that, unravel to replicate; there's a structure that's formed and can you influence that structure? So, I presented that at the American chemical society conference when I was a senior, in college. So that's the first networking event.

KARL: Yeah, it's funny to hear you say all that because I think of myself as being super introverted and yet I also sold lemonade. I had a lawn cutting business. I was in a band for a while. So I played parties. I would go see a lot of bands and would go talk to the bands after they played. That was something I did a lot of and then in college I wasn't in a fraternity. After college, I worked as a waiter. So that forces you to talk to a lot of people. And I don't remember the first professional event, but what I do remember is when I first started working as a freelancer, being told to go to these BII networking events, which are small business events, you go early in the morning, you meet a bunch of people at a breakfast, you sit around the table, you talk about what you do. Kristen, my wife would always be like, "Why do you go to this event?" Because there's never anybody that's in the life sciences. Those events are really for, you know, "I'm a real estate lawyer," "I'm a dentist," "I run a nail salon," "I run a coffee shop." So when you go and you're like, "I'm a life sciences entrepreneur" to one of those things, everybody's like, "Wait, what do you do?" But I always approached it as, you never know who you're going to meet or who knows someone, so I remember those events. And I do remember a pretty cringy one where I'm at an event trying to make my way through this crowd of people who I didn't know and some guy is walking around just giving away his business cards doesn't say anything just gives you the business card and walks away And I was like, I guess that's one way to do it, you know, you don't need to interact with people. Just give them your business card. And hey, guess what? This is exactly what I need. I'm going to call this guy immediately.

ERUM: There is that type of character in these networking events. There's a persona that, maybe this is a separate episode, or maybe we can create a graphic, but there is

the “here's my card” guy, or girl, like “here's the card and you figure it out and, somehow get motivated to reach out to me.”

KARL: So what do you think you have to do to stand out at an event? What's your strategy for standing out? Or actually how do you prepare for an event before we get into that?

ERUM: Yeah. So preparing for an event, it's much easier these days. I would say, back in my day, we had to go into a phone book and look up... No. Um, so of course,

When you get invited to an event or see an event, you'll see who's speaking the agenda. You'll see, maybe who's attending. Sometimes they give that information and it's just a matter of doing some research. Try to understand who's going to be there. What is the purpose of the event? Why are they having it? Are they having it to showcase these companies? Are they having it to facilitate networking? Are they having it because they're trying to make money and there's a cost to it? there's a lot of events that are like that. They're just money making machines and the content's okay. I mean, it's always great to meet people in person, and see, is it worth going to?

That's the biggest thing I think now that we've been to thousands of events in our lifetime Karl, we're always very protective of our time and we're like, okay, this is not worth it. Or this is worth it. Absolutely. Or, maybe you're just curious about a topic. So being able to do that research in advance and ensuring that you have your LinkedIn updated these days, I think it's really important because what I've been noticing when I go to events recently is like, oh, let's connect. Let's scan each other's LinkedIn's and they open up the apps and we just share it. It reminds me of back in the day, the bump app. I don't know if you've used a bump app, where everyone downloads this app called Bump and then you just tap your phones and the information is exchanged automatically. And that was really cool. I haven't seen it recently, but I love the fact that it was just tap and information was exchanged.

KARL: You can do that on the latest version of iOS iPhones, it's built into it.

ERUM: Oh? You heard it here first, folks.

KARL: Yeah, cause I learned this at biofabricate. So I totally agree with you, if you don't know how to do it on LinkedIn. when you're in an event and you click on the search bar,

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that's where you've got a QR code that someone else can scan. So it makes it really easy to share information.

ERUM: That's what it is now, but that could change by the time anyone's listening to this.

KARL: Today, as we record this in 2024, and, I think, preparing for an event is two thirds of the event. I had someone I can't remember who it was and said that they would always write out, strategically what they wanted to get out of the event, like what were the three things: "I want to meet Erum, I want to learn about dna synthesis, I want to stand outside in the california sunshine," three positive things. And then what are the three worst things that can happen if you go to an event? "One, I don't meet anybody, two, the food is really bad and I get sick, or three, what's the worst thing that can happen," but I think it's kind of good to have the intention of why you're going to the event and as you said, it's much easier to do the research these days and to really be strategic about why you're going to go to an event.

