

BNI®

SuccessNet

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EDUCATION *and* INFORMATION BULLETIN *for* BNI MEMBERS



BY ROYAL appointment

BNI Member gets on his bike to success

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LAWSONS' LORE

Welcome to the second issue of your new-look SuccessNet. We hope you like the re-designed format of your quarterly newsletter, and find it even better - and easier - to read.

SuccessNet has evolved over the years but, if the newsletter is to be valued as an information and educational resource for members, it must meet your needs and expectations.

For this reason, we hope you will take a few minutes to complete the short questionnaire about SuccessNet, which you will find in this issue. We want to know what you like (or dislike) about its content and presentation, whether there are particular topics you would hope to see featured in the newsletter and what other improvements you think we can make. Please help us to make SuccessNet a 'good read' – and an effective means of communication.

Meanwhile, in a few weeks time, we welcome back to the UK our Founder and CEO, Dr Ivan Misner, who is principal guest and keynote speaker at the London Members' Day.

With our rapid growth into a worldwide organisation, Dr Misner has to share his time and expertise ever more carefully around the globe, so it is hardly surprising that the last major event he addressed in the UK was over three years ago. Consequently, our Members' Day at the QEII Conference Centre in Westminster will be an unmissable occasion.

Despite it being the largest gathering of members in BNI's history, it will still be over-subscribed so, if you want to be among the 750 delegates to benefit from this special day, you need to act quickly using the application form contained in this SuccessNet. Tickets will be allocated strictly on a first-come, first-served basis – so good luck! ●

BNI HELPS

DAVID PROJECT ROYAL IMAGE

When Clerkenwell Chapter's David Clement-Horton received a message to call HRH Princess Michael of Kent, he thought someone was winding him up. His booming projector hire business, AV2Hire.Com, might have brought him into regular contact with the rich and powerful, but...royalty?

However, a call to the Princess's personal secretary confirmed that Her Royal Highness was indeed looking to use David's services – and that he'd received the royal request as a result of a referral given to Kensington Palace

by one of his chapter colleagues, Gary Weekes of Mark Turnbull & Associates Photography.

"It never ceases to amaze me just how diverse are the people in each other's networking circles, but I never thought it would include royalty," said David. "It shows how well-connected BNI members can be."

David arrived at the Palace on one of his company's distinctive seven-foot long bright yellow cargo bicycles and spent an hour with the Princess, setting up a large screen in her private dining room and showing her how to use a projector.

While this was his first royal engagement, AV2Hire.Com's colourful bicycles are a common sight around some of London's most famous addresses. David has twice ridden through the gates of Downing Street to deliver equipment for Tony and Cherie Blair, and become a frequent visitor to The Houses of Parliament.

He's now looking for more referrals into the Royal Household in the hope of obtaining a Royal Warrant to display on his bicycle! ●

You can contact David on 0845 123 5654

BY ROYAL APPOINTMENT? David Clement-Horton arrives at another prestigious London address to deliver AV projection equipment. Photograph courtesy of Mark Turnbull & Associates Photography on 020 7729 8684.



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It will be the biggest Members' Day ever held, the most high-octane networking event of the year and, for the fortunate 750 who get their applications in first, it will offer a unique chance to gain substantial new business.

London to host BNI's BIGGEST networking event

Founder & CEO heads unique Members' Day

The London Members' Day 2005 takes place on Friday, 24th June at Westminster's prestigious Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, when BNI's Founder and CEO Dr Ivan Misner heads up a day of dynamic presentations, learning workshops and business networking.

It will provide the first opportunity in over three years for our members to hear and talk to Dr Misner who, as one of the world's leading authorities on word-of-mouth marketing, is now in huge demand from major corporations as an author, networking guru and dynamic public speaker.

He tops an impressive bill of expert BNI directors whose workshops and training sessions will convey the latest

knowledge and techniques for maximising members' business opportunities – expertise that participants can immediately use to network with hundreds of colleagues.

National Director Gillian Lawson said: "We have staged some impressive Members' Days in recent years at which delegates have always made valuable contacts and often picked up major business, but this one will set new worldwide records for BNI. Not only will it be the largest-ever members' event, but the wealth of knowledge and experience on offer is unprecedented. It is going to be a high-powered day and we expect it to produce record levels of business for delegates."

She added: "We could probably have filled the venue with members from just London and the South-East, but since Dr Misner is rarely able to offer his expertise

over here, we felt we had to open up the event to all UK members on a strictly first-come, first-served basis."

The cost per member is just £37.50 (covering refreshments and buffet lunch) if booked before the end of April, after which any remaining tickets will cost £42.50. The event will be over-subscribed so reserve your place now, by using the application inserted in this SuccessNet. ●



BIGGEST NETWORKING EVENT! Westminster's prestigious Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre.

you and SuccessNet...

SuccessNet is published quarterly and distributed free of charge by BNI to all members. We are delighted that with each successive edition, we receive more and more of your emails, letters and calls, asking us to include your news or picture items in the newsletter – but please remember we don't have space for them all!

If you have an item you'd like us to consider for inclusion, please email it to: successnet@grosvenorassociates.com - making sure you include your phone numbers (office and mobile) and address as well. ●



SIX OF THE BEST! TV Presenter Garry Richardson (with microphone) gets the low-down from Collingtree Chapter founder members (from left to right): Philip Walding, Michael Markham, Alan Andrews, Mark Maryan, Martin White and Colin Brett.

TV presenter views Northants success

Northamptonshire's biggest and most successful chapter took a stroll down memory lane recently – inviting past members to join the 43-strong group in a special celebration of its fifth anniversary.

