

BNI®

SUCCESSNET

- **A double-gold perspective**

Dame Kelly Holmes on achieving and sharing success

- **Testimonials = instant referral multipliers**

Find out why and how!

- **Healthy and wealthy**

How to achieve that winning combination



Chapters and Champions: welcome to your Winter 2010 *SuccessNet*



In this success-packed edition, we're delighted to feature our interview with the 'Queen of British Athletics', Dame Kelly Holmes. We know that Dame Kelly's experience and insight into topics such as achieving your goals, mentoring and public speaking will be valuable to BNI members everywhere. If you have any contacts with other respected, high-profile individuals who might be interested in talking to *SuccessNet*, please get in touch with us at National Office.

As the winter days shorten, so your new Leadership Teams will be settling into their roles and brightening at least one morning or lunchtime each week with positive, productive and upbeat chapter meetings! Be sure to support your new Teams and together you'll see your businesses grow and grow. One terrific way of ensuring that the business energy continues throughout holiday periods is to run the BNI Game, so why not consider throwing yourselves into some Christmas and New Year fun and running a BNI Game in your chapter? Talk to your BNI Director for tips and advice on how to achieve excellent results that last.

There's a further opportunity to raise the bar with International Networking Week (February 7th – 11th). What does your chapter have planned? Look out for regional events and use the opportunity to raise your chapter's profile in the local community.

2010 has been another great year for BNI members in the UK and Ireland, with a record number of chapter launches in September and a total membership reaching nearly 15,000. We hope that you're making the most of your membership and enjoying the fruits of successful networking. The ideas and features in this edition of *SuccessNet* should give plenty of food for thought for new ways of maximising your returns from BNI.

Here's to a healthy and wealthy networking winter!

Charlie Lawson and Tim Cook - National Directors, BNI UK & Ireland

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06 Chapter and verse

Great ideas and valuable insights from chapters across the UK and Ireland

10 The greatest referral I ever had...



04 Lead interview

Double-gold Olympic champion Dame Kelly Holmes talks to *SuccessNet*



19 BNI around the world

12 Training

Power-packed testimonials

13 National Office news

14 Get in touch

BNI members speak to the nation!

16 Word of mouth

Be healthy AND wealthy

20 Stat attack



DAME

Dame Kelly Holmes is a golden name in British athletics. Despite significant leg injuries in 2003, her double gold at the Athens Olympics in 2004 secured her place in sporting history - and the nation's heart. Now, in addition to her work as President of Commonwealth Games England, Dame Kelly turns much of her attention to working with young people through her charity, the DKH Legacy Trust. Dame Kelly talks to *SuccessNet* about goals, guidance and getting ahead of the pack.

You have said that one of the most important keys to achieving your Olympic dream was setting specific goals. What advice would you give entrepreneurs about formulating their own personal business goals? I think it's important to find models and examples of people or companies who inspire you. Do some research into how they set up their businesses and then take the time to work out which elements suit you and your aims. Set timelines and write everything down: you never know when little nuggets you might have forgotten will be useful in achieving your goals.

'On Camp with Kelly' is your initiative to mentor young, middle-distance runners to help them fulfil their potential. What do you believe are the benefits of good mentors for business people starting out on their own? Given my business and charity activities, I've spent a lot of time this year learning about the business world. I think that the key to formulating clear goals is to ask lots of

questions. I'm interested that BNI has its own mentoring programme in place to help new members to hit the ground running: good mentors are invaluable. I've chosen people that I respect from all walks of business and industry and I've tried to soak up their knowledge as much as possible. I've found that while all of them have their own style or experience, this wealth of learning has helped me decide what I do and don't like.

Both within and beyond your charitable work, you have had to learn to speak effectively in public and you've carved yourself a niche as a very successful motivational speaker. What advice would you give BNI members about how to present their business effectively to others?

My first tip would be to know the core of your presentation inside out, so that your audience sees that you're speaking from real knowledge and experience. Remember that only you know what you have written down in your

KELLY HOLMES: GOLDEN RULES



Working with our team of elite sports performers, The Dame Kelly Holmes Legacy Trust inspires young people to find and fulfil their potential in sport or in life.

In these challenging times, the need to give young people belief and a vision to succeed is greater than ever. By delivering innovative projects and programmes, our inspirational sports performers help young people to participate, stay in and excel in sport, and help disadvantaged young people to find and believe in their own talents.

Find out more at www.dkhlegacytrust.org

Dame Kelly's Get on Track project involves elite athletes in mentoring young unemployed people.

presentation notes, so they won't know if you stray from your script! A glass of water at hand is always useful if your nerves make your mouth feel dry. Then you're ready to win the audience's interest right from the start. Grab attention with something interesting and different that showcases your unique selling point and always show that you are both motivated to grow and committed to success. Most of all, be yourself: let people see your own personality shine through. That way, you'll relax and enjoy your presentation more and so will your audience.

Since retiring from competitive athletics you have been building the 'Dame Kelly brand' as your own business. How important has networking been to you personally in this process?

It is very important for me to have the confidence to talk to many different people. Attending events, finding out what people do and then being quick thinking or creative can highlight leads that you would never have

thought possible. For example, while chatting with some businessmen while I was away on a trip abroad, I learned that their daughters were interested in running. The guys asked for an autograph card but I didn't have one to hand. I promised to send them one on my return to the UK and of course that's what I did. It felt good to follow this through and this little gesture has cemented a good relationship. It's likely that as our relationship develops I'll be able to help my new contacts and they will take an interest in and support my charity, the Dame Kelly Holmes Legacy Trust.

