

SuccessNet Article:

Low Absences Equal More Referrals

By Ivan Misner, PhD

Would you like to double the number of referrals your chapter generates in the next six to nine months? If yes, here's how. In a past issue of *SuccessNet* I shared a variation on the following table showing how a chapter got "back to basics" and realized some incredible results.

	Absences per Member	# of Members	# of Referrals
1st Quarter (Before)	2.1	14	188
2nd Quarter (After)	.0 (-52%)	18 (+29%)	269 (+43%)
3rd Quarter (After)	.6 (-71%)	21 (+50%)	305 (+62%)

In the above table, you can see that after the chapter started to adhere to an attendance policy as well as follow the basic structure of BNI much more closely, they began to see substantial increases in the number of members and particularly the number of referrals. After only six months, absences (per member) decreased by 71 % and leads went up by 62%!

In response to this article, the Riverside, California, chapter sent me a letter that outlined some of the things they have been doing and the great results they have seen.

	Absences per Member	# of Members	# of Referrals
1st Quarter (Before)	1.9	11	122
2nd Quarter (After)	.9 (-53%)	12 (+9%)	133 (+9%)
3rd Quarter (After)	.8 (-58%)	17 (+55%)	208 (+71%)
4th Quarter (After)	.9 (-53%)	21 (+90%)	322 (+164%)

These two tables clearly show that there is a direct and distinct relationship between absences and leads. As the group decreased its absences, it increased its membership which substantially increased the number of leads that members received. This chapter sent data for a 4th quarter also which shows that after nine months of effort, absences per member went down 53% (even during the Christmas/New Years holidays!) and referrals went up a phenomenal 164% attendance.

High absenteeism translates into low referrals. Low absenteeism translates into high referrals. The lesson here is that if your chapter is lax on attendance, it will affect your pocketbook!

It is in your best interest to reduce absenteeism in your chapter. This, in conjunction with a concerted effort to get back to the fundamentals of running a good chapter, will, without a doubt, make your participation in BNI more profitable for you. Start a movement in your chapter to get back to basics. Ask your local Director for suggestions on how you can start this process. The fact is—We are here to help you make this work. Don't forget that sometimes the best way is not always the easy way. However, with just a little bit of effort, your chapter can realize the benefits that these two chapters have experienced.

Help your chapter get back to basics and get on the right track today!

Dr. Ivan Misner is the Founder and Chairman of the Board of BNI, which has more than 5,100 chapters throughout the world. He is also the author of several books, including his New York Times bestseller, Masters of Networking, Masters of Success, and Masters of Sales.



GAINS Profile

Getting to Know your Referral Sources

Name: _____ Date: _____

Goals:

Accomplishments:

Interests:

Networks:

Skills:



Member Bio Sheet

Revise Your Bio Every Six Months

Date:

Name:	Business Name:
Location:	
Profession:	Years in the Business:
Previous Types of Jobs:	
Family Information:	
a) Spouse	
b) Children	
c) Pets	
City of Residence:	How Long?
Hobbies:	
Activities and Interests:	
Burning Desire:	
Something no one here knows about you:	
The Key to Your Success:	



Sales Manager Moments

Developing Effective Presentations

Each week you will have an opportunity to educate your sales team on how to identify prospects, open a conversation, ask relevant questions, and get permission for you to speak to the prospect about the possibility of doing business. Your marketing team can most effectively open conversations and close contacts on your behalf if they understand what you have to offer and why the prospect would want to consider doing business with you in preference to a competitor. You didn't learn your business in one minute, so allow them to absorb different scenarios over time.

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

Section 1: General Information 15-20 seconds (Same every week)

Name:

Company:

Position:

Location:

Menu of products or services:

- | | | |
|----|----|----|
| 1. | 4. | 7. |
| 2. | 5. | 8. |
| 3. | 6. | 9. |

Section 2: Select One Product or Service

Talk about one area that you would like to focus on this week from the menu above. "This week I'd like to focus on ..."

Section 3: Tell a Story

Tell a story relating to Section 2. Include: Who did you help? What was their complaint/problem/circumstance? What did you do for them? Why were they glad they came to you? What benefit did you provide to your client?

Section 4: Call to Action

If you see/hear ask/tell them.....