ERUM: I'd also say that, with that research, you'll know who's attending. If there's someone that you really want to meet, let them know in advance, like, "Hey, I'm going to his event. I would love to see you. Here's who I am. And I'll just see you there." Do it in a very non creepy way,

KARL: You can fanboy a little bit, but don't overdo it.

ERUM: You could fanboy a little Yeah! "I admire your work in XYZ. I'm excited to meet you. I'm hauling myself out there to learn about this thing." Not "I'm coming out there to see you." That's kind of creepy, but "I'm coming out to learn about this."

KARL: But you could! I hear about people, entrepreneurs who go to an event specifically because they want to meet another entrepreneur and they will spend thousands of dollars and make that investment. And if it's something that's really important for advancing your career or raising money, that kind of thing can make sense. You know, but being clear on your motivation, I think it's very important.

ERUM: Yeah, to the person that you want to reach out to, or, connect with in person. But, if you want to reach out to them in advance, it's a great thing to do. It also shows that you're someone that's prepared. You're someone that thinks strategically, so it can show off your chops of being someone who's prepared. Just research and reach out in advance. Making sure your LinkedIn is updated or, you do have your business cards, people still do it. I think it can be a very classy thing to have as well, especially if they're really good card. and I think those are the main things.

KARL: So what do you do to stand out or to leave a lasting impression with people that you meet? I know it's two questions combined, but, I know certain people, they always wear white so they stand out in the crowd. Well, I don't know if this is the case anymore but I used to find myself a lot of times in rooms with mostly guys who are dressed

either in blue or gray suits. I think people are much more casual. They can be much more personal in their branding. But what do you think people should do to stand out?

ERUM: Standing out in the crowd, I think is one thing. I think everyone should always dress the way that they feel comfortable and that exudes their confidence. You don't have to wear something crazy, although I know, a little splash of something can be memorable.

I think the big thing is standing out in terms of your conversation to show that you're personable, you're a friendly person. That, you go up to that person, especially if they're standing alone, those are the best people to speak with because they're by themselves and they might feel awkward. They might feel a little lonely. And you taking that initiative to go and speak to them shows you care and it makes them feel welcomed. So I think that would help in terms of being memorable.

Of course, this is a tactic that I don't do very well, but, when they introduce themselves, you remember their name and then you say their name again in the conversation. Maybe not immediately. People can do that to me because they say, "Oh, what's your name? Erum?" And then we talk about my name for a little bit. So, they will remember, But as we talk and I'm like, "Okay, what's your name?" And you say, "Oh, my name's Karl." I'm like, "Okay. And what do you do?" And then I'm like, "Oh, Karl, you should meet this person." saying their name is an instant, friendly connection because it's like, "Oh, seems like I've known you forever because I say your name, you know?"

KARL: There is no sweeter sound to the human ear than their own name.

ERUM: Yeah.

KARL: And there is that tactic that you have to say it five or six times to remember it. So some people if you're networking and they keep saying your name, you know that that's their tactic. It's not that there's anything wrong with it, and it's not that it's insincere, but it could be that they specifically want to make sure that they remember your name. I'm also terrible at that, by the way.

ERUM: Of course, there's networking events where you have the name tag and sometimes they print it out in advance or sometimes they ask you to write it. So, if you're writing it, make it legible, make it visible, sometimes they give you a lanyard, I'll put it on backwards and people are like, "Wait, what's your name?" And I'm like, "It's right there on the lanyard" and they're like, "I can't see it. It's backwards." So, let's flip it.

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making sure that's visible. Then you could just see their name and be like, "Oh, hey, Karl," just right away.

KARL: What's your conversation opener, Erum, when you see someone who's standing by themselves?

ERUM: Oh, the simplest one is "Hi. What brings you here today?"

KARL: Totally. Yeah.

ERUM: What about you?

KARL: "God, that's a beautiful pair of shoes you're wearing."