The result was a sparkling meeting of the Collingtree Chapter held at Kelmars Hall near Kettering when guest of honour, BBC TV sports presenter Garry Richardson, heard more than 60 local business people swap stories of how joining BNI had benefited them, some so successfully that they'd felt obliged to make way for newer, less established businesses.

Not that Collingtree's members relinquish their seats easily. Its capacity membership includes six founder members, one of whom, computer and IT support specialist Martin White said: "Most of my business comes either directly or indirectly from being a

member of BNI, but it's not just about receiving business. I thoroughly enjoy representing fellow BNI members and helping get them business in return. The Givers Gain philosophy is a very successful formula."

Another of Collingtree's founders, Michael Markham of Stanair Industrial Doors added: "This chapter has a fantastic set of people, and every breakfast meeting is really energetic. Most people don't naturally enjoy getting up early, but you'll never hear any of our members complain about their early start every Tuesday. They can't wait to get started!" ●



Another seven members have joined BNI's elite Gold Club, after receiving their black badges for introducing six or more new members.

The trio of females who were awarded Gold Club membership are Rachel Hunter (Gold Cup Chapter, Cheltenham), along with Judy Whiting and Angela Rhodes, both from the Diamond Chapter, Milton Keynes. They are joined by Morgan Rothwell (Zeus Chapter, Accrington), Jon Marks (Ham and High Chapter, North London), James Pike, Chapter Director at Clevedon's Heyhoe Chapter and Peter Douglas (Daventry) - and Peter also received a bottle of champagne from his chapter colleagues! ●

If any member in your chapter receives a black badge, don't forget to tell us. Just email their name, occupation and chapter details to: successnet@grosvenorassociates.com

ILFORD RENAMES CHAPTER IN JOHN'S MEMORY

Members of Ilford's Exchange Chapter unanimously voted to re-name their group following the tragic death of their former Chapter Director John Andrews who perished in the Asian Tsunami disaster on Boxing Day.

In recognition of the inspirational role he played during two separate terms as director, members of the newly titled John Andrews Chapter also framed a photograph of their late colleague which now takes pride of place in front of the chapter director's chair.

New Chapter Director, printer Vincent Goode told SuccessNet: "John was a good friend to every BNI member, and a thoroughly likable, professional and inspirational member of our group. He constantly sought to promote the success and wellbeing of BNI and was always trying to help others, giving his time and energy to organise events like the chapter's charity coffee morning to raise funds for MacMillan Nurses. He will be truly and sadly missed by everyone who knew him, and his loss leaves a big gap in our chapter."

Forty-five year old John and Tracey, his wife of just three years, were in their beach hut at Koh Phi Phi in Thailand when the



Tsunami struck. Another couple holidaying with them escaped with serious injuries after deciding to go on a trip inland just before the wave hit the beach.

Vincent added: "John was an independent financial adviser with Chingford consultants DGS, and we were pleased when the firm asked if one of John's colleagues, Malcolm Snook, could take his place in the Chapter. No-one can replace John, but having Malcolm in the group helps us keep his memory very much alive." ●

MEMBERS PAY TRIBUTE TO CHRIS NORMAN

Tributes have been pouring in from Norfolk chapter members following the sad death earlier this year of Assistant Director Chris Norman, after a short illness.



Chris, who had been an Assistant Director for four years, looked after eight chapters and was actively building more groups when he became ill last autumn. James Cruickshank, Executive Director for East Anglia said: "He was a very enthusiastic, hard-working and committed member of our BNI team, and he will be sadly missed by the many members he helped over the years."

An independent distributor for Telecom-Plus, Chris was 56. He leaves a widow Denise, daughter Hannah and two daughters from a previous marriage, Sunday and Troy. ●

NEWS IN BRIEF

MEMBERS IN VANGUARD OF TSUNAMI RELIEF

BNI members throughout the UK and Ireland have again shown their remarkable altruism by responding quickly and with great generosity to the Asian Tsunami disaster.

With offers of supplies, equipment, fundraising events and cash being made by so many BNI members, it would be impossible and unfair to highlight just a handful of the numerous acts of selflessness, but SuccessNet would like to acknowledge the tremendous spirit of giving, and the speed at which members responded to those co-ordinating the UK's Tsunami relief exercise.

BNI National Director Gillian Lawson said: "It is gratifying to know that many of our members were among the first to volunteer help, expertise and services for the relief operation. I am sure their combined efforts made a difference." ●

MORE CHAPTERS LAUNCHED

Among the latest chapters launched during the past few weeks are seven in Germany. They are: Jaguar and Panther chapters (North Berlin), Bernstein and Amethyst (both Munich), Büchner (Mannheim-Darmstadt), Morgenstund (Bonn-Aachen) and Saphir (Ludwigsburg-Ulm). Meanwhile, Austria saw the launch of Mozart Chapter in Wien, and the Netherlands welcomed the Robijn Chapter (Amsterdam).

In the UK, new chapters include Tudor (Middlesex), Diamond (Halifax), Petersfield (Hampshire), Phoenix (South Kensington), Gold Cup BNI (Cheltenham), St. James (Wallington, Surrey) and Priory (Lewes), while Ireland has also seen a trio of chapters launched at Riverside (Castle Knock, Ireland N.E.), Westgate (Clonmel, Co.Tipperary) and Viking (Waterford City). ●

BREAKFAST BONANZA

'BEST EVER' AS CONCORD CELEBRATES EIGHT YEARS OF SUCCESS

Members of Concord Chapter in North-West London, recently celebrated the group's eighth anniversary by presenting founder member, Steve Pursey with an eight-year ribbon and a



birthday cake decorated with the business cards of every chapter member.