What is the most important referral that you ever received in terms of furthering your career, either in athletics or in your new business?

Being introduced by a very successful and well-respected interior designer to a licensing manager has opened up a whole new world for me. The referral is helping me to establish my own brand in the health, fitness and wellbeing industry.

CHAPTER AND VERSE

WHAT'S NEW AND HAPPENING IN CHAPTERS THROUGHOUT THE UK AND IRELAND



EVOLVE WITH BNI!

In a particularly reflective moment, Union Chapter (Berkhamsted) members were pondering the origins of business referral. They decided to recreate the first ever networking meeting – those early days of teamwork that led to the mighty meetings we know and love today!

The original concept for the special meeting came from Events Coordinator Gary Garner who actually floated his plan to Ivan Misner after meeting him at the London Members' Day in June. Dr Misner thought it an excellent idea and asked to be kept informed of Union's prehistoric progress!



For one morning meeting only, a table was reserved purely for suitably attired cavemen and cavewomen who shared the Ten Minute Presentation to present their businesses in Stone Age-style. For example, Mick Grimsdale (builder) extolled the construction virtues of flint. Signmaker Mark Talbott explained that paint on walls was fine but he was looking forward to the invention of writing and the wheel so he could expand his business!

The event was enjoyable and light-hearted, but Gary also used it to underline two important BNI concepts that have helped make Union Chapter a top chapter in its region. (Nearly half of its £1million business total has been passed in the last nine months.)

1. Humans have always worked most effectively in cooperative teams.
2. While human beings may have started out as hunters, today's BNIers know that farming is the most productive way of building successful business.

One visitor was so impressed that they applied for membership on the spot. The meeting was also publicised in the local press – ideal for attracting interest, visitors and new members. Furthermore, having inspired the BNI Founder from the start, the event has sent positive ripples across the Atlantic. Dr Misner comments, "I'm delighted to see such wonderful creativity in getting the *Givers Gain* message across. Union Chapter has taken 'Changing the Way the World Does Business' to a whole new level."

Bryan Wright - bryan@yellowyoyo.co.uk

A FLYING START

When Esher and Cobham Chapter launched in July 2010 at the Old Surbitonians Memorial Ground, it turned into a major business event!

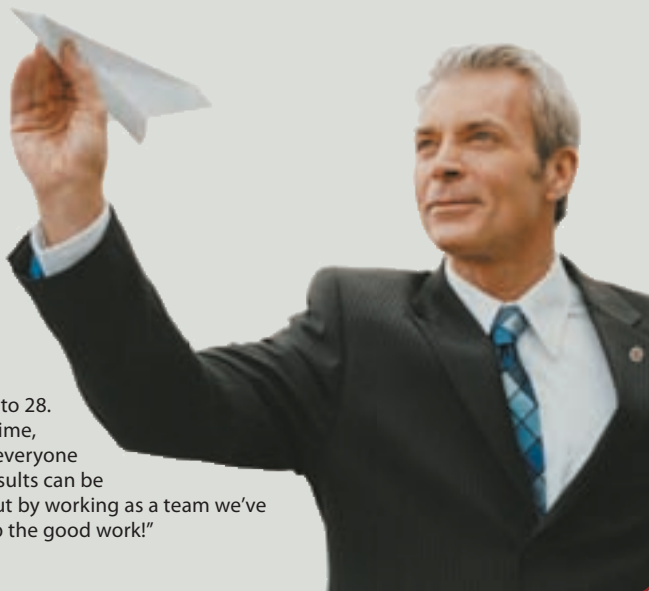
As well as inviting people along from local clubs, associations and other social networks, the core group members each wrote 50 launch party invitations which were sent with flyers in 'fat-folded' (ie folded neatly but not flattened, making a fatter, more intriguing package), hand-addressed envelopes. These guys were serious about getting visitors – and winning the prize for the most guests on the day!

Perhaps it wasn't so surprising then that people were queuing for some time at the door to get their prized seat. The Leadership Team even had to organise extra car park attendants to cope with the weight of traffic! In fact, an impressive total of 138 people attended the launch meeting, making this Surrey's largest ever BNI launch event. A magnificent 18 of these guests were invited by just one member – Michelle Ford, the new chapter's mortgage broker.

Visitors included the architect who had designed the venue and two magicians who seemed to appear from nowhere (of course).

A number of applicants were accepted for membership, bringing the new chapter total to 28. James McBrearty, Secretary Treasurer at the time, says, "The launch party taught us that when everyone in the chapter takes action together, great results can be achieved. The core chapter was only small, but by working as a team we've grown significantly and we intend to keep up the good work!"

James McBrearty - james@taxhelp.uk.com



SCOT POWER

As we all know from our initial training, BNI policies exist and develop for one reason only: because they are proven to help our members make more money from their membership. But do you know how that happens? How many of us have stopped to think about the mechanism that allows our guiding policies to progress?

The answer is that BNI's International Board of Advisers (IBOA) is regularly at work on our behalf. And most importantly of all, the IBOA is made up of excellent members who understand and demonstrate *Givers Gain* in action. There are currently around 100 Board members from around the world.

The work of the IBOA is largely done by teleconferencing to accommodate all members and their respective time zones. The most recent topic discussed was the revision to the BNI Guideline on Substitutes.

