

# Business-Relationship Building Tips, as Shared in “The Balance Myth”

## By Teresa Taylor

Many individuals are so focused on “closing the deal” that they completely forget the art of creating a business relationship. Here are six tips to help you nurture business relationships with your customers, investors and partners, written from my personal and professional experiences and shared in my book, [\*The Balance Myth: Rethinking Work-Life Success\*](#).

1. **Shut Up.** The hardest thing to do is stop talking and listen. Get yourself comfortable with long pauses and wait for someone to answer. Don’t be so worried about what you are going to say next but rather absorb and comprehend before you reply. You will be surprised at how often the conversation will take a different turn if you just let it happen.
2. **Look Around.** When you visit someone in their office, take a moment to look around at the personal items that they may have on their desk or wall. Everybody wants to talk about the picture of the dog, fishing trip, or kids. Keep a mental note of what you saw and draw upon it later in your ongoing conversations.
3. **Don’t ignore the administrative assistant.** This person knows every single thing that goes on at that office. Treat the assistant with the same respect and courtesy that their boss is getting. Build an ongoing relationship and find a personal connection. The assistants move between companies so they may help you get in touch with your next customer or investor.
4. **Technology appearance is important.** How you present yourself is reflective of your ideas. Put all your devices on vibrate, and make sure you know how to use your laptop if you want to use a demo. You also don’t want your phone buzzing when you are talking – it is distracting. The constant noise can change the whole rhythm of the discussion and ruin the meeting.
5. **It is a two-way street.** Don’t treat your new relationship like a street that goes in one direction – that is, *your* way, to serve *your* needs. It’s about give and take. Relationships don’t get built by arriving in someone’s office and shouting, “Ta-da!” It is not about making people into human vending machines – it is about sourcing.
6. **Do what you say you are going to do.** Now that you have spent the extra effort listening, looking around, and being extra nice to the administrative assistant – follow through on your commitments. If you said you are going to provide more information, a link to something, or a contact – do it! If there is a reason to put a time constraint on it then make sure you are clear in your communication. Most deals fall apart over an avoidable misunderstanding or bad business relationships.