As only the second UK group to be launched back in 1996 when it was then called the Northwood Chapter, Concord's members have long enjoyed considerable success, but Steve, an independent financial adviser, reckons their eighth anniversary has marked the group's best ever period.

He said: "I've no doubt that this is the most successful time in the chapter's history. Quality referrals are passed in a great atmosphere, and everyone is very supportive of each other."



Our picture shows Chapter Director and business coach Nick Simmonds presenting Steve Pursey with his ribbon, while Membership Co-ordinator Michelle Fisher and Secretary/Treasurer Mark Weedon hold the birthday cake, later donated to Michael Sobell House, a local hospice. ●

For more information contact Nick Simmonds on 020 8868 7702

Top performers pass the 20,000 mark!

There are plenty of high performing BNI groups when it comes to passing referrals. And then there is Bentley Chapter, whose 38 members have turned the referrals business into almost an art form!

Bentley (previously known as Stanmore Chapter in Middlesex) doesn't do anything by halves, which is why its members have just celebrated the passing of their 20,000th referral, and now routinely exchange between 80 and 100 referrals at every meeting.

Our picture shows chef Paul Linden (right) of 'Dining in Style' passing the group's milestone referral to flooring specialist Phil Berg of Philip Berg Interiors – a single opportunity that Phil immediately turned into business worth several thousands of pounds. To mark

the event, Bentley's cake-maker Anne Hoad presented a commemorative cake to the chapter.

Phil told SuccessNet: "If you averaged out the number of referrals passed each week since the chapter started back in 1998, it would be more than 60, but of course for a long time we had around 20 members whereas in recent times we've been hovering close to our 40-strong capacity. Consequently, over the past couple of years, members have always exchanged at least 80 referrals a week, and exceeding 100 is not uncommon.

"Bentley members have been amongst the top referral givers in the North-West London region for a long time, and I think we'd be genuinely upset if any other chapter successfully challenged our record."



Chapter Director, surveyor Robert Rose, commented: "It was very appropriate for Paul and Phil to be involved in this landmark referral. Paul has become one of our most prolific referrers, while Phil was recently voted the chapter's top achieving member. Our success is based on teamwork, mutual respect and a great camaraderie." ●



GOING FOR GOLD! Chapter Director Mike O'Shea from mobile phone company More-UK, with Rachel Hunter from Connect2 and James Grant from Martin & Co - makers of the famous Cheltenham Gold Cup.

GOING FOR GOLD

In most chapters, referral slips are personally handed around or across the breakfast table. But in one new chapter, members do it in unique style – using a priceless gold cup to convey referrals between colleagues.

Where? Well, we've already given the game away – it's Cheltenham's Gold Cup Chapter of course, whose 30-plus membership after barely four months has already overtaken one of the town's two more senior BNI groups and is now breathing down the neck of the other.

And yes, the gold cup that features prominently at every Chapter meeting IS the real article! That's because the town's leading jewellers Martin & Co, who make the prestigious trophy for one of horse racing's most famous events, is a member of the namesake chapter - and BNI colleagues were quick to seize a golden opportunity to get their hands on one of racing's richest prizes.

"The cup takes pride of place at our weekly breakfast meetings," said Chapter

Director Mike O'Shea, who runs a business mobile phone company. "We couldn't let one of Martin & Co's directors, James Grant, sit amongst us without persuading him to bring along an original Gold Cup, so every week members now fill it with all their business referrals. It certainly adds flair and stature to the passing of referrals."

He added: "We had a fantastic launch event attended by more than 100 guests from the local business community and we are very excited about the group's early success. Having three solid BNI chapters in Cheltenham is something special for businesses in Gloucestershire. We put so much into making this one of the fastest-ever launching chapters in the country and, with a famous name as well as a brilliant leadership team and membership, we're going to grow quickly." •

For more information, contact Mike O'Shea on 01905 381190



BREAKFAST MEETING IS NO PICNIC!

When you arrive for your BNI breakfast meeting on a dark and bitterly cold January morning to find the venue locked up and members stranded in the car park, it pays to have a sense of humour!

Fortunately, the hardy souls who comprise Tyne & Wear's Collingwood Chapter have a reputation for combining fun with a professional approach to business, so when they turned up at Newcastle Falcons Rugby Club to find it closed, their enterprise quickly produced a solution. A call to the city's Novotel promised much-needed warmth, a full breakfast and exclusive use of their restaurant.

Chapter Director Michael Holliday said: "I had visions of conducting the meeting in the windswept car park, but on a bleak winter morning it would never have worked! However, we like a challenge and were soon setting off in convoy for the hotel where we had a great meeting with many referrals exchanged - business which was very nearly lost that day. It showed the character of our Chapter."

There was even a bonus awaiting members when they returned to their usual Falcons' venue the following week. "When the management realised they'd locked us out, they were keen to compensate us, so we now get some extra goodies served with our breakfasts!" •

For more information, contact Michael Holliday on 01665 510555

400 that'll do nicely!

REFERRALS?

In every chapter, there are members who struggle to find and pass good referrals. Despite the availability of excellent BNI workshops and the regular training they receive during chapter meetings, some continue to face difficulties with this key element of membership. Happily, most chapters also have a growing number of members able to produce seemingly unlimited quality referrals. For this special feature, we asked some of BNI's most prolific UK 'givers' during 2004 to share their referral methods, and offer some practical ideas...

"Never stop listening – and don't miss a trick!"