One of the latest nominations to the IBOA is Peter Major of Aberdeen Alpha Chapter. Executive Director Sid Grant says, "With all his BNI experience and insight as an eight-year member, Peter is an ideal nominee for this responsible role. He's an exceptional member with

lots of Leadership Team experience and he's a great example to his colleagues.

In eight years he's never once been absent or late! Peter refers around £50k in completed business each year and has brought a total of 64 visitors, 11 of whom have become members. His attitude is always positive and he's unfailingly cheerful and pleasant with everyone."

Sid adds, "Peter will only commit to doing anything if he is sure that he can give it 100% and I'm delighted that he has agreed to go for this exciting opportunity. I'm also pleased to report that BNI HQ in California has now confirmed his nomination."

Peter Major - pmajor@capital-solutions.co.uk

If you'd like to know about your IBOA representative, please contact your local BNI Executive Director.

AN AWARD-WINNING STRATEGY

Karen Walters of Star Virtual Office has a new strategy that is helping to spread the word about her business, her chapter (Welland, Market Harborough) and BNI in general.

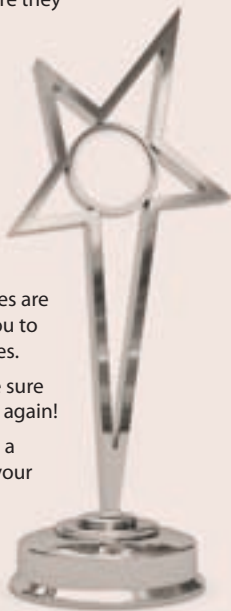
The strategy's quite straightforward: her company enters awards schemes, some locally and some that expose it to the wider business community. This has brought a stack of benefits: Karen and her team have not only reached several finals and won a prestigious award, they have also been interviewed on radio, enjoyed press coverage and generated business from sources that may otherwise have been unreachable.

The initiative has both raised Star's profile and highlighted to the business community that over 70% of the company's new business comes from BNI referrals. It's a great way of attracting visitors who want to share in the success and business generated by chapters nationwide.

Star tips (or How to make the most of award opportunities)

1. Read the rules and stick to them. Don't get disqualified before judging begins.
2. Search Google for tips – there's plenty of free help out there.
3. When preparing a written entry, don't be afraid to blow your own trumpet – make sure they know how good you really are!
4. Check and double-check your grammar and spelling. Spell checks are VERY unreliable! If in doubt, get someone to help you write up your entry – and don't underestimate the time it takes to complete it properly.
5. Stick to awards run or sponsored by reputable organisations. Some award schemes are actually scams that simply want you to attend expensive award ceremonies.
6. If you win or reach the finals, make sure you tell people. Blow that trumpet again!
7. Don't give up: winning an award is a great morale booster for you and your colleagues.

Karen Walters -
karen@starvirtualoffice.co.uk



MAKING THE LINK

With more than 60 million members, LinkedIn is becoming a popular communication hub for business professionals.

At Warrington's Viking Chapter, Pam Case and Mark Simpson, both keen LinkedIn users, recently gave two ten Minute Presentations to their Viking colleagues on the benefits of the site and, in particular, how to use it to grow their chapter and generate referrals.

Pam (of the PC Support Group) and Mark (of digital agency Eden Light) covered a variety of topics such as optimising your profile, searching for contacts, posting updates, joining groups and starting discussions. They demonstrated how to connect with LIONs (don't worry, not fierce ones – just LinkedIn Open Networkers) and how to integrate LinkedIn apps such as 'Events' and 'Huddle Workspace' as well as the latest iPhone app which instantly connects you with people you meet at networking events.

They also explained how the site helps you to:

- find out who your contacts know, so you can generate new referrals for fellow chapter members
- find and invite new visitors
- increase your visibility, credibility and profitability (VCP).

Following the training, the BNI Viking LinkedIn group now encompasses 98% of the Viking members. Given all the extra networking opportunities they've discovered, it's perhaps not surprising that Viking Chapter has recently hit the £1 million mark for referrals passed in the last 12 months – an excellent achievement.

Mark and Pam have already been invited to present their LinkedIn sessions to other chapters in the area who are keen to grow their social online networks – and their BNI returns.

Mark Simpson - mark.simpson@edenlight.co.uk



BLAZING A TRAIL

The Leadership Team at Blaze Chapter (Hitchin) was keen to find a new way of raising the chapter's profile amongst the local business community. They'd held Visitor Days before and knew that these could work well in attracting new members, but they also knew that those who may be unable to attend early morning meetings might still be a rich source of new business.



A daytime 'trade show' therefore seemed like a suitable scenario. If Blaze Chapter could convey the members' professionalism and *Givers Gain* ethos and provide a forum for building new relationships with the local community, they felt sure that everyone would win. Each chapter member was asked to bring (not just invite – BRING!) a minimum of 10 guests to the show. They could be businesses large and small, friends, family members – indeed anyone with an interest in working with reliable, high quality suppliers.

The event was held in a marquee in the grounds of Hitchin Priory where Blaze meetings normally take place. With around 230 guests in attendance, the atmosphere in the marquee was electric! As well as members' stands the show featured three excellent speakers. There was

also a draw for a 42" plasma TV prize.

John McNelliey, Chapter Director at the time, adds that Blaze Chapter is delighted with the outcome of this successful event. He says, "In terms of the trade show's key purpose, the members are now noting on their Thank You For The Business slips all business which stems from the show. So far, that amount exceeds £50,000 but it's rising all the time. Several delegates also visited our regular meetings and to date at least one has joined. Next time, we'd strengthen the chapter's own stand and try harder to grow the group, but we're happy that we've really opened up our businesses to a whole new set of potential clients who now know us and (we hope) like what they saw!"

