

EPWN Speed Networking Event January 23, 2008
<http://www.europeanpwn-amsterdam.net>

WISDOM WILDFIRE

I'd dropped out of the organization for a few years, but when I heard that business coach extraordinaire, Stephanie Ward, was facilitating a networking evening, I *had* to register for it. It was fabulous! In fact, I was so impressed by the event and attendees, I immediately renewed my membership.

If you weren't there, here's what you missed:

A total of 37 people (including one man, a guest of Karen Lopez) participated in *Speed Networking: Creating a Wisdom Wildfire!* on January 23rd at the Holiday Inn on the Boelelaan in Amsterdam. The event lived up to Stephanie's claims that everyone has the time to network successfully, regardless of their busy schedule.

Seated on both sides of long tables, participants played 'musical chairs', moving one seat to the left every six minutes to face someone new. A bell chimed at three-minute intervals to keep us aware of the allotted time. In Stephanie's introduction to speed networking, she advised us: introduce yourself, tell what you have to offer and what kind of help you need. This formula worked perfectly. It's remarkable how much information two people can exchange within six minutes, when focused.

I'm no stranger to speed networking, having attended some sessions in the past through my designer organizations. Of course, it was helpful to network with people in my own field. This event was considerably more exciting, because the EuropeanPWN-Amsterdam attendees come from a wide diversity of professions, making it possible to bring many more viewpoints into play. I exchanged information, contacts and suggestions with eleven women, including a molecular biologist, an attorney, a voice coach, a tax manager, a stress counselor and other fascinating professionals. Wow! Where else would I have the opportunity to meet and pick the brains of such a variety of people?

I made great connections, and think I managed to give good suggestions and leads to a few people. After all, it's about sharing; giving knowledge as well as getting it. Networking also took place before and after the event. I did my best to meet as many people as I could, and have several pages of notes and a large collection of business cards to peruse.

In the past 20-plus years that I've been involved with the Amsterdam network, I've made very useful contacts and discovered lasting friendships. It is rumored that attendees were so enthusiastic about this particular event, that it may be repeated on a regular basis. If so, I will certainly attend, and encourage all who were not present to sign up for the next speed networking evening. It was a very rewarding experience.

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