Says Lawrence Coppen of Chislehurst's Prince Imperial Chapter

401 REFERRALS GIVEN
77 REFERRALS RECEIVED

There's a saying around London's SE12 postal area that "if Lawrence Coppen doesn't know you, you're not worth knowing... and if he can't sort out your problem, then no-one can..."

Such is Lawrence's reputation as someone who knows just about everyone else, and how to find any product or service you might need, that it comes as no surprise to discover he is one of BNI's top UK referrers, having passed an amazing 401 referrals last year – mainly to colleagues in his Prince Imperial Chapter in nearby Chislehurst.

"How do I find so many? It's simple: The secret is knowing a lot of people, listening to everything they tell you and never missing an opportunity to offer them a solution to whatever they want or need," he said. "Having run a plant hire business for 16 years, I get a lot of people coming into my shop, but I don't just hire them my equipment. By talking to them, I find out that they might also need a plumber, a good solicitor, a decent car mechanic or a better mortgage deal – and I nearly always know a BNI colleague I can recommend."

A dedicated BNI-er, Lawrence added: "People are always ringing me who don't necessarily want to hire my equipment, because they know I have a lot of business colleagues in BNI ready to give them an equally good service. They say to me: 'I don't know who to go to for [such-and-such], but I know you'll have a solution...'

"If you're willing to spend time listening to people's problems, it's easy to find referrals. I like to think I never miss a trick, because I never stop listening."

"Put the effort in – and you'll reap the rewards!"

Says Simon Kershaw of Cheltenham Chapter

394 REFERRALS GIVEN
261 REFERRALS RECEIVED

"When I joined BNI three and half years ago, I wasn't convinced it was going to do anything for me," said Cheltenham Chapter's Simon Kershaw. "Now I'm a committed BNI man, because if you follow its Givers Gain philosophy, it works perfectly."

He should know. Last year alone he passed 394 referrals to his BNI colleagues, and received more than 260 in return – just one of them leading to a contract worth more than £100,000.

Simon, who is Managing Director of SK Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Ltd, said: "We come into contact with many business and personal customers, who don't just want our systems. They're often looking for a whole range of other services, so they're only too pleased when I can refer them to a BNI business colleague I can trust."

"There's no great mystery to finding referrals. When I joined BNI, I took the view that I had to put in the time and effort to helping my chapter colleagues, if I hoped to receive new business through them. And that's the way it is. If you continue to work at it, the results will speak for themselves. BNI has probably earned us over £200,000 in three years, and while not every referral leads to a good contract, enough of them do turn out to be very worthwhile."

“Put up a Notice Board – and get noticed!”

Says Jeffrey Permutt of Bentley Chapter, Stanmore

354 REFERRALS GIVEN
140 REFERRALS RECEIVED



GETTING NOTICED! Jeffrey Permutt

Jeffrey Permutt had been in BNI for about six months when, rummaging in his attic, he came across an old cork notice board and had what he thought was an obvious idea to boost his ability to give high-quality referrals.

“I run a busy shop, Ramels, in London’s Golders Green, and see hundreds of new faces every day. Invariably customers are also looking for other products and services when they come in, and they usually share their problems with me. Because I keep my ears open and my mouth shut, listening to their needs often becomes a referral for one of my chapter colleagues.

“It occurred to me that if I put up a big notice board in the shop, containing all the business cards of my BNI colleagues’ services, with a high-profile introduction from me recommending these other businesses, then some of my customers would browse through the cards and find someone they needed.”

And so it was that the now familiar BNI Notice Board concept was born. Jeffrey took his makeshift board along to a training workshop where it was an instant hit with other members, and he discovered that plans for a standard members’ business card notice board were being developed by BNI’s UK national office.

Jeffrey added: “Nine out of every 10 referrals come from my notice board. Lots of customers look at it and then ask me about the BNI member whose product or service they want. Because I’m able to talk so positively about my chapter colleagues, it very often produces a good referral. It’s no wonder that this idea is now widely used by members.”

“Show your customers just how many other businesses you can recommend”

Says Bob Dubock of Tunbridge Wells Chapter

354 REFERRALS GIVEN
73 REFERRALS RECEIVED

As a long-established plumber and heating engineer in Kent, Bob Dubock routinely meets dozens of new customers in their homes every week. But to make absolutely sure that they remember not only his expert work, but also the services of his BNI colleagues, Bob has had special cards printed, listing all of the trades and professions in his chapter – which he always leaves with his customers.

“The cards don’t include my colleagues’ names or phone numbers, but they carry my strong endorsement for their services,” he said. “I tell my customers I will only recommend other people who they can trust to give them good service, and it works. It means that weeks or sometimes even months after I’ve visited a customer’s home, they or a member of their family will need a different service, look at the card I left behind and say ‘If Dubbie recommends them, they must be all right.’ Then they call me up, ask to be put in touch with my relevant BNI colleague and, hey presto, I’ve got another great referral.”

Bob also has another trick up his sleeve. “I live by my diary and, at the bottom of each day’s page, I make a note of any little comment made by a customer, which could turn into a referral at a later date. For instance, if someone tells me they’re moving house in a few months time, I’ll note it down and, when the time is right, offer to put them in touch with a solicitor, a removals firm or any of my other chapter colleagues whose services they might want.”

“Make it a specific item for every client meeting”

Says Steven Blofield of Portsmouth Chapter

327 REFERRALS GIVEN
76 REFERRALS RECEIVED

Independent Financial Adviser Steven Blofield has a foolproof method for maximising every opportunity to find referrals: he makes it an agenda item for every meeting he has with clients.