John McNelliey - JohnM@mac.gb.com

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

As members of four West Yorkshire chapters, Hemingway Tailors and The Hemingway Club have developed The Personal Principle which they apply to all aspects of their membership.

The Personal Principle

Your contacts + open, active listening = excellent referrals

Using the Principle means that you harness all your power to gather information about someone else in order to help their business. 1-1s are the perfect starting point, but it doesn't stop there...

Armed with The Personal Principle, you'll go the extra mile to learn and understand more. The richer your information about not only who a person is and what they do but how they think and work, the more likely you are to identify what makes the best referrals for them.

For example, in Leeds Royale Chapter, Toby Luper of Hemingway Tailors mentioned to Karina Navarro-Moreno-Spittle of KNM Events that he loved a specific hotel in New York. Karina therefore introduced him to Alex Vince who had previously run luxury hotels in New York. Karina knew them both well enough to see potential for their future business together. In fact, Alex and Toby later developed The Hemingway Club (a luxury lifestyle management company) together. Karina had used in-depth, insightful information to make a perfect referral.

Samantha McGawley - samantha.mcgawley@thehemingwayclub.com

The Hemingway team suggest five tips for finding better referrals with the Personal Principle:

1. Never switch off. Every scenario has potential for getting to know your BNI members better.
2. Take a small notebook and pen and make notes on the people you meet up with so you can remember little facts at a later date.
3. Try and remember something specific about each person you meet. They'll be impressed when you remember it next time!
4. Arrange more 1-1s. Use social BNI situations to find out more about other members.
5. Every introduction is an opportunity: don't think that because you can't see a monetary outcome, a relationship won't flourish into something spectacular.

From: Visitor

To: Jo Smedley

Referral: Murder mystery nights at Barceló Hotels & Resorts

Value: £50,000 and growing

Making a killing

Jo Smedley of Grimsby's Business Exchange Chapter occupies an unusual category: Murder Mystery Games. She writes and retails custom murder mystery dinner parties for groups of all sizes. Jo's story goes to prove that BNI networking has the power to generate dream referrals however unusual the business.

As a one-year member, Jo recalled that BNI Director Jeremy Bass had stressed the importance of 1-1s at her Member Success Training. In particular, he'd suggested that you don't restrict your 1-1s to BNI members as understanding people's businesses and networks is always valuable. He recommended that visitors, among others, would be ideal 1-1 partners.

When a recent visitor at Business Exchange explained that she was looking for people to buy into her spa evenings, Jo offered to meet up with her for a 1-1 as she had some good local connections which the visitor might find useful.

After their meeting, the visitor was so impressed with Jo's *Givers Gain* attitude and business enthusiasm that she offered to help her in return. It turned out that she was a good friend of the Sales Manager at Barceló Hotels & Resorts and having learned to trust Jo she was happy to put her in touch with this major player.

In fact, the visitor not only talked to her contact, she also arranged a meeting with her and drove Jo to the Barceló Hinckley Island Hotel, Leicester to introduce her in person. The Sales Manager and Events Manager were enthusiastic and agreed to transfer the account with the hotel's existing supplier as soon as their contract allowed.

"This referral is beyond my wildest dreams," says Jo. "Barceló now want my mystery nights in all 21 of their hotels across the UK. Last year I had just three hotel bookings, but this wonderful visitor referral means I could easily have more than 70 this year! I'm now looking to take on another member of staff and hire actors from across the UK. One quality visitor's referral has changed everything for me.

Always value your visitors: you never know just who they might know!"

Jo Smedley - jo@red-herring-games.co.uk

The greatest referral I ever had...

Windows of opportunity

Andy Hennessy (Regional Sales Manager of Senator Windows in Limerick) heard on the grapevine that a local school, Crescent College Comprehensive, had received funding to replace all of its windows.

Andy decided to call on the help of his substantial 'sales team' at Treaty BNI. In his next 60 seconds, he asked his colleagues to improve his chances in the tender process with a referral into the school.

Andy's fellow member David Fitzgerald of the Woodlands House Hotel was listening hard to the presentation. Unbeknown to Andy, David knew one of the teachers well both as a friend and as a colleague on another school's Parents' Council. David therefore had good contacts within the staff team and he approached one of them to discuss how he might help both the school and his trusted colleague with a personal recommendation. When the tender shortlist was published Andy's bid was there in the running, and with David's warm praise in his favour it's no surprise that Senator soon clinched the contract.

Before long, the school had the new windows it needed and Andy was delighted to fill in a slip that thanked David for a massive €236,000 of business.

What's the top lesson from this fantastic referral? David suggests, "Asking for an introduction into that specific school really paid dividends. Also, be sure to consider all of the groups you're in contact with when generating referrals for your BNI colleagues. Think beyond your work and family circles, as referrals can come from anywhere – schools, associations and groups like Lions or WI, gyms and sports clubs, churches... the list is endless. In any of these communities there could be dream referrals just waiting to happen!"

David Fitzgerald - dfitzgerald@woodlands-hotel.ie

Got a 'great referral' story? It might be a referral that paved the way for a major contract, or perhaps a story that could help other members find top referrals in places they'd never considered... Here are three referral stories that recently put a smile on the faces of givers, receivers and their fellow members too.

