



Network Your Way to Wealth

Original Report by Setupandgrow.co.uk

No part of this publication may be reproduced, or stored in any retrieval system or by any means.

The publisher, author and distributor of this report take no responsibility for the consequences of any actions taken as a result of the advice given herein.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained within however no responsibility for this accuracy can be taken by the producers and authors. Any consequences remain the responsibility of the reader.

The reader is encouraged to seek the advice of competent legal and accountancy experts before engaging in any business activity.

Contents

1. Introduction	4
History	4
What are B N Organisations?	4
Is There More to it Than This?	5
Does Networking Work?	6
It Could Change Everything	7
What Type of Business Does Well	8
Will You Fit In?	9
2. Networking – How Does it Work?	11
What are Referrals?	12
How to Find Referrals	12
Monitoring Referrals	13
Try it for Yourself	14
3. Business Network Meetings	15
A Typical Meeting	15
Arriving	15
Opening	15
Short Introductions	15
Passing Cards	16

Exchange of Referrals	16
20 Minute Slot	17
One – To – One	17
4. Memory Hooks	18
Categories of Hook	19
What to do with Your Memory Hook	20
5. Network Organisations	21
6. Comparisons	22
BNI	24
4Networking	25
Business for Breakfast	27
Business Consort	29
BOB Clubs	31
TLGC	33
Local Network Groups	35
Ladies Only	36
7. Speed Networking	37
What is Speed Networking?	37
Is Speed Networking Effective?	38

1. Introduction

Networking is probably one the most over-used expressions in the English language but unfortunately it is the only one that adequately describes the subject that we are about to look at.

Now with advent of social networking and sites such as MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn etc. the concept of networking has reached right into the average living room. However Internet based networking is a subject for future investigation and we will concentrate here on face-to-face Business Networking.

History

For many years people with similar business interests have met to discuss the developments, problems and opportunities within their business environments but over the last twenty or so years organisations have been created specifically to promote the exchange of business contacts and more.

I guess we could say that it all started with organisations such as the round table and rotary club although the reasons for their existence were primarily somewhat different.

The big change came in 1985 when an American Dr Ivan Misner founded the BNI or Business Network International; from which most other UK networking organisations have evolved.

What are Business Network Organisations?

Simply put, they are organisations that operate in order to enable members to meet other business people and to do business with them or to be introduced to any of their customers with a relevant requirement. This is not a one way traffic but relies on the mutual exchange of referrals. How this is achieved may vary from one organisation to another but the aim's the same.

One point on which they are all agreed is that just giving over a name is not adequate. An acceptable 'Referral' must be one where you introduce the services of another member to your contact, having determined that he has a definite need. This ensures that when the prospect is contacted he knows exactly who is calling and what the call is about.

All the rest is simply mechanics.

I will supply a list of network organisations later and a breakdown of how each of them operates complete with costs.

Is There More to it Than This?

Yes there most certainly is. I remember when I first joined a Networking group. It was a revelation. Although I had been in business for years and running my own company for more than a year I had a distinct feeling that I was a 'business in a vacuum'.

The reason for this was that although I had clients and suppliers I had little or no contact with the business community and the feeling of isolation was really strong. Joining a business network group gave me the chance to talk to other business people on an equal footing.

I learnt what was going on in the local business world and almost every week someone (be it a bank manager, solicitor, gardener accountant or therapist) would tell me about the latest changes in their profession of which I was totally unaware.

In addition, every week a different member would take 15 to 20 minutes to take us through some aspects of their business in considerable detail.

Network meetings also provided a free source of professional advice with fellow members only too willing to share their knowledge and experiences.

Ideally, networking groups should be 50% social and 50% business.

So, yes networking can provide a lot more than just a place to give and receive referrals.

Does Networking Work?

The simple answer is YES it does. But it must be said that it works better for some types of business than others. It also works at different speeds depending on the type of business. But on the whole for the majority of business types it does work.

I have known very many people who have kept their businesses busy and become prosperous entirely from the work that they receive through Networking.