“The nature of my job as an IFA makes it easy for me to discuss people’s needs and problems, but that said, even in a people business like mine, you need to know how best to bring up the subject of a client’s wider requirements,” said Steven.

“In my case, finding out about someone’s needs is always a specific item on my meeting agenda. So, once we’ve dealt with the issues that involve my work for them, I always make a point of talking about any other professional or trade services they might be requiring, focusing on the fact that I have good relationships with other excellent business people through BNI.”

A founder member of Portsmouth Chapter, Steven added: “The key is to make sure that finding referrals is a specific item on your agenda at every one-to-one meeting you have.”



Alan's eye for enterprise lands a lucrative contract



Smart thinking by a member of Thetford's Forest Chapter has resulted in an £85,000 contract for one of his BNI colleagues, whose company beat a much larger competitor to win the business.

Alan Archer, Managing Director of cleaning company Breckland Industrial Ltd was attending the launch for the transfer of South Norfolk District Council's housing stock to a housing association

when, in the absence of his own contact, he introduced himself to other managers who worked in its IT department.

"I discovered they had all kinds of problems and realised my chapter colleague Peter Lascelles and his company, IT4Enterprise, could probably help them. I passed on his details and gave Peter the referral at our next meeting," said Alan.

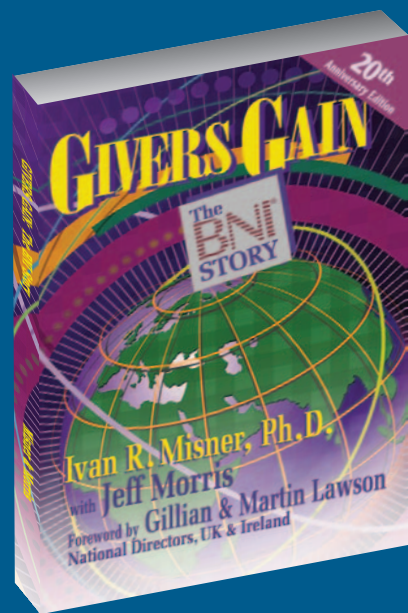
IT4Enterprise duly fought off tough competition to win the lucrative deal

which will see it install a new communications room, cabling, firewall technology, switches and servers in the association's new headquarters.

Peter said: "We are extremely grateful to Alan for seizing this opportunity. We may never have learned of the project had he not been on the ball." ●

For more information contact
Peter Lascelles on 01953 456726

GIVERS GAIN - FIRST THE PHILOSOPHY, NOW THE BOOK!



A new book, "Givers Gain - The BNI Story", tracing the organisation's incredible growth over the past two decades has just been published, and all 73,000 members worldwide are being offered a free copy.

Written by BNI's Founder Dr Ivan Misner, "Givers Gain" is a lively and entertaining history of the world's largest and most successful business networking organisation, from the launch of its first chapter in January 1985, to today's global coverage with 3,700 chapters in 23 countries.

The book provides a fascinating insight into how the BNI meeting

agenda developed, how the referral system has been constantly refined to become today's potent business tool, and why the organisation's philosophy works equally well across the world's different business cultures.

Looking to the future, Dr Misner writes: "We're opening a chapter a day, somewhere in the world. By the end of this decade I believe we'll have over 5,000 chapters, and more than 15,000 chapters worldwide within the foreseeable future."

National Director Martin Lawson said: "The philosophy of Givers Gain is the first and most important lesson

every new member learns, because it defines what BNI is about. With this book, members will have a deeper insight into why the Givers Gain ethos is the cornerstone of BNI, and how it has become the world's most successful organisational principle for business."

The book will be provided free to all new members when they attend their initial Member Success training. Existing members will receive a copy either by re-attending a new member training session or one of BNI's numerous skills workshops. ●

INVINCIBLE MEETING OF MINDS

When a brand-building PR consultancy and an ovens supplier joined Preston's Invincible Chapter last summer, neither firm saw any business synergy emerging through their weekly meetings.

Jane Hunt, Managing Director of Catapult PR wasn't even convinced BNI would do anything for her consultancy, while Orchard Ovens' boss Andrew Manciocchi felt sure he didn't need a new marketing partner.

Eight months later, both parties think very differently. Following Jane's 10-minute breakfast presentation, Andrew realised the benefits of using her award-winning consultancy, while Catapult had already seen the potential in Orchard's wood-burning pizza ovens, as the next big thing in outdoor entertaining.

A dynamic partnership was born, and given the perfect launch when Catapult gained national media coverage after the infamous 'Battle of the Buffet' at Manchester United's game with Arsenal, by offering a free oven to the player who admitted throwing pizza over United's manager Sir Alex Ferguson.

Catapult's David Aaron said: "This shows BNI is not just about securing contracts, but identifying partners who can make a difference to your business."

Andrew added: "We've progressed further in the past few months than in the previous eighteen, thanks to joining BNI and meeting Catapult." •

For more information, contact David on 01253 851188 or Andrew on 08700 550477

THE PERFECT PIZZA PARTNERSHIP?

David Aaron from Catapult PR (left) with Andrew Manciocchi, Managing Director of Orchard Ovens.



A WAR OF THE ROSES? Hardly! In fact everything is blossoming for Bolton's Sue Gregory pictured with Harrogate's Reg Atkinson at Hollingworth Lake on the Lancashire/Yorkshire border. Photos courtesy of George Barrie, Summit Studios (member of Rochdale Chapter).

PERFECT PARTNERS ACROSS THE PENNINES

Despite the age-old rivalry between Lancashire and Yorkshire, two members have formed a thriving trans-Pennine alliance that is proving mutually profitable – thanks to their attendance at last year's BNI European Conference.

