



Business & Personal Development Programme



www.brxnet.co.uk



CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Dear BRX member

My name is Michael Stern and I am the Founder and Chairman of Business Referral Exchange Ltd (BRX). I am delighted you have decided to join BRX and partake in everything we have to offer.

As you are reading this you will have received your new member pack including our Business and Personal Development Programme, Business Card Holder and BRX Lapel Badge.

Please take the time to read the Business and Personal Development Programme as it is your opportunity to start learning the techniques and skills to help you succeed in your membership of BRX. Please also wear your Lapel Badge with pride as you are now a member of one of the leading Referral Networks in the UK.

Make sure you book a 1 2 1 meeting with your Regional Partner, Area Partner or Group Partner. They are there to help you get the best out of your BRX membership and help you to connect with other members across the network.

Please also keep in touch with me as you progress through your membership. If you have any issues at all or indeed any ideas for improvement of the BRX please don't hesitate to drop me a line at michael.stern@brxnet.co.uk. I will do my best to resolve your issues and to see how we can use your positive suggestions to improve the BRX offering.

I wish you all the very best and good luck in your quest for more business and more profit.

Michael Stern



BRX BUSINESS AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

- Chairman's Introduction
- BRX Ethos p1-2
- Regional Support p3
- Top 10 Networking Tips to get you started. p4-5
- Developing Champions p6-7
- Referrals p8-9
- Meeting Formats/Leadership Team p10
- Making BRX Meetings Work for You p11-12
- Leadership Team/Committee Roles p13-14
- Substitutes p15
- Presentation Skills p16-17
- Member Action Plans p18-19
- 1 2 1s p19



BRX ETHOS

The Foundation of Well-Functioning Groups and a Truly Trusted Network

What is it?

The BRX ethos is a statement that defines the organisation's commitment to its members, and the members' reciprocal commitment. This statement is taken from the publication 'The Business Referral Exchange Ethos' a copy of which is included in your new members pack.

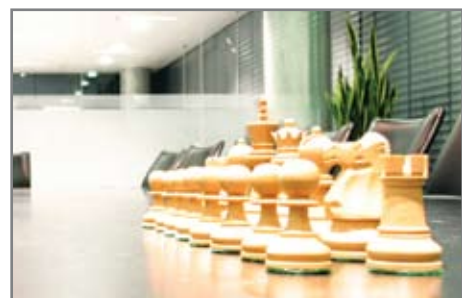
Introduction

BRX's experience from many groups over the country, from individual discussions, and from what people tell us is that people join BRX for all sorts of reasons and with all sorts of expectations. Surprisingly, 'developing more business' rarely comes first, although it's always in the list somewhere. With this variety of reasons comes an even wider variation in what 'success' means to people – if they've thought things through that far. If it is simply left there, people will join and leave randomly, often disillusioned and wondering why it didn't work for them.

So Business Referral Exchange's first challenge is whether to encourage this broad church and do its best to manage it, or to focus on a narrower band of people whose requirements and expectations are more closely aligned with each other's and with what BRX believes they should be.

The organisation's original premise was to generate more, and better, business for its members. In these days of ever more shrill sales messages raining down on us from all sides and in all sorts of media, working with people we trust and like is seen as the only way to develop sustained, rewarding business. It doesn't matter whether we're talking about one-man businesses or multinational corporations: in the end people are doing business with other people. However, with the number of people working for themselves and in tiny groups increasing rapidly, the successful marketing of their services becomes that much more difficult, so the development of mechanisms to connect them to the people who need their products and services becomes ever more imperative.

The fundamental belief is that to generate good sustainable business, it must enable its members to develop credibility and trust in each other, and an extensive network of contacts. It must then organise itself to provide the means for members to make their own requirements known, and to connect each other





This then is the first essential element of the Business Referral Exchange ethos – its commitment to its members, stating clearly what it's for and how it will go about it. If people do not align themselves with this purpose at the outset, they are likely to be at cross purposes from the start.

However, it's a two-way street! Having made its own position clear, it follows that BRX is not going to suit everybody. In addition, while BRX provides the guidance and mechanism for success, ultimately it is the members who will determine how successful they are by how effectively they follow the guidance and use the mechanism. This is similar to a conventional company in that it depends on its employees, but the similarity ends there: the crucial difference is in the relationships. In companies there is an employer-employee contract where the employer rewards the employee for conducting certain defined tasks, and often with a managerial content, i.e. supervising and taking responsibility for the output of others.

