

5 THINGS I LEARNED FROM 5 YEARS AS AN AMBASSADOR

by David Telisman

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When I was approached by Chamber leadership to be an Ambassador five years ago, I first thought, "Who, me?" After processing it, though, I felt, "Yeah, me!"

I'd benefited from the generosity and mentorship of other Ambassadors, and I realized that this was a great opportunity to take on more of a leadership and volunteer role as a Chamber member. While it's nice to don the Ambassador name tag at events and to receive shoutouts at First Friday networking breakfasts, this role has been fulfilling in so many other ways.



Here, I share what I've learned.

1. Importance of Networking

If not for the Chamber, I wouldn't have learned how to network, or I'd have become a bad networker. Networking is crucial for both personal and professional growth. As an Ambassador, I have had the opportunity to attend countless events and meetings, which has allowed me to forge valuable connections with professionals from various industries. Networking has not only helped me expand my circle but also facilitated collaboration and knowledge-exchange, making me a more resourceful and well-rounded individual.

2. Generosity Is Currency

I mentioned earlier that I've benefited from the generosity and mentorship of other Ambassadors. What has that looked like? These folks have called me to see how I've been, met me for coffee or lunch, made helpful introductions, referred me, and have advocated for me. They have given, and thus, I've become a giver. Nothing makes my day more than when I give back and help someone. I know that sounds corny, but it's the truth.

3. Significance of Community Engagement

I'm a Northbrook resident of 10 years. I always felt that Northbrook was a nice place to live, but the more active I got with Chamber, the stronger my connection to the community has grown. I've gotten to know my village board and state senators and representatives, I've attended ribbon cutting ceremonies for local businesses, and I'm always aware of volunteer and service opportunities. In my experience, the Chamber has been the hub, connecting business with local government and people to resources.

4. The More of Us, The Better

Am I jealous of new Ambassadors? No way. The beauty of the Ambassador program is that we're able to groom the next generation, as it were. More Ambassadors mean more givers. The growth of this program creates more opportunities to connect with local businesses, represent the Chamber at various events, and to contribute to the development of the Northbrook community.

5. The Rewards of Professional & Personal Development

When I entered the Chamber doors six years ago for the first time with a business that was two days old, I was meek and insecure. Right away, people offered their support, and I received it and leveraged it. I used what I learned to become more grounded and confident as a business owner. Along the way, I've gained new friends, some who've become close, with whom I can talk business and personal matters. These relationships have given me a sense of belonging and a network of trusted advisors.

Want to be the Chamber's newest Ambassador? Of course you do! We're looking for people who have demonstrated enthusiasm as active Chamber members, a commitment to show up for Chamber events, and a willingness to help other members make the most of their Chamber experience. For more information, contact Gail Eisenberg, Membership & Events Director, at gail@northbrookchamber.org or (847) 513-6006.