ERUM: Oh, you're a schmoozer. I wonder if you schmoozed me when I first met you. We met at [GENSPACE](#). I can't remember our first interaction. I think it was like, "why are you here?" Because it was a weird event.

KARL: Right Yeah, "What brings you to this event?" I think "What brings you to this event" is a great icebreaker and it gives you the opportunity to get to know that person. We're going to talk about things not to do but there is this element of going to networking events that is a lot like dating.

ERUM: Oh, of course, a hundred percent.

KARL:

So you do have to be comfortable with the so-called cold open. You have to be able to approach someone cold because if you're not approaching and you're noticing people who are alone that gives you the opportunity, but it doesn't mean that if you're standing alone people are going to approach you. So I think it's something people have to get over. I mean, like I said at the beginning I do consider myself to be mostly an introvert and I prefer to be alone a lot, but I have learned to put on the extrovert side of Karl at these events and know how to open those conversations.

ERUM: Yeah. You said something that's very, I mean, you say a lot of important things, but something I wanted to point out is that you're putting on another persona. Everyone should be authentic, but at the same time, if we're networking for business,

right, you're talking about networking for dating, the differences that's a very personal thing because you're trying to hook up with this person, but

For business, you're representing a company or you're representing an idea. That's the mentality that you have to have is you're not just yourself. You're representing a whole idea, a whole company. And it is transactional. We're going in there with a specific mission. We need to represent that mission, be honest to that mission and be able to meet the right people that are at that event.

So I think a big thing is navigating an event and, I mean, if you already have a list of people you want to meet, that's easy, and then you just have to find them. And luckily you can just go online and see what they look like, and just beeline to them if you have that mission, and you should just do that. And that's fine. But if you haven't done the research, or you're at an event, do more there to learn about whatever they're talking about, and you do want to meet the right people. It's being able to talk to someone, understand who they are, understand if there is value to be exchanged beyond just being friendly. You should always be friendly. But if they're not the right person, it's like, okay, maybe, this is not the person you talk to, you need to talk to someone else. So we talked about tactics on how to get out of conversation, which we always joke about.

KARL: Yeah, before we get into that, what you're saying in terms of, you're representing an idea or a company, is really important. When you're at a company or you're representing an idea, If you're not communicating that idea, you're actually doing the world a disservice. You have to remember that the world needs you and they need your idea and if you don't express that idea, then the world is going to miss out. And what I was going to say about being a shy person and going to an event: if you're going to a really big event, and you're really not comfortable talking to people. I think one of the easiest ways to practice having cold conversations with people is going around to the booths. If there's booths and people are selling or trying to represent other companies, go around and talk to the people at those booths. Have the conversation, let them sell you, listen to them. Because it's a really easy way to warm up to this idea of going out and talking to other people. And pay attention to the way that they try to sell you because there are tactics that people use and after a while you can start to figure it out.

Oh, you know what they're trying to get to know me because they want to sell me this thing or the tactic here is be friendly or ask me questions is always a good one. The other thing I was going to say too is that you mentioned this thing about going to events and having an agenda. I don't think that there's anything wrong with telling people that you meet, like, "Hey, Erum, I'm really here to meet Jason Kelly, the CEO of Ginkgo Bioworks. Do you know him? Could you introduce me?"

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ERUM: Yeah.

KARL: I wouldn't say that right away, but I think, after you get to know someone and you've had a little bit of chit chat and a bit of conversation, you can say, "You know, actually, one of the reasons I'm here is because I'm trying to meet this specific person. Do you know them? Could you introduce me? If not, then who are you here to meet?"

ERUM: Oh yeah. The best person to really connect with there is the event organizer, if you know who that is, because they are there to help people network. So if you are a shy person, and there's one person that you have to, put away your shyness for, it's the event organizer.

Introduce yourself, introduce your mission and say, "Hey, I'm looking to meet this person or these types of people. Could you make an introduction?" And they will know who's attending if they are a good event organizer, they'll know and be happy to make the intro. So event organizer is a good resource because they will know the people. They'll know other events that are happening. You can find out who that person is. You'll be in good shape.

KARL: Yeah, I totally agree. To me, the example and I mean, [John Cumbers](#) and I have become very good friends, but I think that at the first or second SynBio Beta, I really made a point of getting to know John and stayed in touch with him. We became friends and we wrote a book together. We're still friends today.

