

How To Use Networking (without Becoming A User) **presented by Tanya Michna/Michaels**

You may have heard the expression “it’s all in who you know.” How much truth, if any, is in that statement? And how do you effectively (*but not obnoxiously!*) let people know who you are?

❖ How can you make professional contacts?

Professional writing organizations, public reader events, booksignings, and online venues

Good: business cards
intelligent questions
giving back (expertise and volunteerism)
geeking out for fun and profit (common interests—such as www.supernaturalsisters.blogspot.com)
reliable follow-through
the contest circuit / thank you notes

Less Good: monopolizing a group pitch
crashing an editor dinner
whipping out your book during lunch and bullying the people at your table into buying
turning your workshop into an infomercial
not playing well with others in a multi-author project
insincerity and bitterness
body-checking a colleague at a cocktail party so that you can get to a Big Author
pressing the emergency stop button in an elevator to pitch to an agent
blowing off “little people” (or little agencies or little chapters)

❖ **Debunking the myth:** how do things really work behind the scenes, and what are the practical limitations to networking?

❖ So, how *can* positive contacts realistically benefit you?

group promotion
quotes
mentorships
introductions and recommendations
collaborative speaking/writing opportunities

Your homework: brainstorm three new ways you can improve your social/professional contacts this year:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Now think of a way you can help a fellow writer this year!

Two-time Booksellers' Best winner and three-time RITA finalist Tanya Michaels joined RWA and Georgia Romance Writers in 1999 and accepted her first volunteer job about a week later. She's served as a chapter vice president and on RWA National committees and has been the recipient of multiple service awards. Meanwhile, she stays busy speaking and teaching wherever folks are willing to listen and watches entirely too much TV. She writes for Harlequin American Romance (*Mistletoe Mommy* 8/09, *Mistletoe Hero* 10/09) and, under the name Tanya Michna, also writes women's fiction for NAL Accent (*Baggage Claim*, 05/09). Her twenty-plus books have been translated into nearly a dozen languages for distribution around the world and have been nominated for awards by reviewers, readers and peers. Drop by and say hi at www.tanyamichaels.blogspot.com.