



7 Rules of an Effective Business Card

Business Card Rules for Every Small Business Owner

By [Alyssa Gregory](#)

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Having an [effective business card](#) is not as simple as listing your name and contact information on a small 3.5" x 2" card. In fact, there are thousands of ways you can format your business card, many options when it comes to the information you include, and even more ways you can make your business card stand out.

If you fail in any of these areas, though, you could lose prospects, get your card tossed before making a connection, and hurt your ability to [network effectively](#).

Follow these seven business card rules to make sure your business card supports your brand and performs well for your business.

1. Include Only the Most Important Information

It's tempting to reduce the font size and include every last bit of information you have on your business card. I have seen cards that include the staples (name, title, business name, phone, email, website), plus every social network profile, a sales pitch, a comprehensive list of services and a bio. If you have this much information on your card, you are most certainly losing the recipient's attention due to information overload.

You want to include enough to pique the interest of the recipient and make it memorable, without making his or her head spin. Skip the kitchen sink, and [keep your business card simple](#) by being selective about the information you include.

2. Make Sure It Is Legible

Funky fonts are fun, but there's a time and a place for them, and your business card usually isn't the right place. Make sure the fonts you use on your business card aren't too small, too fancy, or distorted in some way, making your card difficult to read.

Do you want to add some spice to your card? Let your logo be the design element that adds interest and keep the text simple and straightforward.

3. Avoid Full Coverage

With affordable business card printing, it's very common to have full-color text and designs on both sides of your business card. But, avoid the temptation to completely cover every white space on your card, unless absolutely necessary.

It's impossible for your recipient to make notes or jot down a memory trigger when there is no room to write, when there is a dark color covering the entire surface, or when a high-gloss finish is applied to both sides. For those who regularly use business cards for note-taking, your black, glossy card may not make the cut for them.

4. Get Them Professionally Printed

While you could [print your own business cards](#) at home on your inkjet printer with perforated business card paper, please consider professional printing instead. Unless you have commercial printing capabilities, DIY business cards might not make the best first impression.

You may be able to save a moderate amount of money and update your information easily if you print them yourself, but the impact of handing over a homemade business card isn't the same as cards that are printed professionally.

5. Design for Your Audience

If you have multiple businesses, you may consider using the front of your business card for one venture and the back for the other. In some cases, when the two businesses complement each other or are loosely connected, this may work.

However, if you have two opposing identities -- let's say you're a graphic designer by day and a tow truck driver at night -- you should create a business card for each business to avoid confusion and speak directly and appropriately to each distinct audience.

6. Use Special Finishing Options Carefully

There are so many ways to make your business card stand out when it comes to the design. I have seen some very effective business cards that use attention-getting finishing features such rounded corners or other die cuts, holes punched through, unusual sizes, embossing, foil accents, and folds that can turn a simple card into a mini-brochure.

Any of these options may work for your business card, but make sure you are selecting a finish that is [relevant to your brand](#), not just something cool to try.

7. Consider a Call to Action

While I recommend keeping your business card simple and streamlined, that doesn't mean you can't use some valuable real estate for a special offer or other call to action. Craft a short message that offers a discount, directs the recipient to your website, or provides a tip that will be relevant and useful to the reader.

If you hit the mark with a specific call to action or other helpful information, you can make your card instantly memorable and generate more leads in the process.

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