So I think that has been a relationship that's been very valuable to me professionally, and personally. I send people to John all the time. He sends people to us. And when we go to smaller events, I don't always do it, but I do try to find out who organized the event so that I can get to know that person because they are a network and they may know someone that either can help advance your career or invest in your company or know someone that, you might want to hire.

ERUM: And thank them. It takes a lot of work to put on an event. And so if you want to flex your networking skills and just be a nice person, just thank that event organizer for the time that they took to coordinate, invite, plan, just so much that goes behind an event. So thank you to all the event organizers out there.

KARL: We appreciate you in a big way.

What are some things you shouldn't do at an event Erum?

ERUM: What you shouldn't do is just sit in a corner and not talk to anybody. What you shouldn't do is not pay attention to the agenda and the events and what people are speaking, unless you again have a very specific mission just to meet people and not listen to the content that's being served up.

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What you should not do is throw your business card at someone and run away. Collecting cards is a good thing. Just handing out cards is not. That's the mentality to have. Maybe if you're someone that hands out business cards, just don't bring any and have the mission of just collecting them. Or just connect with people on LinkedIn.

KARL: We talked about how you start a conversation. How do you keep a conversation going and how do you get out of a conversation?

ERUM: That's a good one. We mentioned some openers, whether it's complimenting them on something or just asking them why they're there. Then it becomes a series of questions. And expressing curiosity and genuine curiosity, interest, is how people thrive. They want people to talk about themselves. You'll see how they interact with you.

If they're asking you questions, or they're just answering questions rolling their eyes then they might not be interested. So it's like, get out of that conversation. If you don't have a nice, warm, friendly vibe to the person, or the flip side is if they're really interested in you, you should definitely be friendly and talk to them. But let's just say, for example, you're a DNA synthesis company, and you're looking to talk to people that work in the lab that work with DNA you run into someone that is not in the space at all. They're like selling pipette tips, they might be very friendly. They might be very kind. You should talk to them, but you have a limited amount of time to meet the maximum amount of people. How do you get out of a conversation? There's a few tactics there. I'm going to throw this back to you, Karl, because you shared the best tactic because this is something that you do, sometimes. So if you meet Karl at an event, you'll know if he's trying to get out of conversation with you, but what are some tactics to get out of the conversation?

KARL: Well, there's a lot of tactics. I mean the one that we joke around about is if I feel like the conversation is not really going anywhere and now everybody's going to know I'll say something like "So, tell me who is it you want to meet or who you're trying to get to know at this event? All right. Well, it's great to talk to you. Let me see if I can go find that person. I'll bring them back to you." So that's a very nice way of extricating yourself from the conversation. The other thing that you can do is you're carrying a cup of coffee, you can say "I'm gonna go get a cup of coffee" or "I really need to go to the bathroom" or "Oh, I've got a call I've got to take," there's a lot of things you can do to be nice to get yourself out of the conversation. But Erum says, if you're there to meet a lot of people or you have a specific mission, when you go to an event, being able to get out of a conversation is just as important as getting into it.

ERUM: Yeah. And just be kind, whether you have to be tactical and, you come up with some story or, just say, it was nice meeting you. Let's connect and share your business card, and just wrap it up. But the thing is, you're not obligated to talk to someone for a really long time.

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Again, you're not there to make friends. I mean, I don't want to be like, you don't make friends. I make a lot of friends at networking events. I met Karl at a workshop, so you will make friends. That's great. and you can be friends with people if there's no transaction. I've met people that I'm very friendly with that we have no aligned mission whatsoever. But we're friendly with each other and we just stayed connected. Again, this is more about how you're trying to achieve a goal. You're trying to maybe find leads for your business or find partners for your new company, or just learn and find advisors, you need to navigate. So it's really important to get out of a conversation if it's just not serving your mission at the time.

Okay, so at an event, you're prepared, you met everyone you needed to, maybe you met more people you didn't expect to meet that are valuable. Maybe you met people that you didn't expect to meet that aren't transactional, but you want to stay connected. You did it. Event's over. So what happens next?