Business Referral Exchange operates as a Membership organisation, in which we supply certain facilities, and members are rewarded by how effectively they and their fellow members use these facilities; the reward also comes from any number of third parties, not from BRX itself. This strong element of interdependence – one's own success relying on both one's own actions and the actions of one's fellow members – is at the very heart of what makes BRX successful and unique. What it takes to practice interdependence successfully is therefore at the very heart of its ethos, and getting people to understand and aspire to it is the challenge of every BRX group leadership.





REGIONAL SUPPORT

A key element of your BRX membership includes the UNIQUE Regional 1 2 1 support offered to members of BRX by your Regional Partner, Area Partner or Group Partner.

Quite simply no one else will work harder to try to help you succeed in your membership and to help you gain QUALITY REFERRALS and MORE PROFIT. But it's up to you to take advantage of this special service.

Your Regional Partners are FULL TIME professionals who have run their own successful business and are there help you to succeed. Use their contacts and knowledge of their Regions to help you access the kind of clients and referrals you are looking for.

- 1 Book a 1 2 1 without delay with your Regional Partner, Area Partner or Group Partner for your induction.
- 2 Make sure the Regional Partner, Area Partner or Group understands what your business is about and how he can help you. Never assume he or she will know your business.
- 3 Try to quantify exactly how much business you need to make your investment in BRX worthwhile (see member action plan section). This information will help your Regional Partner to help you achieve your aims.
- 4 Aim to be specific about the kinds of business you are seeking introductions to. Your Regional Partner/ Area Partner will be able to use this information to help target other members within the BRX network to introduce you to and help get your membership off to a good start.
- 5 Remember your Regional Partner is very well connected and experienced and is there to help you so use this resource to your advantage and do let them know when there is an issue, a challenge or a problem.





TOP 10 NETWORKING TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED

1. Seek the Relationship not the Sale.

Many people go to networking events to sell. This is the wrong thing to do as if everyone goes to sell no one will be buying. Focus on building relationships first.

2. Be committed to the process.

Go to networking events regularly. People who go to events infrequently don't do as well as those who go regularly. It takes time to build awareness and trust.

3. Be patient.

Don't give up if it's not happening for you quickly. Good relationships take time to build but once established can last a life time.

4. Prepare.

Don't just turn up at a meeting and hope your pitch will go well. Prepare what you are going to say so it is clear and relevant.

5. Give and You will Receive.

If you can help someone, then do so. Those that give generally receive in return.

6. Listen and Learn.

Listen to what people are saying. Try to understand what they are looking for. Then LISTEN FOR THEM

7. Follow up.

If you say you are going to follow up make sure you do. Nothing creates a worse impression than saying you will do something and not doing it.



8. Ask for what you want.

Be very specific about what you want. The more specific you can be the better the likelihood of you getting what you want.

9. Be Confident.

Remember; chances are you are an expert in your field so be confident in the knowledge you know what you're talking about.

10. Enjoy yourself.

Networking involves effort and commitment so it's important to enjoy the process. Don't take it too seriously; you will meet lots of interesting and useful people. Enjoy.





DEVELOPING CHAMPIONS

We define a Business Champion as being someone who actively promotes your business even when you are not present. Generally Champions will come from satisfied positive Clients, but not always as we'll discuss shortly.

In order to develop Champions, the first step is to identify our customers.

Levels of 'Customer'

There are five levels of Customer and it is important for the successful company to move their customers from one level to the next:

- **Suspects**
A Suspect is someone who you want to become a customer but who doesn't yet know your product or service or may not even be aware of it.
- **Prospects**
A Prospect knows about your product or service, may have experienced it but has not yet purchased it.
- **Customers**
A Customer is defined as someone who has purchased your product or service, but demonstrates no brand loyalty and will not necessarily purchase from you in the future.
- **Clients**
A Client demonstrates brand loyalty and will regularly come to you for your product or service.
- **Champions**
Your Champion will not only demonstrate brand loyalty but will also recommend you to others and will actively look to win you new business.



By moving someone up the ladder from Suspect through Prospect, Customer and Client to Champion, a business is more likely to bring new suspects and prospects into the system thereby creating more Champions.