Now I expect that you're thinking 'Will it work for me?' and this is a difficult one. I will try to give some indicators to this later but there are few instances of businesses that can't benefit. Often it is more a case that a business has joined the wrong network for them and that a change to a more suitable organisation can change everything.

An example: Some years ago I was a member of network club where we received a request from an undertaker who wished to join us. He was accepted and did very well from his membership. That's not to say that members went round bumping people off to find him some work.

What he was doing was promoting a service which he provided whereby you could specify your funeral, in detail, whilst you were still alive. You could also pay with regular instalments prior to your demise. This meant that when; alas your time came to depart there were no problems for your loved ones to sort out. It was all done and done, as you wanted it.

He not only sold the scheme to other members but also received many referrals from financial advisors, accountants and insurance brokers who were happy to recommend him to clients when discussing provisions for their day of reckoning.

It Could Change Everything (a little story)

Quite a few years ago I had a phone call for a Friend that I had worked with at two different companies. I had not seen him for some time as he had moved away so I was delighted to hear from him.

When we worked together he was a sales executive and more than that he was one of the best that I have ever met. Now during the intervening time he had started his own business that was then some eight months old.

Graham explained that the company he had set up was a cleaning service and he was tackling all types of cleaning jobs here there and everywhere because there wasn't enough work in any one type cleaning.

He came over to stay with me and I took him to a network of which I was a member. That next day he learnt more than he had done in the previous six months. Graham was able to talk to someone who had several years of experience in the cleaning business and because Graham was not a competitor, living miles away, he got tons of valuable advice free of charge.

When I next spoke to him Graham had been a member of a networking group near to his home and was thriving. He had met people who let out property, architects, developers and many more people all who could help to grow his enterprise.

He is now able to concentrate one particular aspect of cleaning and has exploited this niche market to great effect. His business has now grown beyond recognition and largely due to networking.

If it sounds too good to be true, it isn't. I would be pleased to provide his contact details to anyone and I know that Graham loves nothing better than talking about the success of his business.

What Type of Business Does Well in Networking?

As I said earlier there is no business that I have ever come across that can not benefit from networking. Even if the members of your chosen group would not themselves use your product or service, some of them will be dealing with someone who can.

The main difference is the time scale involved. If you sell a simple straight forward and relatively low cost product the chances are that you will get some referrals very early on and that these will quickly turn into sales.

Where you have a more technical product and especially if it is quite costly it may well take some time to get any referrals and even longer for them to turn into business.

There are some companies who take home a handful of referral slips every week and I'm thinking here of florists, garages, dry cleaners, printers, gardeners etc. The down side is that the value of these is not great but as long as they keep coming they mount up. This is born out by the fact that every chapter (as network groups are often called) has a group of such businesses that usually stay members for a long time.

The others may wait for some time before getting any referrals but the sky's the limit when it comes to the value of 'a big one'.

When I first started networking I received only a handful of referrals in the first six months. One was a very lucrative prospect but they decided not to go ahead. Two years later they contacted me saying 'Revise your quote as it is two years old and start collecting the work'. They were then, and still are, the businesses largest client.

Moral of the story: BE PATIENT.

Will You Fit in?

I have no doubt that if you have spent years in a senior position in an organisation or as a sales executive who is accustomed to presenting in public then the meeting its self will not phase you in the slightest.

However for us mere mortals the thought of standing up in front of 30 to 40 business people and telling them what you do is enough to necessitate a change of underwear.

Did I not tell you about that bit? Don't worry by the end of this paper you will have no problems, believe me.

Now how to dress is important. There is nothing more likely to make you uncomfortable than to turn up dressed totally different from everyone else.

This need not be a concern. For every network meeting that I have attended (and that's been many) people will dress as their type of work dictates and no one is in the slightest bit surprised. You often see photo's of such meetings showing suited gents and ladies around a huge table all looking very professional if not to say a little daunting.

In networking you will often find those who wear suits for their work will wear suits to the meeting whilst others attend in overall tee shirts or whatever is appropriate to their work. Even the suit wearers like to relax their dress code for the odd meeting.