Lancastrian Sue Gregory (Bolton Metro Chapter) and Yorkshireman Reg Atkinson (Harrogate's Tuesday Chapter) were packing up at the end of the Members' Day when they started chatting. "We hit it off straight away, and when Sue told me about her business, I immediately saw there was huge potential in our working together," said Reg.

Sue added: "We felt there was a strong synergy between my marketing and communications consultancy and Reg's work in the creative side of advertising. Being based on opposite sides of the Pennines wasn't going to stop us and we've already worked together on a number of projects - with more lined up."

Reg is confident enough about the new partnership to claim that the significant work already completed together is just the beginning. "Whatever happens, this year is looking very rosy indeed, thanks to BNI!"

If you're looking to strike up similar strategic alliances with other members, book your place at BNI's biggest-ever Members' Day to be held in London this June. (see page 3 for details). •

Contact Reg Atkinson on 01423 501802 and Sue Gregory on 01706 829567





train&gain

HOW CHAPTER COLLEAGUES CAN HELP YOU WIN BUSINESS FROM PEOPLE THEY DON'T KNOW

By **Andy Bounds**, Assistant Director, Merseyside

When you think about it, every sale you make requires you to 'prove' you are good at your job. It is much easier to do this using someone else's words than your own, which is why written testimonials can be a valuable part of any new business pitch.

So, what would you want in a testimonial, to help you win business?

Imagine your client (Y Ltd) writes you this testimonial (you work for X Ltd):

"We recently asked X Ltd to _____. They were brilliant. We would be happy to recommend them to anyone." Y Ltd

It is flattering. But, if you were to show it to a prospect, would it win you business? Probably not.



Andy Bounds

Remember, when pitching, you are up against your competitors, so wouldn't it help if the testimonial included your USPs, to help differentiate your business?

There's one further important improvement to be made. Your prospects may not have heard of Y Ltd (the testimonial writer), and might reasonably think: "Who are they - and why should I trust what this stranger says?"

The solution is simple: Ask Y Ltd to insert a new first paragraph about themselves, explaining why their business is brilliant, mentioning their main USP, and their most prestigious client. Doing this adds huge credibility to what they then say about you - and gives them some great free publicity. It's the ultimate 'Givers Gain'.

Putting these changes into practice gives you a far stronger testimonial, something like this:

"We are the fastest growing computer support company in the region (24th in the North of England). And, we're proud to be the only local IT supplier mentioned as a case study on the official Microsoft website.

Because of our standing, we only use the best suppliers, one of whom is X Ltd. "We recently asked them to _____. And the results they achieved for us exceeded our wildest dreams. For instance, they ... [your USP's].

We would be happy to recommend them to anyone. In fact, feel free to call me on _____ if you would like to ask any questions about them" Y Ltd

Wouldn't that kind of independent reference be more likely to help you win business?

But, everything in BNI is about "Givers Gain", yet this article has been about **you** receiving brilliant testimonials. Not very "BNI-ish" at all...

The answer? Help your chapter colleagues get business by writing them a brilliant testimonial in this style right now! ●

Andy Bounds helps train all the UK BNI Directors and was one of the main speakers at the 2004 BNI International Directors Conference in California. He can be reached on 0800 781 3799

My latest 'Top 10' tips (in ascending order of importance) show the steps to adopt if you're serious about wanting to generate an endless flow of referrals:

- 1) Maintain your database of contacts (include their special interests, achievements, etc.) An out-of-date database is worthless.
- 2) Make contact with clients and prospects every 60 to 90 days. The longer you leave it, the less likely you are to benefit from the contact.
- 3) Attend networking functions regularly and become known as the key person in your industry. High visibility leads to high profitability.
- 4) After receiving a referral, immediately acknowledge it by e-mail, fax or a card. And don't forget to tell the person who gave it to you, what happened - and thank them again!
- 5) Try and give a referral or help someone in your network every day, knowing that what you give out is what you will get back.
- 6) Send a 'thank you' card to someone in your network every day. If you don't have anyone to thank, you are not communicating enough with your contacts!
- 7) Build a positive profile in your community. Call people by name, wear a name badge at every event, sponsor on a local basis. Think globally, act locally.
- 8) Work your internal close networks effectively and intensely. Your highest visibility and credibility is among your closest circle of family, friends, clients and associates.
- 9) Avoid keeping tabs on what you do for others. Give without expectations.
- 10) Be open to opportunities. The window of opportunity is so clear, we sometimes miss it.

TOP TEN

ways to generate
endless referrals!

Steve Lawson BNI UK Training Director

MAKING IT WORK: USE YOUR TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES TO RIGHT THE WRONGS!

By Terry Hamill, Executive Director for Merseyside, Manchester, Cheshire & North Wales

Did you know that as a global organisation, BNI probably puts more effort and resources into training than any other single business in the world? Every year, we provide several hundred thousand hours of business training for our members and leadership teams and yet, a significant minority of members appear to think they cannot, or would not benefit from tapping into this incredibly valuable resource. From personal experience, I know they are mistaken.

When I joined BNI five years ago, I was given a card-holder and a badge and felt I knew it all. I thought that just turning up at my weekly chapter meeting was enough. I passed up to 14 referrals each week, considered my 60 second presentations were brilliant and, as an outgoing individual, believed everyone in the room would buy from me. Guess what? I was wrong.

“I'm determined to help members obtain maximum benefit from the BNI system. This starts with the right training, and fortunately we all have free access to BNI's superb range of education and training workshops.”