Of course having identified Champions and potential Champions you need a process for inspiring them to continue to champion you. Develop ways of thanking them for referrals (this need not involve money!).

We said earlier that Champions may not be customers. Champions might include:

- Clients
- Suppliers
- Friends
- Family
- Networking Contacts
- Employees
- Former Colleagues
- Competitors with complementary specialties
- Well connected and influential people who know of your product or service.

Having identified possible Champions we need to:

- Inspire them
- Champion them first
- Provide an exceptional service
- Build a great relationship with them, seek to help them
- Share your successes, so they are enthused to continue Championing you
- Say 'Thank You' – by email, letter, card or in person and if appropriate with gifts or entertainment
- Champion them in return

Whatever you do, make it personal and always do something.





REFERRALS

The primary reason that we join BRX is to generate more business for ourselves and our fellow members.

The sort of lead we all want is one that turns easily into quality business. We call these leads 'referrals' and a referral has certain characteristics. And if you want to get plenty of referrals, make sure you start generating referrals for others.

Characteristics of a Referral

- **The need has been identified.**
This means that you know that there is a need with one of your contacts. It might be a neighbour who you know is thinking about having a new bathroom installed and may need a plumber.
- **The need has been confirmed.**
Confirming the need means that you have spoken to your neighbour and established that they are definitely looking for a good plumber.
- **The person with the need is expecting the call.**
You have also told your neighbour that you have a business associate who can fulfil their need and advise them that you will ask this plumber to call them, giving the plumber's name and any personal recommendation that you can.

It can seem very challenging generating quality referrals each week – and we don't expect you to do so. There are times when information comes your way that would be of use to another member, but which you cannot develop further in a reasonable time frame. You might pass that on as a tip, a lead or as a recommendation.

- **Tip**
A tip is a piece of unqualified information that may be of use to another business but without the complete data necessary to allow that business to follow it up. It would most likely be followed up by a cold call. An example might be that you pass an office complex and notice new tenants moving in. You might mention that fact to the telecoms business in your group so they can call by and see if they can generate business.
- **Lead**
A lead is a contact that may have a requirement for a particular service or product supplied by a member, but the contact may not be aware of that members business. Given time this might well be developed into a referral by confirming that your contact does indeed have that need and would be open to an approach by the relevant member.



- **Recommendation**

There may be times when you cannot establish that a contact has a particular need, but you suspect it and you recommend the member's business.

A recommendation is where one person tells another about the quality of a member's services and suggests that the first person uses those services. There is no introduction to the recommended company and no follow-up.

Generating Referrals

The first tip on generating referrals is to use the whole meeting and the whole week to your advantage:

Take Referral Slips away with you and leave them near to your telephone, reminding you to be aware of potential opportunities as they arise

Keep your business card holder with you at all times, carrying at least two cards of every Member

Tell people about the Group, both the buyers in your Company and your friends, family and colleagues and ensure that they know to come to you if they are looking for a product or service.

When talking to Members in the meeting or with others in external networking meetings etc, ask, "How can I help you?" and "Who do you need me to introduce you to?" If you don't understand enough about a fellow Member's business, don't be afraid to ask.

Meet up with fellow Members outside the Group in their place of work and find out more about what they can do and who their customers are.

Ask them to tell you how to recognise opportunities for them. Invite them back to meet you in your surroundings.

Listen carefully to the Sixty Second and any Five or Ten Minute Presentations and keep Referral Slips in front of you at all times as you do so. As you listen, ask yourself whom you know who would be interested.

Pay attention to other referrals as they are described, listen out for anything that may trigger further ideas for you to refer business.

It is worth repetition. Listen **FOR** people, not only to them. In other words, get mentally involved in what they are saying and start working out how you can help them.



MEETING FORMATS

BRX operate a standard breakfast meeting format (below) which is a tried and tested system which gets results for members and helps members and guests to focus on developing relationships and generating referrals. In addition many groups have adopted Format Variations developed and published by BRX which serve both to keep meetings fresh and to deepen the understanding of each members' business.

There are three main components which in our opinion should never change.

- 1 There must always be time to network with other members and guests.
- 2 There must always be an opportunity to present.
- 3 There must always be a referrals session at THE END of the meeting.