So don't worry, go however you feel most comfortable.

Last Word

Over the years that I personally have attended network groups I have met many business owners who swear by this method of generating new business.

As I mentioned before to go one step further than this, many have told me that their enterprises have been highly successful, fuelled entirely by referrals from networking.

I would advise that any one, no matter what type of business they have (be it a profession, trade, craft, service or product-based endeavour) should give their best effort to networking for a while.

With many network groups available from £100.00 per year plus £10.00 per breakfast the possible benefits heavily outweigh the costs. So please give it go!

2. How Does Networking Actually Work?

No matter which organisation you visit the principles of networking remain the same. You bring referrals (qualified leads) to the group and in exchange members will bring referrals to you – simple.

The process is best summarised by Brad Burton founder of 4Networking as 'Meet, Like, Know, Trust'.

People will not put their reputation at stake by recommending your services to a valued contact of theirs unless they have complete confidence in your ability to do the job and to do it to the highest standard. The whole process of networking is aimed at meeting suitable business people and developing this level of mutual confidence.

Human nature being what it is, people will respond far more energetically to your requirement for business prospects once they have received a referral for you. If anyone doubts this just wait until you receive a referral from a chapter member that turns into a good piece of business. It is almost impossible not to feel a strong desire to find some sort of an opening for them and their business.

This is the reason that the BNI have a saying that 'Givers Gain'. If you think that you will not be able to provide some referrals to your fellow members then it is really not worth spending your time and money in networking as the whole system relies on this two-way traffic.

It is vital that that the two-way nature of these transactions is maintained as this is the essence of the whole thing. Everyone in the chapter will try to pass referrals to you because it enhances their standing in the group but if one-way traffic continues for too long you will find less and less coming your way.

What are 'Referrals'?

As most of networking revolves around the passing of referrals we should be absolutely clear as to what they are.

A referral is an opportunity to do business which one member passes to another member - this does not mean one member necessarily buying from another.

In addition the person finding the possible referral must talk to the prospect introducing the group member who can help, explaining his service, and asking the prospects permission for the other group member to get in touch.

Only when all this is done is there a referral to pass on. Now the receiver of the referral can simply phone the person with the need, who is expecting the call, and hopefully business is done.

A referral is not a network member passing a house on their street and seeing some building work, noting the address and passing this to a builder, plumber, plasterer etc as a referral at the next meeting. This would be a corrupt referral and some networking organisations (BNI for example) would record this as a black mark.

How do I find Referrals

Everyone has his or her own ways of finding the much sort-after referral. The starting point is to collect the business cards of all the members of your group and also make sure that you understand what they do. Keep them in a special business card wallet often supplied by the networking group that you have joined.

Keep more than one of each card so that you can give them to anyone who may have an interest. From here on it's just a matter of listening and looking. Even when talking to friends and family if you hear someone say they are thinking of having some work done or buying a particular item ask yourself, 'Could anyone in my network group provide this?'. If the answer is 'yes' away you go.

Obviously businesses fall into groups that will find it easier to help each other. Bankers, Independent Finance Advisers and Insurance Brokers may well be able to help each other all the time. The same may apply to builders, plumbers, architects, electricians etc.

If you are not in a type of business like this then just stay aware. Every time you are on clients premises look for opportunities and listen when your client is complaining about poor service, may be its time he changed supplier and that means an opening for someone in your group.

This may sound daunting at first but anyone who has been in networking for any length of time will tell you that it becomes second nature and in fact it can actually be fun.

We will cover this subject in greater detail in the near future.

Monitoring Referrals

This is one area where networking organisations differ considerably from those that have little or no measurement of referrals to those where considerable pressure is placed on members to meet set targets.

To find out which attitude to referrals is prevalent in each network refer to the listing of individual organisations later in this article.

As an example the BNI go round all of the members present at a meeting and in turn they announce how many referrals they have and then deliver them to the individuals concerned on special referral slips.