Refer again to the story or situation above.

Section 5: Close

Name, Company Name, Memory Hook

WHO DO YOU KNOW WHO ...?

Focus on a particular target market who may need your services. This type of commercial should include an action or incidence that people can relate to. For example: "Who do you know who was recently in an auto accident?" This would be a good commercial for a chiropractor or auto body shop.

DID YOU KNOW ...?

Give a fact or share statistics that will make people say, "Wow! I had no idea."

LONG-TERM FOCUS

"Over the next few week(s)/month(s), I would like to increase my business in the area of Today I would like to talk about" Select one thing to focus on and what makes you the best in the business. It could be a specific target market that you want to add or a new product line within your current classification.

NOTES

Bring in your marketing materials, brochures, product samples, flyers, etc to illustrate the point of the story. (However, please do not pass things around during Sales Manager Moment time; it disrupts the other members when they are giving their presentations. Rather, pass them out prior to the meeting or put them on a Resource Table.)

Keep the Sales Manager Moment focused on prospects outside of the group. Avoid saying "you" and "your needs." If the members don't personally need your services today, they tend to shut out the rest of your message and not know how to prospect of your behalf. Please keep in mind that the Sales Manager Moment is a work in progress. Try it, do it, fix it.



Lowest Common Denominators

Make it Simple!

By breaking down your product or service list to its most basic form, also known as the lowest common denominator, you will be able to more effectively describe what it is you really do. Take each individual product or service from this list and create commercials for the next several months.

By using handouts, samples, or other visual aids, you are more likely to make a lasting impression on other chapter members. The more people can see, hear, taste, or touch, the more likely they are to remember your message.

List specific products

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

List specific services

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

List specific target markets

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

List specific benefits

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

List specific qualifications

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

List specific handouts/visual aids

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |



What Constitutes a Good Referral

Educating Your Sales Force

Name: _____ Chapter: _____

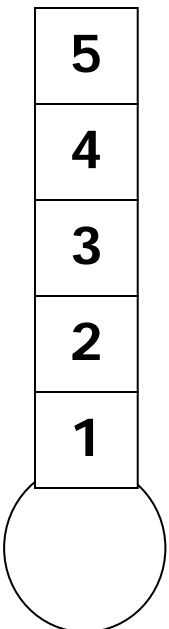
1. The following describes the type of products or services that I offer: _____

2. Examples of qualified referrals for me would be: _____

3. Examples of referrals that are NOT what I am looking for: _____

4. The following scenario describes the perfect referral for me: _____

When you receive a referral slip, what would you like the referral to look like? Give an example of your ideal referral as it relates to the Referral Slip Thermometer. For example, if someone marks a 5, what level of referral would you like it to be?





Member Goals Worksheet

Setting Individual Goals

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number of Referrals Given												
Goal												
Actual												
Number of Referrals Received												
Goal												
Actual												
Number of Referrals that Became Sales												
Goal												
Actual												
Number of One-to-One Appointments												
Goal												
Actual												
Number of Visitors												
Goal												
Actual												
Other (Professional Development, Presentation Skills, Confidence, Networking Skills) Scale of 1 to 10												
Goal												
Actual												



Member Showcase Presentations

Educating Your Sales Force

Each week a member gives a 5-10 minute presentation about his/her business. Follow these guidelines to make the best use of this valuable time to educate the other members about how to find your new referral business:

All members have the opportunity to expand on their Sales Manager Moment and give more information to your chapter membership about what you really do. Each week a member will give an 5-10 minute presentation that educates the members about his or her business and how the chapter members can find more qualified referrals.

Write down what you want to say. Rehearse it, take notes, use an outline, practice it in front of a mirror, and time yourself. Make sure you get all the important points across in the first few minutes.

There are several ways to approach developing your presentation. Below is just one example. Bring visual aids, handouts, and marketing materials to give away. Remember, by using handouts, samples, or other visual aids, you are more likely to make a lasting impression on other chapter members. The more people can see, hear, taste, or touch, the more likely they are to remember your message.

Don't forget to bring a door prize with a \$15-\$20 value. Make sure it is something tangible that the winner can walk away with, for example, a gift basket, book, bottle of wine or gift certificate. It should NOT require additional investment, such as \$20 toward the purchase of \$100 product. Put thought into it, be creative!