These three components of a meeting are critical to the success of a meeting. Other aspects of the meeting can be changed or moved around as long as these three components are present.

We do however recognise that the standard meeting format can be a bit boring after a while and as such we have a Format Variations Programme in place (Your Group has a copy) which consists of a number of sessions designed to help make meetings more interesting and indeed more productive.

Groups using the variation sessions are finding they are getting better quality and indeed more referrals and that visitors and guests are asking to come back for more as no one else provides such a comprehensive and active programme.

STANDARD MEETING FORMAT (formats and timing vary from meeting to meeting but a normal meeting lasts one & half hours).

7.15am	Arrive
7.15am till 7.40am	Networking time
7.40am till 8.00am	Breakfast (more networking)
8.00am till 8.05am	Chairman's Welcome/Group Notices
8.05am till 8.20am	60 second member presentations
8.20am till 8.30am	Format Variation session or 5-10 min member presentation
8.30am till 8.45am	Referrals and Contributions session
8.45am	Close of Meeting



MAKING BRX MEETINGS WORK FOR YOU

Commitment

BRX Groups will be successful if members are committed to the group and to the process. Lack of commitment from even a few members can seriously impact on the strength and morale of the group.

The more you put in the more you are likely to get out. The more you give the more you will gain. Regular weekly attendance builds trust and understanding in you and your business which is why its essential you attend every week and when you can't go arrange a substitute (see session on substitutes) to represent you and do your pitch when you are not there.

It's also essential to get involved with the group by participating in the group leadership team or by simply helping others in the group to make the group successful.

Punctuality

Punctuality is absolutely essential each week. The BRX meetings lasts for around 90 minutes and its essential you arrive on time and stay for the full meeting to ensure you get the full benefit from the group.

You should try to block out the time between 7am and 9.30am each week to attend the meeting and gain full benefit from it. You should also consider what sort of message you will be giving out if you are regularly late for meetings and this may have negative impact on the level of referrals you receive.

Reliability

This is very important and demonstrates the quality of you and your business. It is essential you follow up on referrals, tips, and leads etc quickly and efficiently and with due courtesy.

If you find you cannot make the meeting send apologies to, at the very least the Chair, as it's really annoying when members simply don't turn up and no one knows why. Again consider what sort of message your actions are conveying to the group.



Preparation

Be Prepared. Failure to prepare is preparing for failure. These words are very true so it's essential you prepare for each meeting and think about what message you wish to convey during your 60 second presentation or indeed any 5-10 minutes presentation.

Spend some time each week thinking about how you are going to approach your next meeting. Target members you wish to speak with and seek them out early on in the meeting.

Generosity

Remember in Referral generating and networking "YOU HAVE TO GIVE BUSINESS TO GAIN BUSINESS" so don't be afraid as you get to know your colleagues to start making referrals to them or to start introducing them to your contacts. If you do they will want to reciprocate and do the same for you.

The best networkers understand this simple concept and as a result find they gain significant new business as a result.





LEADERSHIP TEAM/COMMITTEE ROLES

The leadership or committee roles are very important to the running of a successful group. Whilst the Regional Partner or Area Partner will be at your meeting regularly and will be around 'off the table' so to speak to help you they simply can't be at every meeting so it's essential that there is a strong team in place to run the group week to week.

The main positions are listed below but several groups have many more than this to ensure every part of the meeting and group run smoothly.

The Chair

The Chairperson chairs the weekly meetings and ensures the meetings run efficiently on time and effectively. They are there to ensure meetings and groups are run effectively and to ensure the other team members carry out their respective functions.

They are there to help the group to grow and develop in partnership with Area, Group and Regional Partners to ensure they are kept up to date with what's going on.

Chairs are usually in office for 6 months sometimes longer but generally no longer than 12 months.

Deputy chair

This role is mainly a supporting role to the Chair and is usually an opportunity for someone seeking to become Chair at some point in the future.

The Deputy Chair is really there to run the meeting in the Chair's absence and to assist the group to operate efficiently and effectively.

Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for managing the group's finances, collecting cash from guests/visitors and managing the standing orders for members.

They normally report to the group once a month on the state of the group finances. They usually hold office for a year but this can be extended if necessary.



The Visitor and Membership Secretary

This is an important role and is very much focused on the members within the group and guests and visitors as well.