I am sure that we can all benefit from a little pressure to encourage us to produce referrals and many people find this is perfectly acceptable and even enjoyable part of their group meeting - especially those who have a competitive nature. However there are those who find it rather like being back at school. Again as Brad (4Networking) says 'You didn't become self-employed to be told what to do. So there's no compulsion to attend meetings, No referral system...'

The decision is up to you, but it's a point well worth pondering before you join a group, as you will have to live with your choice at every meeting that you attend.

There is a split in networking between those who do not monitor or reveal referrals those who do. The main argument in favour of a formal referral system is that without it people lose sight of the purpose of Networking. It becomes a social gathering without an aim.

There can be no doubt that a perception that there are few if any referrals taking place will lead eventually to a huge turnover in members.

Think about this before you commit to membership of a networking group. Can you provide the number of referrals expected? and if not can you live with the more relaxed approach which may result in few if any of the longed for leads.

Try it For Yourself

All Networking organisations allow new prospects to attend two or three meetings before they have to decide to join so make use of this. You should be able to find three or more network groups within reasonable travelling distance of your home.

Why not visit all of them? The most it will cost is £10.00 for the meeting charge and that includes breakfast and you never know what referrals you may get. By visiting a few different meetings you will be able to see which group is best suited to your type of business and also which has a slot available.

3. Business Network Meetings

What Happens at a Typical Meeting?

The following is just to give you an idea how a network meeting usually proceeds. This will vary somewhat from group to group but I will look at that in greater detail when I investigate the individual network organisations.

Arriving

You arrive at the venue with match sticks under your eyelids. Yes, I forgot to mention most meetings start at 7.00 am. And yes that's the one in the morning.

The idea of this early start is to get everything finished and people on their way to work by 9.30. By doing this networking does not take time from your valuable money earning day.

There are several variations of this starting anywhere from 7.00 to 08.30 and finishing at a corresponding time. You will be welcomed with coffee, tea or juice and there is usually a short time to mingle.

At this point you will be met by someone whose task it is to show you the ropes. All the meetings that I've attended have been extremely friendly and welcoming so there is no danger of feeling like Billy-no-mates.

Opening

You all take your places and someone usually the chairman will start things off with welcomes, news etc.

Short Introductions

Here we go. Now everyone gets a short amount of time usually one minute or less to introduce themselves and what they do. This can be factual or humorous and you

will find a great variety of styles and characters emerging during this session.

I'd recommend that you practice this before you go and do it against the clock. It's so easy to overrun and you don't want to be told to sit down on your first visit. Worse still some groups will administer a small fine that usually goes to charity.

Often the visitors one minute slot is left to the end so you will have plenty of time to watch how the others get on. If your new to this type of thing don't worry everyone is on your side and if you find yourself drying up you don't have to use the whole minute.

If however you like the stage and find keeping to one minute difficult again don't worry. You will be informed if you overrun.

Passing of Cards

Whilst people are introducing themselves the cards are usually passed around. When your turn comes make sure that you pass round enough business cards so that everyone can take one. If you wish to make a good impression, take a card from each of the other people present. It is a good idea to make some brief notes on the back of the relevant card during each 60 second presentation just to help you to remember what they do. This is especially important if you think that they may be of interest to you at a later date.

Exchange of Referrals

This does not take place in all Network organisations but it is part of the original BNI format. At this point small referral slips are filled in and passed to the intended recipient. Whilst this is taking place each person in turn will mention what he or she has done for the chapter (group) since they last met.

20 Minute Slot

Again this is subject to variation from ten to twenty minutes. It may well be known by different names, in 4 Networking it's the 4 Sight slot and is not a sales pitch but a chance to share something that you are interested in or that will interest the audience.

In BNI and many other organisations someone will generally give a presentation on his or her product or services. This is to enable the other members to become more familiar with what you do so that they are best equipped to spot potential business for you. These slots are agreed many weeks in advance so that you have time to prepare and only apply to members.

You usually have to book these slots well in advance as it is a chance to put your point across to a captive audience.

Summing up and Close

Chairman will sum up probably say a few words to visitors outlining how the organisation works and then you are free to go off to work.