Tips for a Successful Presentation

1. Don't talk about how you got into the business or what is going on in your personal life.
2. Talk about your business and how your sales team can find you more referrals.
3. Educate your sales team as to what you do. Educate them as to how they can help you.
4. Get feedback from someone else on your presentation.
5. If you're stuck for ideas on what to present, ask other chapter members what they would like to learn more about.
6. Several weeks prior to your scheduled presentation, identify the demographics of who you would like to hear your presentation. Every person invited to hear your presentation could count as a direct referral for you.
7. Provide the group a handout listing the types of referrals you are looking for.
8. If you have display materials, be sure they are set up ahead of time. Don't use your 10 minutes to set up or pass out handouts. This is distracting to your message.

Anatomy of a 5-10 Minute Presentation

All About You—Education, credentials, experience (1 minute) _____

Company Info—Location, unique products (1 minute) _____

Brief Story—Describe client problem and how you solved it (4 minutes) _____

Benefits—Why should someone use you over your competition? (1 minute) _____

Good Referrals—Describe ideal client (1 minute) _____

Q&A (2 minutes)

The more specific you are in asking for referrals, the better your sales team can find you referrals.



Contact Sphere Worksheet

Identifying Potential Power Team Members

Contact spheres are businesses or professions that naturally provide a source of referrals for one another. They are in somewhat related but non-competitive businesses. Businesses in a contact sphere have a symbiotic relationship in that they support and enhance one another. Power Teams are the people *in those professions* that are willing and committed to helping you build your business through a structured referral system using networking, word-of-mouth marketing and referrals!

After you've identified what professions are in your contact sphere, circle the number next to the ones that are not currently represented in your chapter. Announce at your next chapter meeting what professions you'd like to see filled in your chapter. By asking other chapter members if they know someone in that field, they may be more willing to invite them to visit the chapter.

Your Contact Sphere

Your Profession/Business

Related professions:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____



BNI Book Review

Can be ordered using the Book & Supplies Order Form

Masters of Networking

Building Relationships for Your Pocketbook and Soul

By Dr. Ivan Misner and Don Morgan

A New York Times Bestseller! Contributing authors to Masters of Networking like Tom Peters, Harvey Mackay, Deepak Chopra, Mark Victor Hansen, John Naisbitt, and Jay Conrad Levinson, all know that creating, maintaining, and serving a wide "network" leads to great business and personal rewards. Generating leads and referrals, building healthy relationships, and delivering value over the long term are at the heart of networking and are critical for anyone. Packed with valuable insights and personal examples from many of today's top networkers, this exciting book shows:

- Why networking is the most effective marketing tool today.
- The characteristics of the most successful networkers.
- How the world's best networkers leverage and maintain their networks.
- How you can build a successful networking lifestyle through effective communication, long-term partnerships, and word-of-mouth marketing.

Masters of Success

Proven Techniques for Achieving Success in Business and Life

By Dr. Ivan Misner and Don Morgan

A #1 Wall Street Journal Bestseller! Who has not admired the titans of sport, entertainment, commerce and public service and been inspired to set course by those stars? What youth has not dreamed of becoming rich and famous? What restless fast-food manager has not dreamed of being the boss of a nationwide restaurant chain? What hard-working employee has not dreamed of running his own company? Perhaps more important, what can they, and we, learn about achieving success from successful people? This is the magic of Masters of Success. You will:

- Discover Brian Tracy's insights into the laws of success
- Learn from Tony Alessandra the importance of passion
- Hear Lou Holtz's advice on visualizing success
- Discover what drove Erin Brockovich to triumph over great odds

You will read chapters by Buzz Aldrin, Wayne Dyer, Larry Elder, Michael Gerber, John Gray, Mark Victor Hansen, Tom Hopkins, Vince Lombardi Jr., Tony Robbins and many others. All these famous people and many more contributed to the writing of Masters of Success. If you seek inspiration and ideas, Masters of Success has stories of daunting hardships overcome, lessons learned and unexpected successes in abundance. You will eagerly page from one story to the next, finding both motivation and encouragement throughout this handsome volume.