From: Mike Reeder

To: Mark Ellis

Referral: Entertainment services at Doncaster Racecourse

Value: £30,000

On the nose

Mark Ellis had been running Vibe Music, his high-end professional music agency, for about a year when he was invited to a Doncaster Dynamite BNI meeting by a good friend, James Tomlinson. Mark wanted to learn more about networking and see if it really worked. Soon after he arrived, James introduced him to fellow member Mike Reeder of Doncaster Racecourse and their conversations about work highlighted Mike's busy schedule as he prepared for September's major, four-day St Leger event.

Mark enjoyed the meeting and the Givers Gain ethos and, feeling sure that membership would be ideal for his business, he joined the chapter. Soon afterwards, he received an email from the Racecourse Director's PA, inviting him to make a formal tender for all the entertainment services at the St Leger! With great excitement, Mark arranged an initial meeting to discuss times, venues and musical styles. Within a week he had put together a plan and obtained quotes from excellent audio companies. He knew that with more than 60,000 visitors over the four days of the festival, sound quality had to be outstanding.

To his delight, Vibe Music won the contract which was worth around £30,000. He also needed to call on the services of the chapter's insurance broker, solicitor and accountant to help with issues such as public liability cover and a crash course in VAT!

Across six separate locations on Doncaster Racecourse, this year's St Leger crowds subsequently enjoyed quality entertainment with 26 bands, 131 musicians and lots of dancing. Mike Reeder comments, "Mark had quickly established a reputation in BNI for quality and attention to detail, and giving him the chance to take on this huge task was therefore easy. The Racecourse is receiving nothing but praise for the music and entertainment that Mark arranged." He adds, "Through BNI, a new business took on a task previously handled by much larger agencies simply by building great relationships and a sound reputation."

Since the St Leger, Mark has received further referrals from Racecourse guests which will build his business still further.

Mark Ellis - info@vibemusic.co.uk

From: David Fitzgerald

To: Andy Hennessy

Referral: Window replacement throughout a comprehensive school

Value: €236,000





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The power of testimonials

The testimonial not only makes people feel good. It can also pack a powerful and profitable punch. Guy Griffiths, Executive Director for BNI South Wales, explains what more testimonials could do for you and your chapter.

Next year I will row one of the world's major oceans on behalf of the BNI-Misner Foundation. We are raising money for Touch Trust, a charity in the Wales Millennium Centre which helps children with complex needs, including autism. To raise my substantial target sum, I wanted to produce a 'Million Dollar Homepage' concept website on which individuals and companies worldwide could promote themselves and their companies. All I had to do was create the site and develop a workable social media strategy...

How did I find the right people to help?

At Cardiff BNI meetings, I'd met Anton Faulconbridge, a cutting edge web designer from Rant Media (www.rantmedia.com) and Austin Walters, a social media strategist (www.triplefishy.co.uk). What I heard in the testimonials given during their meetings had convinced me that these two were leaders in their fields, with the resources and skills to deliver on this project.

Why do testimonials work?

The testimonials I heard were objective, unbiased recommendations written in the first person. They were powerful because they gave me the direct experience of a customer. A business can easily sing its own praises, but why should a customer endorse a business unless they are genuinely pleased with them?

Other business people who share my standards and whose opinion I value also endorsed the two suppliers.

That gave me the reassurance I needed to approach them.

The message is easy, then. Be specific. Mention only one business per testimonial. Be specific about what you bought. Be specific about the benefit you enjoyed such as the money saved, the pain cured or the brownie points earned with your wife.

The final word goes to Dr Misner: testimonials are "an instant referral multiplier discovered by accident."

Who can you recommend this week?

Guy Griffiths - guy.griffiths@bni-southwales.com

The story of testimonials in BNI

Ivan Misner tells how testimonials first came about at BNI meetings. Without anyone to vouch for his work, a chiropractor in the very first chapter was receiving no referrals. On Ivan's advice, he offered a free consultation and tour of his clinic to any of the members who wanted to try out a treatment.

The following week, the only member who took up the offer wanted to tell the other members about his experience. The persistent back pain he had endured for some time had disappeared and he was over the moon! Not surprisingly, more referrals swiftly followed and testimonials became a regular feature of BNI meetings across the world.

The ingredients of a powerful testimonial

Ivan Misner advises that certain key ingredients give testimonials more punch. These are:

- specifics
- specifics
- specifics.

New opportunities for you and your chapter

BNI® BNI_National

twitter



Stay in touch with BNI on Twitter

We'll be keeping you up to speed with the latest news, top training tips, referral generation ideas and inspiration, all designed to help you get the most out of your BNI membership. All you'll need to do is follow BNI_National.

If your chapter already has a Twitter account then follow BNI_National and use your account to get in touch. Let us know about the good things that are happening in your chapter, share great success stories, the number of referrals you passed or the number one category that you're looking to fill and we'll share the news with the rest of the BNI community online and our many non-BNI followers.