The Visitor and Membership Secretary is responsible for keeping a record of the renewal dates for members and for looking after the guests and visitors to the group. They are responsible for ensuring the experience of the guest and visitors is a good one and also to ensure that the visitor and guest details are taken and recorded to be passed on to the Regional Partner.

They are also responsible for ensuring that every visitor or guests receives one of our membership application and information brochures and that they invite feedback from the guests about the meeting etc. They are also responsible for inviting the guests back for a second visit as well.

Referrals Secretary

The Referrals Secretary takes the referrals section of the meeting. Their role is to educate the members and guests as to what the referrals session is all about.

This is a very important part of the meeting and it is the referral secretary's responsibility to ensure this session is positive and productive. They also record the referrals received and provide regular feedback to the group on the progress of business referred.





SUBSTITUTES

We know that regular attendance at meetings builds trust and understanding. In turn we know that trust and understanding builds referrals.

We also know that sometimes it not always possible to be at a meeting due to ill health, problems with business, meetings, holidays etc etc. which is why we actively encourage members to use the BRX substitute scheme.

The success of your membership depends on you being represented every week including those times you can't make the meeting yourself. As such we encourage you to use substitutes to attend meetings you can't make especially if you know in advance you can't make a meeting.

EMPTY CHAIRS DON'T MAKE OR RECEIVE REFERRALS!!!!

It's worth remembering that by being represented you are not only showing you commitment to your group but you will potentially pick up a referral even when you are not there.

- 1 Use the Substitutes list which your Group or Regional Partner will have if you can't find anyone in your own firm or network to sub for you. The people on this list are looking for opportunities to sub at other groups to access the wider network and provide support to other groups.
- 2 Consider becoming a sub yourself. Its costs you nothing and you may well pick up more business as a result. If you sub regularly your profile with in the network will also rise gaining you more referrals.
- 3 Ensure that a copy of your 60 second pitch is left at the group so it can be handed out to your sub or indeed anyone who turns up at the meeting willing to sub for you.
- 4 If you are really stuck for a sub contact your BRX Regional Partner and they may be able to help. Whilst it's not their direct responsibility they often know which subs are the most active and can be relied upon to step in at short notice.

Remember EMPTY SEATS DON'T MAKE OR RECEIVE REFERRALS so it's vital you make an effort to use the subs system to maximise the potential to get referrals during your membership.



PRESENTATION SKILLS

In a 'standard format' BRX meeting there are two levels of presentation to educate your colleagues and guests and to help them generate referrals for you. In a variation of format meeting there will be other opportunities, typically less formal.

These are the 60 second and 10 minute presentations slots at each 'standard format' meeting. Each week you will get a chance to stand up and do a 60 second presentation. Every so often you will get a chance to do a 10 minute presentation as well.

The most important thing to remember when doing either a 60 second or 10 minute presentation is to PREPARE. Failure to prepare is preparing for failure. It's absolutely vital that you prepare your presentation, each week keeping your 60 seconds message focussed and fresh. Remember these presentations are your opportunity to educate your colleagues about your business and most importantly about what you are looking for.

You may hear members say when they are about to do their 60 second pitch YOU ALREADY KNOW WHAT I DO!! You should never approach your presentation in this way as there may well be someone in the room who doesn't know what you do or doesn't fully understand what you are looking for so ensure you prepare for your slot each week.

Hints and tips for effective presentations

- 1 Always start and finish with your name and company name.
- 2 Describe what you do in terms of how it helps people to solve a problem they may have.
- 3 Keep presentations SIMPLE, CONCISE, SUCCINCT.
- 4 Rehearse and prepare well focusing on a different element of your business each week.
- 5 Seek to EDUCATE rather than sell
- 6 Use HUMOUR and PROPS to make your point.
- 7 Don't use JARGON. You may understand what it means but don't assume your audience does.
- 8 Try not to read from a script. Remember to rehearse and prepare.