KARL: I like to follow up with people on LinkedIn. There's people who say you have to follow up right away. you should follow up within 24 hours. I think if it's a big conference, I tend to like wait a few days because everybody follows up within 24 hours or a day or so. That said, if you're in a deep conversation with someone and the conversation gets interrupted, or you really want to continue that conversation, then I think it's definitely worth it to email that person or follow up with them on linkedin right away so that you can continue the conversation if possible, but follow up, everything happens in follow up. So I think it's really important to have a follow up strategy.

ERUM: Yeah. Yeah. Especially if you can drop something specific about the conversation you had or about their interest. Again, you want to be able to show that you were paying attention, that you are truly interested in this person and not your own agenda. So you don't just follow up with the, "here's everything about me and my company and my ideas. So let's connect and talk about me more!" Like you don't want to do that. At the top of this episode, I talked about that whole experience and that was just, it was traumatic for me. I was just like, wow, I was just blown away by this person, but I love, Karl that you mentioned if it makes sense to wait, because it shows that person's still on your mind that you really took the time to think about them like, "Hey, that was great to meet you. I would love to continue our conversation about X, Y, and Z. Your company sounds really cool, I think there's something to be discussed there," or whatever it is in terms of whatever value you can offer them. You can hint towards it without actually doing a sale and sales is a whole nother beast. I don't think that's something that we'll really get into unless we have a biological spin on it, which we can think about later.

But, I would say that the follow ups are important whether, immediate and then, if they don't reply a few days later, or the first time, but then you also say, the 'three strikes you're out' rule is super important in this day and age, because we're so inundated with people that are trying to sell us something that we don't need.

If you got someone's phone number, you are in the inner circle. So that's huge. But if this is all LinkedIn and email. Just be kind, be respectful. Don't be pushy. If they don't reply to you after 3 follow ups, they're not interested. Just move on, and don't just automatically add them to your newsletter because they didn't opt in.

I think legally you can't do that in terms of, there's marketing code, but then I think there's legal ramifications of just putting people into a newsletter that they didn't ask to be a part of. I would think the follow up after the conference just is important, saying like, we met at the conference is huge. And that specific conversation to show your interest, and hopefully after that, you meet someone, you guys continue to talk and have a lasting business relationship that is fruitful for both people.

KARL: Yeah, thinking how you can be helpful to other people goes a long way. And being helpful in your interactions with people when you meet them at the conference or the event. It's a great way to get a conversation started. After the event, finding other ways to be helpful to that person is also a great way to continue to build the relationship. I have relationships with people I've had for 20 years.

And, we've never done business together. But, they've sent me people that I want to meet. I've sent them people they want to meet. And we're friendly with each other when we see each other. We grab a cup of coffee or have a drink. We're good professional friends. And we help each other with our networks. I think it's really important to be able to continue to do that.

ERUM: Those are the true network effects, It's when someone else is helping you, even though you might not have a direct transaction with them, but they are like, Oh, I truly took the time to understand what Karl does, and I know that I met this other person at another event that Karl could be helping that person. I'll make the introduction and that's referrals, word of mouth. That type of, let's call it marketing process, sales process, connection will stand the test of time. SEO, brand, all that stuff. Sure. It's great. Inbound. Great. especially when it's word of mouth and referrals.

KARL: Yup. Absolutely. All right. Any final thoughts about networking and networking events or conferences that our audience might be interested in, Erum?

ERUM: Yeah, I'll say network with us. I mean, you could find us on LinkedIn. you could find information about us on the show notes. And I will say that I would love to hear your stories of successful interactions that you've had at networking events and what you did and how that turned out. And also, Do you have any cringe worthy stories of interacting with people at networking events? Similar to what we've experienced. Please let us know. We're going to add a question to Spotify. just go to the episode and

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you'll see the question. Or, please just reach out to us. Our contact information is in the show notes.

So, please share. Let's network. Let's create a collective consciousness to achieve goals and make a better planet.

KARL: Let us know what you thought about this episode and feel free to ask us any questions and for sure do meet us when we're out and about.

ERUM: That's a wrap.