Extended Payment Plan

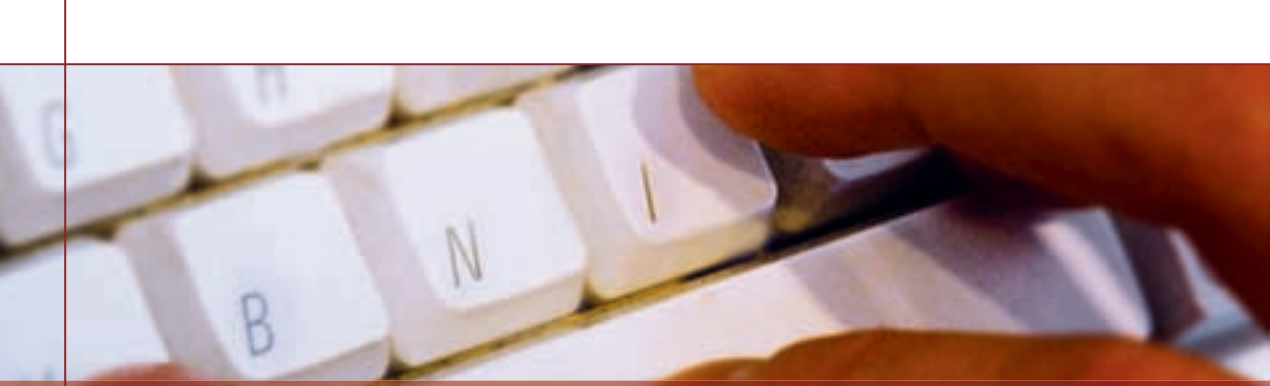
We understand that for some businesses, cash flow can prove to be a stumbling block when deciding how to invest in your business. With this in mind and based on feedback from our members, we are pleased to announce that during 2010 we've successfully trialled a payment scheme which allows you to spread the payments on your membership fees. You can still pay by credit card or cheque, but this alternative gives you greater flexibility than before. This scheme will be rolled out in the UK in 2011. Your BNI Director will be able to provide you with full details of the scheme at that time.



BNI podcast: bite-sized advice from referral experts

Want up-to-the-minute ideas and guidance from the world's finest networkers? The BNI Podcast site at www.bnipodcast.com not only allows you to listen in to, read or download Dr Ivan Misner's latest podcasts, but the new archive download feature means you can access any podcasts you choose from his extensive collection, absolutely FREE!

What's more, you can add to the discussion by leaving your own comments on how the issues affect you or your chapter. Leadership Teams will find a wealth of information to support their roles, Education Coordinators can use the archive to plan their next presentation, and every single member can learn about and comment on a host of valuable topics from networking strategies to referral quality and power teams to managing your competitors. There's a treasure chest of ideas, information and interactivity to be enjoyed: make the most of this valuable tool and your membership and log on today!



GET IN TOUCH

Here's your chance to share ideas, views and information with the BNI community across the UK and Ireland. Simply send a letter or email to the *SuccessNet* office and we'll publish a selection in every edition.

You can say what you think: constructive criticism is just as valuable as a well-founded compliment. Or perhaps you have a suggestion that's worked for you or your chapter – something that could work for other members too?

What's more, there's an iPod shuffle for the Star Letter, so let's get those emails and letters flowing.

Email: successnet@jmhcopy.co.uk **Post:** *SuccessNet*, BNI House, Church Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1BS

■ I've been helping people with personal debt problems since 2002, and last year I took the plunge and set up my own business, Finance Solution Centre.

Running a business has been particularly challenging however, because from the age of six I suffered with a stammer. It made it hard to communicate with potential clients and affected my self-confidence because I felt I wasn't taken seriously. However, 12 months on, I've helped over 100 families with their debt problems and, amazingly, I'm about to embark on a second career in public speaking!

How is this possible? Well, it wouldn't have happened without BNI. When I was invited along to a BNI meeting as a new business, I soon realised that it would be a huge test for me. It's hard for anyone to stand up and promote their business in front of 30 strangers, but my stammer made the task so much harder. However, presenting my 60 seconds week after week has given me more confidence in my message and the wonderful support of my fellow members has brought me out of my shell.

In fact it's worked so well, I'm now preparing to launch a new chapter on Thursdays at the North Stafford Hotel in Stoke. It goes without saying that I'm keen to help anyone out there who wants to build their self-confidence and their business at the same time, and this seems the perfect way to achieve that!

Sabina Javid

Network Chapter, Stoke-on-Trent

■ I recently attended the fantastic Members' Day at London's Hilton Metropole where Dr Ivan Misner gave a 25th Anniversary Presentation. Dr Misner is an engaging teacher and knows how to keep his audience laughing while they learn!

For those who didn't manage to get to one of this series of special events (which also took place in Dublin, Glasgow and Amsterdam), here are some of the key points that stay with me and, I really believe, will help me become more successful both in business and in BNI.

The nub of Dr Misner's argument was that developing successful business relationships requires both the right mindset and skillset. Life – and most certainly BNI! – offer a myriad of opportunities that we can either embrace or ignore. It's essential both to have a clear vision of where you're heading in your life and your business and to stay true to your mission. Achieving your vision depends as much on your attitude towards those opportunities as on your ability to meet, speak and connect with other business professionals.

Most of all, I now understand that as a BNI member I have constant opportunities to learn, understand and develop the right skills and attitudes. My ability to create good business relationships with others won't happen overnight. My attitude to the process is everything.

Joanne Jarrett

Olympian Chapter, London

■ After joining BNI in May 2010, there was one statistic in the Membership Coordinator's report that stood out for me: the annualised 'Thank You For The Business' (TYFTB) total. (I can't help it. I'm an accountant.) I started to wonder whether the recorded business figure should actually be higher. Was every member accurately recording all the business from those hard earned referrals?

Our Education Coordinator asked me to present the question to the chapter and this is the gist of what I said. Imagine that each referral you receive is a seed. When the seed grows and flowers, that's the cash we record on a TYFTB slip. But it doesn't stop there...

The flower sets seed and those seeds flower too... in other words, new referrals arise from old ones. The next summer, the plants flower again – a whole field of flowers (or repeat business) all from the one original seed!

