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**MBEC**  
Minority Business Enterprise Council  
Michael P. Williams  
Deputy Finance Director  
Director, MBEC

Your guide to doing business with the City of Philadelphia™

## *“Networking vs. Meeting”*

By: Michael P. Williams, Director

### **NETWORKING VS. MEETING**

Since I became MBEC's Director, I have been truly blessed to meet some fascinating and dynamic individuals. FM 'The Cable Lady' is one of these individuals. FM, who runs a magnificent organization which connects small businesses with consumers (she's CEO of Entrepreneurial Spirit Institute, located in Newark, DE), interviewed me recently for a television show she produces and hosts.

During the interview, I made a comment about the importance of networking at "meet and greet" affairs, seminars, etc. FM stopped me in my tracks with this statement: "You don't want to NETWORK; you want to MEET people." Now, I knew this instinctively, but it took someone with FM's sharply honed skills to articulate this concept for me.



We all have had it drummed into our brains – one MUST network at events to sell one's business, to sell one's self, etc. But what exactly is "networking?" Whatever its original concept, networking has evolved into a formalized, automatic, robotic ritual, where one repeatedly gives out one's name, rank and serial number. Person to person, event to event, season to season, same script, and, increasingly, same result.

Why don't we try something different? Why not try *meeting* people? Letting folks know who we are, what we're about, and how we interact with the particular person to whom we're speaking. Meeting folks, as opposed to networking, is more natural, more heartfelt...and is a more solid relationship basis for creating a business relationship. And, as we all know, most business is built on personal relationships...the more solid, the better.

So...get out there and start meeting people!

#### **ATTENTION MBEC VENDORS:**

Please make sure that we have your updated contact information on file so that we can keep you up to date on the next opportunity to **Meet** people.

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