



How to Make the Most of Your Business Referrals Membership...

Purpose of this guide

This Business Referrals guide is both a training and a reference manual. It will:

- outline the basic operation of the group
 - help officers and committee members know what to do!
 - enable all members to know how to make the most memberships
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Purpose of Business Referrals

The purpose of Business Referrals, Inc., is to:

- help us expand our businesses by referring new customers, clients, and businesses to one another.
 - advertise our businesses consistently to Business Referrals members.
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Overview of what we do



Each Friday morning beginning at 7:00 a.m., we meet at Sara's Place to learn about each others' businesses and give each other referrals. The 30-35 business membership is comprised of only one of each *type* of business (eg., one butcher, one baker, one candlestick maker!).

Potential candidates

- Any person who wants to increase business success by meeting with people for the purpose of giving and receiving quality business referrals is a potential candidate for Business Referrals.
 - Potential candidates meet with the Membership Committee to determine that their business is in a unique business (type) category and that they represent only one type of business. (See "Overlapping business types" for more information.)
 - Potential candidates are cleared by the Membership Committee, and upon filling out the Business Referrals application and submitting fees—they are no longer "potential"...they are full-fledged members!
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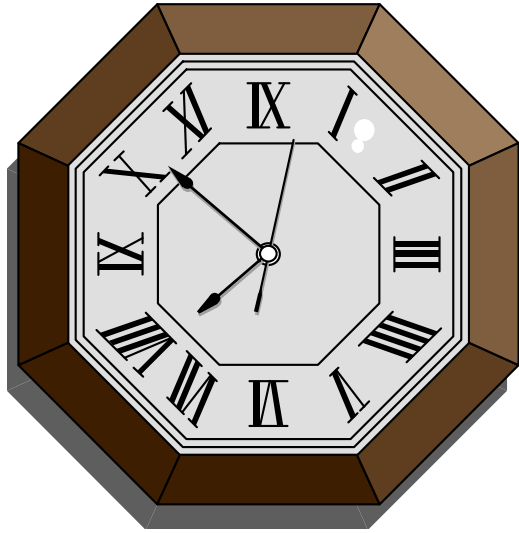
Fees

Initial fee The initial fee to join Business Referrals is \$30, plus \$10 for each month or partial month of the present quarter (see “Initial quarter fee” below).

Quarterly fees The quarterly fee for maintaining membership in Business Referrals is \$30.00.

- Quarterly fees are paid in January, April, July, and October. They will be collected on the first Friday of those months. If a delay is needed, pay the second week of the quarter. Meet with the treasurer (in private) if you need to delay payment until the end of the month.
- Initial quarterly fee is prorated to include the month that the member joins and each month for the rest of the current quarter. (For example, if a member joins in February, he will pay upon joining the initial \$20.00 fee and \$20.00 of the first quarter fee to cover the months of February and March.)





Weekly Program

Overview

An overview of the weekly program follows.

- Meeting opens at 7:00 a.m. sharp
- Potential members are welcomed!
- 30-second promos
- Pass referrals
- Weekly featured speakers
- Announce next week's speakers
- Second 30-second promos

Time and place

- Business Referrals meets every Friday morning at 7:00 a.m. (except specific days/holidays voted on by the membership) at Sara's Place restaurant, 3501 Channahon Road, Joliet.
 - Meetings generally last until 8:00 or 8:15 and occasionally run longer. .
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Attendance



Introduction

Since the purpose of the group is to familiarize each other with our businesses and pass referrals to one another, members are expected to meet every week.

Planned absences

In each calendar year (prorated for first year of membership), members can plan up to 12 absences by marking them on the planned absence sheet that circulates each week.

- If necessary, a planned absence can be set up by contacting the group secretary.
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Unplanned absences

Realizing that instances may occur when a member can't attend and has not planned the absence, up to six unplanned absences are permitted in a calendar year.

Absences during your first year

During your first year of membership, the number of absences will be prorated according to the month that you become a Business Referrals member. It will be based on the number of full months left in the year.

Nearing the limit?

Note: You will be notified if you are nearing either of the above absence limits in order to consider continued membership.

Your membership may be terminated if you surpass the absence limits. There are two reasons for this:

- You probably are not able to attend these weekly meetings at this time in your business career.
 - Business Referrals would like to fill the one business type/one member guidelines with members who are able to attend the meetings.
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Promoting Your Business

Introduction You have the opportunity to promote your business every week (and to learn more about the other businesses in the group) through 30-second promotions and featured speaker presentations.

30-second promotions You have the opportunity each week to give two 30-second promotions for your business—one at the beginning and one at the end of the meeting. Practice on us! Use your 30 seconds to promote and advertise, and to detail who your “target” market is (to help us get you the best referrals).

Featured speaker presentations A few times each year (probably three), you’ll be one of our featured speakers, providing a 10-minute business presentation (8-minute presentation with 2 minutes for follow-up questions).