- 9 Vary your pace. Pausing in the right place can be very effective.
- 10 Be aware of your posture. The way you stand and move is very important. Adopt an air of confidence. Remember you are an expert in your business.
- 11 Be specific about what or who you are looking for. Being very specific makes a massive difference in helping people to understand what you want.
- 12 Stick to the allotted time.
- 13 Use case studies to illustrate the practical benefits of what you do.
- 14 Try to use a memory hook or strap line to help people to remember who you are and what you do.
- 15 Don't try to cram in too much into your presentation as too much information will just get lost.
- 16 Always have a 5-10 minute presentation with you as members sometimes have to drop out at short notice. Remember it's your chance to talk about your business.
- 17 Don't hesitate to use projectors and power point etc if you are comfortable with them and they add to the impact of your presentation. Don't use them if you aren't.
- 18 Always remember you are amongst friends and colleagues so don't stress about getting it right every time. Practice makes perfect and the more you do the more confident you will be.





MEMBER ACTION PLANS

When you join BRX we don't just want you to attend the meetings and hope you get referrals. We want to help you to get what you really want.

Have you given any thought as to how much business you will actually need to get the return of your investment in BRX membership? Many members say to us "well if I get enough back to pay for my membership and breakfast then I am happy".

In our view this is setting your sights way too low. We believe that if you set a realistically challenging 'return on membership' up front you can then plan on the steps you need to take to achieve this. Measure your success with BRX on a regular basis to ensure you stay on track. Your BRX Regional Partner can help with this but below is a suggested format you can follow to set out in advance what you want and the steps required to achieve this.

- 1 Work out what it is you really need to make this membership worth while. This will be different for different people.
- 2 Many members value the support they gain from fellow members; in particular the ability to bounce ideas of colleagues who really understand the members business but are not too close to be objective. If you chose to buy this level of support in the market it would cost you realistically several hundred and maybe thousands of pounds.
- 3 Those of us who want to evaluate membership on the basis of business gained need to consider what a lead is worth. For example £5000 worth of business for someone billing out their time or getting a good rate of commission may well represent an excellent return on their investment as they are keeping the bulk of that £5000. For someone else £5000 worth of business may in fact not be a good return on their investment if they are only gaining a margin from that £5000 of say 10% which results in a net gain to them of just £500. In this case they may look for £50,000 worth of business at 10% margin yielding £5000 profit.
- 4 Once you have worked out what it is you are looking for then you can start to break that down into bite sized chunks to see how you might achieve your target. For example a mortgage broker would need 10 mortgages to get £5000 worth of commission if they received on average £500 a mortgage. He/she would then need to work out how many referrals they might need to achieve 10 mortgages. If they converted 1 in 2 referrals that means they would need 20 referrals over the year of their memberships or around 2 referrals a month. Of course any one referral can lead to further referrals from the business they have been referred to, so it may well be that receiving well under the 20 referrals in this example via BRX could result in business totalling many times the original target.



- 5 By now you can see where we are going with this. If you sit down at the beginning of your membership and work out what you REALLY want it is so much easier then to map out how you are going to get there. Your Regional Partner can help you go through this process at the start of your membership and can also help you to keep an eye on it throughout the course of the year. This way once you and your Regional Partner know in advance what you want then there is a far better chance of achieving it through your BRX membership.

Make no mistake some BRX members who apply this technique at the beginning of their memberships go on to get good quality and consistent referrals on an ongoing basis and indeed actually receive exactly what they need to make their membership worthwhile.

1 2 1s

One to One networking with your colleagues in your groups and indeed with members in other groups across the network is an important part of the process to help maximise your chance of success as a member of BRX. Imagine that every member in your group is a potential champion and unpaid sales person for your business. It's up to you to inspire them and educate them about your business to help them to help you get the referrals you are seeking.

You should be aiming to find out as much as you can about your colleagues business and indeed using 1 2 1 meetings to help educate them further about your business. If every member takes this approach of learning more about their colleagues' business then you can see how easily it is to raise everyone's awareness of what each of you are doing and more importantly what each of you are looking for.

- 1 Aim to have 1 2 1 meetings with every other member in your group. You might find that some members are initially reluctant to have a 1 2 1 until they get to know you better but this is perfectly fine. Aim to approach them at a later time. But always have the maximum number of 1 2 1 in mind at all times.
- 2 When having a 1 2 1 go with the intention of finding out about your colleagues' business. In turn they will want to find out about your business. So listen out for what it is they are looking for.
- 3 Plan ahead for your 1 2 1 so when you get the opportunity to talk about your business you have a good idea about what you are going to say and also have a clear idea of how they can help you.

NEVER sell in a networking environment. Always seek to build relationships trust and understanding in each others business and from this referrals will come.