At that time I was co-director of a furniture company making sofas for TV shows and celebrities like the pop band Boyzone, and I thought my chapter colleagues would be sufficiently impressed to give me all the referrals I could handle. But, my first six months in BNI went completely wrong. Why? Because from day one I'd decided that the people around the breakfast table were the people who were going to buy from me, so I pitched my 60-second presentations at them. The result? I sold two cushions and made a total profit of 75p!

Then a fellow member took me aside and offered me guidance. He said I should stop 'selling' to members and instead, ask them to find me good contacts outside my chapter. He even suggested the sort of referrals I should look for, such as Scottish & Newcastle Breweries who were involved in major pub refurbishments. When I challenged his advice by asking: 'Well, who do you know in that field?', he told me he'd been the brewery's chief architect for 25 years! His subsequent referral led to my gaining introductions to many different pub and club chains, generating £500,000 worth of business in my second six months of membership.

Why am I telling you this? As a BNI Executive Director, I now look after 1,000 members and, given my initial experience of getting the philosophy wrong, before putting it right, I'm determined to help members obtain maximum benefit from the BNI system. This starts with the right training, and fortunately we all have free access to BNI's superb range of education and training workshops.

If you do just one thing for your business in 2005, please attend as many BNI workshops as you can. The knowledge you gain from them will be priceless, representing the best possible investment you could make in your company's future. ●



BNI DELIVERS SUCCESS TO ITS SALES SUPERSTARS!

While it's increasingly tough being a salesperson in today's highly competitive markets, belonging to the world's biggest, most successful business referral organisation certainly helps. At SuccessNet we regularly hear from members who credit BNI and their chapter colleagues with helping them achieve their targets. On this page, we highlight two of the latest examples.



Sale by name and sales by nature – that's Lincoln estate agent Michelle Sale, who has been named the UK's top sales associate for ReMax, the world's largest estate agency franchise.

Michelle and her husband have just returned from an all-expenses paid trip to Florida, her prize for being ReMax's best-performing Associate during 2004, an achievement she attributes to joining BNI's Lindvm Chapter two years ago. Her triumph marks the third successive year in which ReMax's top UK associate has been a BNI member!

She said: "I became an estate agent in April 2002 but the best advice I was given came a few months later when a fellow ReMax associate in Gloucester recommended I join BNI. Fortunately there was a chapter in Lincoln and, since becoming a member my business has gone from strength to strength.

"The quality of referrals is second to none, and because most of the hard work has already been done for me by the way in which BNI members recommend me to their

customers and friends, my job is made a lot more enjoyable."

When she joined ReMax, Michelle's personal target was to become its top UK associate. "I gave myself three years to achieve this, and I've done it in two. However, I could not have done so without BNI, which has given me the majority of my business," she added. "I also get loads of support from my chapter colleagues. If ever I want advice, I just open my red book and call the appropriate member. Everyone is always happy to help."

By happy co-incidence, Michelle's success has been emulated by the whole Lindvm Chapter whose performance earned it a Founder's Award 2004, presented to Chapter Director Randall Hayes by BNI Executive Director Steve Jennings. •

For more information, contact Michelle Sale on 01522 543635



BNI helps Michelle
'Sale'
to the top



HIGHWAY CHAPTER PUTS DAVE ON RIGHT ROAD

With a target that included signing up 10 new customer accounts each month, North London salesman Dave Ayres knew he was in for a challenge when he joined stationery supply company, Lyreco!

Fortunately, the ex-bank manager also knew his prospects for meeting tough goals would be considerably enhanced by joining BNI so, shortly after taking up his new post, Dave became a founder member of Enfield's new Highway Chapter.

That was barely a year ago, since when Dave has easily surpassed his sales targets, with his chapter colleagues providing him with no fewer than 50 referrals for new accounts, saving him a great deal of cold calling.

So it came as little surprise when Dave recently announced to the delight of his chapter that he'd won a special sales award at his company's annual conference in the south of France, after his success had put him into the top 2% of Lyreco's 490 salesmen and earned him promotion to Sales Manager of a larger area.

He said: "Members gave me a massive cheer but really, they helped me earn the award and I'm very grateful to them. They're a great bunch to work with and I've been amazed by their enthusiasm and support. Without their help, I'm sure I would not have been so successful." •

You can contact Dave on 07743 262738

Less than two years ago, Peterborough technology specialist Simon Foxwell launched a one-man business from the study of his home, offering IT support to small businesses and home users.

A few weeks ago his company, Welltech IT Limited, found itself playing host to the City Council's Chief Executive Gillian Beasley, when she opened the company's new premises - from where his business is now booming, thanks almost entirely to BNI.

Having worked in the industry for several years, Simon realised most IT support companies were only interested in chasing big contracts with major firms - ignoring the needs of smaller firms and home-workers. After creating Welltech to fill this void, he heard about BNI and joined the city's Thorpe Wood Chapter, since when his business has taken off.

99%
OF MY NEW BUSINESS
COMES THROUGH BNI

"I know many BNI members attract a lot of new business through chapter colleagues, but in my case 99% of all our current contracts have come directly or indirectly from BNI sources," said Simon. "I am so pleased that I took the decision to join when I branched out on my own. It has been the making of Welltech, and enabled us to grow quickly," he added.

More than a dozen of Simon's chapter colleagues turned out to support the opening of his new offices, including Simon Hinks of Parallel Marketing Associates who also gained substantial media publicity for his namesake's success. ●

For more information contact Simon Foxwell on 0845 084 0171



Run your chapter as a business

Says Mark Joslin, outgoing Chapter Director of Leeds North



Every incoming Chapter Director has his or her own way of trying to move their group forwards.