The World's Best-Known Marketing Secret

Building Your Business with Word-of-Mouth Marketing

By Dr. Ivan Misner

An International Bestseller! Hands down. No contest. We all know that word of mouth can turn a company, product, or service into a roaring success or a crashing failure. Now this long-needed book shows you how to grow your business in the toughest of times with the oldest, best, and most cost-effective marketing method in the world.

The World's Best Known Marketing Secret gives you:

- A proven model for developing your own word-of-mouth program
- Tested tools and techniques to turn word-of-mouth into hot leads and sales
- The winning formula to create a prosperous word-of-mouth business
- Keys to networking success: Skills to deliver your message and get tons of referrals
- A comprehensive resource list of networking groups
- A special section of step-by-step work sheets for creating your own marketing plan

This valuable book is the blueprint for all business people on networking and word-of-mouth marketing. It draws from Dr. Misner's doctoral research at the University of Southern California as well as almost two decades of experience in running BNI, the world's largest business networking organization.

Business By Referral

A Sure-Fire Way to Generate New Business

By Dr. Ivan Misner and Robert Davis

Tired of frustrating cold calls? Looking for new ways to build your business? Turn your business into a referral magnet. Will this book help you attract more referrals? It will, if you are an accountant, consultant, contractor, caterer, chiropractor, dentist, financial planner, florist, photographer, printer, real estate agent, salesperson, travel agent, or one of thousands of other services providers who want to attract more referrals. And it will make cold calling a bad dream from the past.

Create a powerful network of business relationships that work for you. Take advantage of 15 things others can do to boost your business to the next level. Motivate friends, associates, and colleagues to send you referrals. Use 18 tactics that will increase your visibility, credibility and profitability. Create your own 5-step program for turning referrals into customers, clients or patients. Reward business associates who send you referrals. Write a comprehensive business plan for your referral marketing program.



Leadership Team Positions

Opportunities and Responsibilities

This is a general sketch of the leadership opportunities available within each BNI chapter. Successful chapters are run by dedicated members who show enthusiasm and provide positive, supportive attitudes. Leadership "terms" last one year from October 1 to September 30. Leadership training is required for all positions and some positions require meetings outside of the regular meeting agenda.

President

Runs a smooth, timely meeting by following the BNI Weekly Agenda. Facilitates monthly leadership team meetings. Coordinates and makes sure other leaders are fulfilling their responsibilities. Provides direction and motivation for the chapter to meet its goals.

Vice President

As the manager of the Membership Committee, the Vice President conducts monthly and brief weekly Membership Committee meetings. Keeps accurate records of attendance, referrals given and received, visitors, and one-to-ones. Tracks the value of business passed using the Thanks for the Closed Business Program. Enforces the attendance policy. Helps motivate the chapter to achieve its goals.

Membership Committee

Reviews and selects applicants for membership in the chapter by conducting a phone interview, checking business references, and holding a one-to-one with the applicant. Helps provide motivation for the chapter.

Secretary/Treasurer

Tracks, announces and collects new and renewal membership dues. Maintains speaker rotation for presentations and announces the speakers. Tracks and collects meeting room or breakfast fees, if applicable. Provides motivation to the chapter.

Visitor Hosts

Often the first impression visitors and potential members get of the chapter. Greets visitors, substitutes and members as they arrive. Introduce new-comers to members. Gives a brief overview of what to expect during the meeting. Conducts a brief orientation for all visitors after the meeting. Records and tracks visitors and substitutes. Provides motivation to the membership.

Education Coordinator

Prepares a 3-5 minute Networking Education Moment dedicated to topics related to networking, word-of-mouth marketing, and referrals. Works closely with the president and other leaders to address in a timely fashion issues specific to the chapter (such as inviting more visitors or the attendance policy). Helps motivate the chapter to reach its goals.

Event Coordinators

Helps the chapter prepare for events such as Visitor Days, Open Houses and the summer BNI Family Picnic. Plans and executes chapter events like a holiday party or an after hours event.

Mentor Coordinator

Makes sure each new member goes through the mentoring program.

Power Team Coordinator

Facilitates the Power Team Program in the chapter. Identifies which professions each Power Team would like to be added to the chapter, and develops an ongoing Top Ten Professions Needed list.