Now, you wouldn't just admire the flowers growing from the first seed, would you? So why would anyone only look at the money generated only from the ORIGINAL referral?

My point is that if we ensured that all money from 'referrals from referrals' and repeat business was recorded, our REAL business total would be far higher.

To gain a true picture of your BNI membership value, you need to make sure you record every bit of income for which BNI is the original source. Record it for your own purposes, so you know how much your own membership is worth to you, and record it in your chapter's TYFTB box, to show the true success of your group. If every member did this we would have an accurate (and, I suggest, pretty impressive!) statement of the actual cash benefit of *Givers Gain* and our BNI membership. Enough to make an accountant – and every BNI member – very happy.

David Beaumont
Wakefield Wealthbuilders

■ It's not always the longstanding members that make the greatest impact in a BNI chapter. Some new members really do stand out from the crowd: they understand what BNI and *Givers Gain* is all about and make positive use of their membership right from the start.

At Indigo (Wirral), we have a relatively new member who has quickly made a huge impression on his fellow members. Soon after he joined us, Dave Sergison of Wirral Wetrooms headed off to Florida for a three-week holiday. Did he arrange subs to cover his absences? Of course. But this member doesn't stop at fulfilling expectations – he goes way beyond them. It turned out that Dave had prepared a total of 21 referrals and six written testimonials so that we wouldn't miss his contributions while he was away. Awesome!

Do you think Dave's likely to wait long for great referrals to roll his way? No way: with commitment like that his credibility is already terrific.

We reckon this is an example from which we can all learn a great deal!

Geoff Jones
Indigo Chapter, Wirral

STAR LETTER

■ Graham Jenkinson made an interesting suggestion in the Summer 2010 edition of *SuccessNet*. He proposed the introduction of a BNI Passport that would introduce you to others when travelling in the UK or abroad. However, I'd suggest that we already have one that we should be wearing all the time – the BNI pin badge. It's a visible, hard-working passport that will open up opportunities wherever you are in the world.

For example, members of my own chapter have been able to bring visitors to our meeting based on a conversation that began with, "What's that badge you're wearing?"

One member in our area visited a company to bid for a major contract. The MD of the company they were approaching saw the BNI pin and said, "You're a member of BNI? You've got the job." The MD didn't need to compare the quote or learn more about the company: he trusted the BNI brand and those it represents.

So here's my advice. Wear your pin badge and people will ask you about it. (Leave it at home and you can be sure nobody will ask!)



Ian Trembith
Parkside Chapter, Derbyshire

You too could be the writer of a Star Letter and win a cool iPod Shuffle.



Word of mouth

Every edition of *SuccessNet* now features a topical article written by a member. Each Word of mouth article aims to share the great reserves of knowledge and good practice that abound in our organisation.

Healthy and Wealthy



This edition's Word of mouth feature comes from the Health and Wellness Power Team at Belfast's Erimus Chapter, who argue that health and wealth go hand in hand.

Business coach Anne McAllister, of Wake Up Be Inspired Ltd, Joe Boyle of Boyle Hypnotherapy and Bodytalk therapist Gillian Higginson of Mauri Therapies have put their heads together and come up with five Top Tips for your healthier, wealthier future.

They say that "Your health is your wealth"... and they would be right! In order to build financial wealth and enjoy it you must look after your physical and emotional health as well.

Who wants to be an unhappy millionaire? As a Health and Wellness Power Team, it's our mission to help create healthy, happy millionaires. Try these tips to make a great start!

1. Learn to manage your emotional state.

If you're feeling stressed, overwhelmed or negative in any way, your capacity for decision making and communication with others will suffer. Learn to recognise your trigger points and take action to eliminate or reduce them. A few moments of deep, steady breathing will help. Another very effective technique involves attaching a strong, empowering meaning to situations and events which trigger your emotions. For example, if you're angry or disappointed that you lost a sale, remind yourself that rejection isn't personal and take action to create the next sale. Focus on a successful outcome and handle whatever happens coolly, creatively and positively. Then see your blood pressure drop and your productivity soar!

2. Do one thing every day that makes you feel good.

This doesn't have to be time-consuming or costly. It could be as simple as taking a 10-minute walk outdoors or having a relaxing bath at the end of a day. Repeat your feel-good relaxer every day for 30 days and it will become a good habit: you'll start to take better care of yourself than ever before.

3. Celebrate every success.

This is a truly important tip because it's human nature to concentrate too often on what's not going well or needs to be improved. By acknowledging and focusing on every success you begin to build a more positive picture of you and your business. And you know what they say... "Success breeds success!"

4. Take a therapeutic treatment once each month.

Make a habit of doing something once a month which involves a professional therapist who will nurture your body and mind. It could be massage, a spa treatment, reflexology or a body talk session. Think of this as a routine service for your engine, your body. We all know that our car needs regular servicing to keep it running smoothly. Well, so does your body – and it's a little too late if you only seek help when your 'engine' breaks down.

5. Take a break.

Make sure you have some time every week when you are not working: be clear in your mind that this is rest or downtime. Switch off from work and go and do something relaxing, stimulating or fun instead. You need this downtime to allow your body and mind to refresh. What's more, in the long run it will make you much more productive.

So let's get started! We hope you find these tips thought-provoking and, most of all, valuable: whatever your thoughts, drop SuccessNet a line and let everyone share them.

Anne McAllister - anne.mcallister@yahoo.com

We're mapping the BNI news around the UK & Ireland!