At Leeds North, we are constantly looking at innovative ways to get the best out of our members.

I run a busy company and, when I took on the chapter leadership, I felt the best way to make real progress was to run the group as I would my own business, treating members as if they were my staff. I wasn't being egotistical or bullying, but felt the group needed renewed direction and purpose, and saw it as my job to deliver this.

The first task was to produce a clear, fixed diary covering all chapter events and activities for the duration of the incumbent leadership team. This programme, together with sheets containing the names, photographs, contact details and business summaries of every member, was then placed inside the covers of hard-backed manuscript books which we issued to each member, requiring them to make notes throughout every meeting.

Why? Because how could individuals recall the details of every 60-second presentation or each request for a specific referral from 25 or 30 colleagues? Now, members use these books to jog their memories during the week and, as an added motivation, I email everyone two or three times a week, reminding them about key issues from our last meeting and the need to properly prepare for the next one.

In drawing up our programme, we chose some novel ideas to make sure every meeting would be interesting, ringing the changes by focusing on different aspects of the referrals process, and challenging members to find new ways to promote their businesses to the group.

It included 'third-party' referral days when everyone was asked to provide at least one external referral; a 'lottery day' when one lucky member's name was drawn to receive a referral from everyone else at the end of the month; 'Swap Days' when we each took over a colleague's 60-second presentation; 'Prop Days' (dressing in costume or using visual aids in our infomercials), 'Double Days' - requiring two good referrals from everyone - and even a 'BNI Re-united Day', when no less than 17 past members came back to the chapter!

All these initiatives focus on increasing the amount of business we pass across the breakfast table. A few members might sometimes feel a little uneasy by the new challenges our agenda produces but, like any other business, I want my staff (in this case my BNI colleagues) to step outside their comfort zones and push back the frontiers. That's how successful companies grow, and I want my chapter to benefit from the same approach. Keep an eye on Leeds North! ●

Mark Joslin is Managing Director of Tomorrow's Office, an IT systems and network services company. Contact him on 0113 236 2626



WE'RE A WINNER! Former Chapter Director and its 'Star Performer' Marcus Simmons holds the trophy, watched by his Olympus Chapter colleagues.

OLYMPIAN FEAT BY OLYMPUS!

Leyland's Olympus Chapter may not be Lancashire's biggest BNI group, nor even the loudest. But they are definitely the proudest, having been named the county's Chapter of the Year at the recent regional awards night, for the quality of referrals and consistently high standards.

Jackie Williams, who serves on the Membership Committee, said: "I think we apply BNI's rules more strictly than some chapters. Prospective new members are interviewed at length by the committee to ensure we attract quality not quantity, and we won't tolerate absenteeism nor allow fudged contributions. We run a very tight ship which is probably one reason we won the award."

She said that if any member left because they'd become too busy as a result of BNI referrals, the chapter viewed it as an opportunity to attract an even better replacement.

"Bringing in the right new people adds vibrancy and introduces us all to new contacts. Visitors are always impressed by the 'buzz' we generate at our meetings, and by the serious amount of business they see changing hands. Receiving this award proves that small can be beautiful!" Jackie added. ●

For more information contact Jackie Williams on 01257 232155

Edwin shares its 'Top 10 networking tips'

Within BNI there is a wealth of textbook and practical advice on better business networking – but members of Carlisle's Edwin Chapter have gone one better, and produced their own 'Top 10 Tips to Networking'.

The group's 'Top 10' started as a project when Chapter Director Wendy Aldred was its Education Coordinator and asked all members to write down what they considered to be their top five tips. Well over 50 different ideas were whittled down before the whole Chapter voted to select its chosen Top 10.

Wendy told SuccessNet: "We wanted a permanent reminder to us all about our commitment to our chapter, our colleagues and BNI generally and, having created our Top 10, the tips were then printed onto laminated cards

designed to fit into the back pocket of the standard BNI business card holder." She added: "Our Top 10 tips are owned and personal to our chapter and we issue the card to every new member. We have also shared the idea with other chapters who have been keen to copy it." ●

AND HERE IS EDWIN'S TOP 10

- Have a positive mind and be proactive
- Get to know each other and their business by showing an interest
- Listen attentively
- Be sincere and respectful
- Talk to your customers about other members' services
- Promote others as you would wish to be promoted
- Use the BNI Business Card holder
- Follow up on introductions
- Ensure they remember you
- Commitment means all the time, not just Friday mornings

CHAPTER & VERSE

BY PAUL HARDMAN . www.hartoons.co.uk . tel: 01704 543 981



Five Star Cheltenham!

Cheltenham Chapter turned its first breakfast meeting of 2005 into a celebration of success, when no fewer than five awards were presented.

For the third year running, the group received a prestigious Founder's Award for its outstanding contribution to BNI, while the chapter also recognised individual top performances from members.

Certificates were presented to Simon Kershaw for passing most referrals in the chapter last year (an amazing 394), and to Diana Beaver for introducing 26 visitors during 2004. Two other members, Angie Freeman and Kirsty Merriman, were also recognised for their outstanding contributions.

Chapter Director Louisa Evans said: "It was a brilliant start to the year, and an inspiration to us all. I just hope we can make 2005 another great year for Cheltenham." ●



FIVE OF THE BEST! Cheltenham's award winners (from left to right) are Diana Beaver, Kirsty Merriman, Angie Freeman and Simon Kershaw, pictured with Chapter Director Louisa Evans in the centre.