90-Day Membership Review

Checking In On Progress

Chapter Name _____ Date Inducted _____
Member _____ Mentor _____
Occupation _____ Member's Phone _____

1. Referrals given to date: _____
 2. Referrals received to date: _____
 3. Percentage of referrals received that have become sales: _____
 4. Number of members who have been referred to me: _____
 5. Number of members with whom I have scheduled at least one Dance Card: _____
 6. Number of guests I have brought since my Visitor Day: _____
 7. Number of my guests who have become members: _____
 8. My presentation/introduction skills have improved: _____ Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No
 9. I am more comfortable speaking in front of groups: _____ Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No
 10. I am beginning to establish strong referral relationships: _____ Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No
 11. I am satisfied with my BNI membership: _____ Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No
 12. I would like to consider a leadership role: _____ Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No
- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Strengths a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Strengths Yet To Emerge a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ |
|---|---|

Date for 5 Month Review: _____

Today's Date: _____

New Member's Signature: _____

Mentor's Signature: _____



Five Month Membership Review

Checking In On Progress

Chapter Name _____ Date Inducted _____

Member _____ Mentor _____

Occupation _____ Member's Phone _____

1. Referrals given to date: _____
2. Referrals received to date: _____
3. Percentage of referrals received that have become sales: _____
4. Number of members who have been referred to me: _____
5. Number of members with whom I have scheduled at least one Dance Card: _____
6. Number of guests I have brought since my Visitor Day: _____
7. Number of my guests who have become members: _____
8. My presentation/introduction skills have improved: _____ Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No
9. I am more comfortable speaking in front of groups: _____ Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No
10. I am beginning to establish strong referral relationships: _____ Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No
11. I am satisfied with my BNI membership: _____ Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No
12. I would like to consider a leadership role: _____ Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No

13. Strengths
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

14. Strengths Yet To Emerge
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

Today's Date: _____

New Member's Signature: _____

Mentor's Signature: _____



Member Win-Win Contract

Making a Commitment

I, _____ agree to the following terms and conditions as part of my membership in the _____ chapter of BNI as a dedication to my own profitability and the profitability of others.

1. I understand the importance of full member participation in our chapter. Therefore, I will attend every meeting and when I am unable to attend, I will send my substitute to take my place. I also understand the responsibility to fully brief my substitute on what they should say and how they are to behave while acting as my substitute and to also de-brief them after the meeting. I understand that if I miss 4 meetings in six months, I could lose my membership. If I abide by this creed, I also expect other members to do likewise.
2. I understand the importance of arriving early each week prior to "Open Networking" so that I can help greet guests and network with members. Therefore, I will arrive early each week and I will not leave early, as this is very disruptive to the meeting process. In return, I also expect the meetings to end at the scheduled closing time.
3. I will comply with the requirement to invite, and follow up with, potential members to our business sessions. I understand how it is in my best business interests to invite quality members to our chapter. I also understand the importance of regularly inviting guests to our chapter to help us all increase our marketing exposure.
4. As I become acquainted with the members, I will switch my buying to appropriate BNI members in my chapter or other chapters as is possible. Furthermore, I agree with the importance of following up on all purchases I make from BNI members with constructive and helpful feedback.
5. I agree to maintain ethical standards that are equal to or above that of the rest of my profession. I agree to be truthful with BNI members and any qualified referrals.
6. The weekly BNI meeting is designed to advertise my business and me, and allow other members to educate me on their business. I agree to take notes on the other members' business needs as an aid to finding them contacts and referrals, and each week to prepare and practice the infomercial I bring to the meeting. In return, I will expect other members will take notes on the needs I have for my business.
7. In between meetings is when we are able to network with the other members. This important activity is done through One-to-Ones (business building interviews) and helps us to better understand each other. I agree to master the art of One-to-Ones by regularly using the GAINS Profile and the One-to-Ones meeting methods.
8. I will always give high quality service as I expect others to give me.
9. I will provide the products and services at the prices I quote.
10. I will build goodwill and trust among the members and their referrals.
11. I will take responsibility for following up promptly on the referrals I receive.
12. I will read and abide by the BNI Member Policies Brochure and the BNI Code of Ethics.

Mentee Name (print) _____ Mentee Signature _____

Mentor Signature _____ Date _____