Note: If you need to reschedule your timeslot, you’ll need to call someone else on the monthly speakers list to switch with someone, or call the secretary.

Quarterly Open House Each quarter, Business Referrals meets one evening (in addition to the usual Friday morning meeting) at the place of business of one of the members for food ‘n fun. The member plans the evening’s details (food), but Business Referrals picks up the tab!



Networking...

Referrals...

Speaking opportunities...

Overlapping Business Types

One member for each business type

Each member will represent only one type of business (for example – a member has 2 businesses that don't relate like printing and landscaping OR a member has businesses that relate but there are other potential members who can cover one of those businesses like mortgage services and general bank loans/deposits/checking

There will be one member only for each type of business (for example, accounting firm, law firm, bank, cabinetry, print shop).

What if someone wants to join, and their business only partially overlaps an existing business type? He may request that we split the category into two subcategories.

For example, a second lawyer wants to join the group. He specializes in an area that the current lawyer does not cover, so he requests that we split the lawyer category into two subcategories.

The Membership Committee determines whether or not to split the category, using this procedure:

- The current member in that category will meet with the membership committee to review the new category guidelines. Possible outcomes:
 - The current member believes this to be an overlap of category and infringement of the one business type/one member agreement
 - The current member believes the two businesses partially overlap, but if the potential member needs to either agree not to discuss or bring up any area of overlap in his dealings with Business Referrals or other agreement by all involved, then joining would be acceptable.
 - The current member believes both businesses can be a part of Business Referrals with no problems!
 - Other ...

Then the membership committee will meet with the requesting (new) business to discuss options, such as: joining is not possible because the businesses are too similar, joining is possible with conditions to avoid infringing on the present member's business.

Note: The committee will make the final decision and inform both parties.

What About Leadership?



Introduction

The leadership of Business Referrals consists of officers who serve for six-month terms. The officers oversee committees and advisors. Officers are:

- president
- secretary
- treasurer

President



The president:

- Facilitates weekly meetings, following weekly program listed above.
- Prepares and maintains visitor packets. Gives to first-time visitors.
- Meets with membership committee to consider potential members.
- Meets with new member advisors as needed.
- Notifies members (or delegates this responsibility) when they have 5 unplanned absences.
- Trains incoming president at end of term.

Secretary



The secretary:

- Develops and maintains speaker list
 - Ensures each member is able to speak at regular intervals.
 - Fits new members into schedule by end of month following joining (if possible)
- Prepares and passes out copies of speaker list (and posts to BusinessReferrals@yahoogroups.com) the last Friday of each month.
- Notifies next week's speaker if absent the previous week.
- Maintains planned absence sheet.
- Circulates business card box and planned absence sheet weekly.
- Tracks attendance and referrals at meetings
 - Gives copy to president at the end of each month
 - Notifies president whenever a member reaches 5 unplanned absences
- Times weekly speakers, enabling them to adhere to 8-minute presentations with 2 minutes for follow-up questions.
- Meets with membership committee to consider potential members.
- Trains incoming secretary.

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What About Leadership?, Continued

Treasurer



The treasurer:

- Collects dues the first Friday of each quarter.
 - Follows up (in private) with members whose dues are not paid first Friday. to ensure they are collected by the end of the month.
 - Records dues and provides receipts.
 - Pays bills monthly.
 - Makes deposits weekly.
 - Maintains checkbook and bank statements.
 - Reconciles bank statement monthly.
 - Gives written financial report first Friday of each month.
 - Pays for potential members' first breakfast.
 - Meets with membership committee to determine whether potential members will be admitted to join.
 - Acquires new signatures cards for incoming treasurer before end of the 6-month term.
 - Trains incoming treasurer.
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Membership Committee

- The membership committee consists of the president, secretary, treasurer, and other interested Business Referrals volunteers.
 - The membership committee meets after the weekly meeting:
 - whenever a guest is brought as a potential member
 - to discuss whether this person's business fills a unique category for Business Referrals
 - to discuss if there are any conflicts with present members
 - whenever membership conflicts arise
 - a potential member may have a category conflict with an existing member
 - an existing member may have a membership issue that needs to be resolved
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What About Leadership?, Continued

New member advisors

At the discretion of the president (who may wish to advise new members him/herself), new member advisors are enlisted to counsel new members on these issues:

- How to do a 30-second promotion
 - How to give a 10-minute presentation (8 minutes with 2 minutes for questions)
 - What to do if you need to miss your scheduled presentation (switching with someone else, or who to contact)
 - How to look for referrals and how to get them
 - Go over attendance considerations
 - 12/6 absences
 - Prorated absences until end of first calendar year
 - What to do if you need to miss meetings
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Other committees

From time to time as needs arise, the president may form other short-term committees to fill a specified need.