Want to share your news?
Let *SuccessNet* know
and we'll put the top
stories on the map!

After seven years of seeing her husband Robert head off early in the morning to his **BNI Iomart** (Glasgow) chapter, Dianne McGroary started her own new business and knew exactly how to safeguard its future: **as BNI members, husband and wife have both transformed their businesses.**

Realising they needed a chapter-wide boost, **Egbert Chapter** (Middlesbrough) **went back to the rule book**, tightened up their practice and promptly **shot up the Traffic Light tables by 25 points in one month.**

Hinckley BNI organised a donation-based car wash service and gave the money raised to a local nursery for children with disabilities. By ensuring that the local press were involved, they were able both to publicise the nursery fundraising and raise the profile of the chapter.

High-achieving **Cork Chapter** has over 40 great members but two are particular stars. Over the last three years, Jack Cahill and Sean Ware **have given their chapter colleagues over €1million in business!**

BNI Business Team Chapter (Nottingham) decided to take their team bonding to a new level and **participated in the Nottinghamshire RNIB's annual Dragon Boat Race.** They raised a good sum for the charity and now feel they all know and understand each other for wetter, for worse...

Four Shropshire chapters (Pengwern, Thomas Telford and Severn Enterprise from Telford and the newly launched Three Fishes from Newport) **met up for a mega-meeting in September.** The members offered each other ideas and support as well as exchanging networks and business.

Graphic designer Paul Ruane (**Kingdom Chapter, Tralee**) is grateful to his extensive BNI support network whose votes **helped him win Cadbury Ireland's national competition** to design a wrapper for their Limited Edition Fairtrade chocolate bar. Well done, Paul!

Accountant Mark Fordham, a member of **Chariots Chapter in St Albans** since December 2003, has recently **passed his 1000th referral!** His colleagues say he's the ultimate 'Giver'.

After starting the year with around 18 members, **Fortune Chapter** (Mill Hill) tightened up on practice, smartened up their image and are now rocketing skywards **with 47 members and £1.45million in TYFTB slips!**

Giving, gaining and The Beautiful Game: meet BNI South Africa!

The diverse Republic of South Africa sits at the continent's southernmost tip, where the Atlantic and Indian oceans meet. Of its 11 official languages, Zulu, Xhosa and Afrikaans are the most commonly spoken. English is recognised as the language of business, politics and the media, but ranks only fifth for use at home.

Since South Africa embraced democracy in 1994, the country has been working hard to develop its economic infrastructure and markets. It is now one of Africa's most advanced and productive economies and following its very successful hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, this vast nation's reputation and confidence are growing ever stronger.

BNI is part of South Africa's economic transformation. Since 1998, 75 chapters have established a firm foothold, bringing business owners together to cooperate and thrive. Chapters are based in eight cities as well as a number of isolated but developing regions and distances between them can be vast.

The National Office team believes that the country's widespread business centres make their annual International Conferences particularly important as they provide ideal opportunities for exchanging ideas, support and of course, business! By inviting international speakers and developing home-grown talent, the team aims to deliver vibrant, inspiring and valuable conferences for members and BNI Directors alike.

At this year's event, held in East London (which lies on the south-eastern coast between Durban and Port Elizabeth), host Butch Coetzee aimed to maximise the Conference's training value for members with 'dance card' presentations. Trainers were assigned to individual desks and each delivered a short training topic to the delegates around them. At the blast of a vuvuzela, the delegates would move to a different training post to receive another presentation of information and ideas. Butch reflected, "The members appreciated the greater intimacy and variety of the small groups as they could ask questions, get to know each other better and learn at the same time." VIP speaker Dr Ivan Misner was impressed too, and was spotted snapping photos so that he could share the idea with members worldwide!

The World Cup has brought excellent business to BNI members across South Africa. One valuable World Cup referral came from Mandy Morck of Durban's BNI Crest. Her client, a large shopping centre, wanted to construct a mini football field for children's entertainment and promotional activities throughout the tournament. Mandy recommended her BNI colleague Gregg Clarke of SkyeScapes, who won the contract to construct and install the mini football facility which provided an entertaining and eye-catching focal point for the centre.

We've not yet heard of any BNI vuvuzela makers...!

**Want to talk business with BNI South Africa?
Contact Solveig McCormick - solveig@bni.co.za**

Quick facts

The first BNI South Africa chapter launched **12 years ago**.

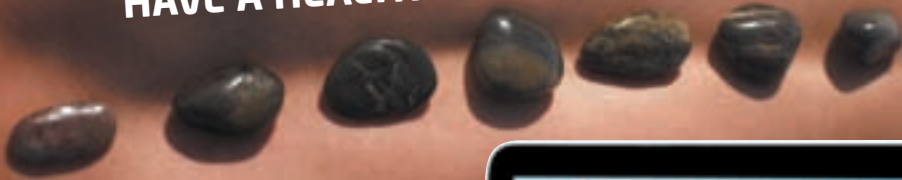
There are now **75 chapters** and a total of **1426 members**.

**4,037 members
in the UK and
Ireland have
been in BNI for
at least 3 years**



**There are 16 UK
members called Guy,
and just 1 in Ireland!**

**492 CHAPTERS IN THE UK & IRELAND
HAVE A HEALTH AND WELLNESS MEMBER**



**There are 47 members in each of
the UK and Ireland's largest*
3 chapters, Business 4 Business
(Redbridge), Fortune (Mill Hill)
and Nexus (Glasgow).**

* as at October 1st 2010