Some people will stay on to have specific talks with their fellow members (a 'one-to-one' in BNI-speak).

One to One Meetings

The format of these may differ but just about all network groups encourage members to meet together on a one-to-one basis. This gives the chance for the two parties to tell each other all about what they do and how it can benefit their respective clients.

Once armed with this information the job of finding referrals becomes much easier and people begin to build friendships that will become the basis of networking success.

4. Memory Hooks

Memory hook is an expression first used in the BNI and describes a short sentence or saying that helps people to remember who you are and what you do. For many years the advertising world was powered by 'jingles', however they seemed to have lost their popularity over the last few years.

The current advertising 'must have' is the 'Sonic Brand Trigger'. This grand sounding item is the sort of thing that is best exemplified by the Intel four note sound that accompanies any mention of Intel on an advertisement. So why are we interested in Memory Hooks and what are they?

In a networking situation we are asking other business people to go away and remember who we are and what we do. This is necessary so that they can find good referrals for us and for our business. If we can find a good memory hook then this will make their task so much easier.

A memory hook is really a jingle used when we are explaining what we do.

A well know jingle that could be used as a memory hook might be: 'You can't get quicker than a QuickFit fitter.' Although it doesn't tell you what the service is it could be placed after a statement like 'So for all your tyre and exhaust needs remember you can't get quicker than...'"

There are many examples and types but they generally fall into categories so you can try a few of each type and try to find one that suits your business.

Categories of Memory Hook

Here are the main categories that memory hooks fall into:

Sense Based This type of hook relies on stimulating one of the senses 'Come fly with me' or 'It's not just food it's... food'

Humour If you can make them laugh, all the better.
Accountant – 'We make life less taxing'
IT Consultant - 'We put the IT in PROFIT'

Use Your Name

Even better if your name's locked in there especially if its funny or it rhymes.
Solicitor – 'Sooner or later you'll need Slater'
Chiropractor – 'If you're bent, call Brent'
I'd be a little careful with this one.

Use Rhyme Solicitor - 'If you need someone mean, call Phil Bean'
Plumber - 'If your pipes don't flow you know where to go'

Double Reverse

Make a short statement then turn it around.
Butcher – 'Pleased to meet you, Meats to please you'

If all else fails take a well know phrase or saying or even a well known advert and change it round. You can play at this whilst watching TV or reading a magazine by changing every well know advert that you see to one with your business in it. Sooner or later something will come up that you like and can use.

Maybe I should try it, how about 'Setup and Grow – Assistance from a Distance'.

Here are a few more:

- Accountant – ‘Your bottom line is my priority’
- Car Repair – ‘We don’t just meet by accident’
- Clothing – ‘Clothes you love to live in’
- Computer – ‘Hardware, Software... anywhere’
- Flooring – ‘We’d like to floor you’

If you want more ideas try the Ivan Misner site at www.memoryhooks.com

What to do with Your Memory Hook

Quite simply use it whenever you can. On business cards, adverts, web sites and of course at networking meetings. Don’t be shy if you have a really ‘cheesy’ one, the meeting will give a suffering groan but might like it for all that.

When you finish your one-minute presentation you should finish with your memory hook it ends things neatly.

“So thank you everybody that’s me, Brian Gregory, Setup and Grow – Assistance from a Distance”.

Are you getting the idea?

5. Networking Organisations

Types of Networking Organisation

There are many differences between the Networking Organisations but one of the most fundamental is that of exclusive or non-exclusive.

Exclusive

The most famous of which is the BNI. It is a fundamental stipulation of their rules that any chapter (group of up to 40 members) may have only one representative from a particular type of business. So: one plumber, one accountant, one banker etc.

The argument for this is that when you become a member of a chapter you 'Lock out' your competition. You have paid to receive all the referrals, for your type of work, from your chapter and once you have done that no one else can encroach.

This of course means that if you attained a chapter and they already have someone who is a competitor of yours then you will not be allowed to join.

In this case you must find another chapter from the same organisation or change to another network. The only alternative is to have your name entered on the waiting list; however, some types of business rarely become available such as Banks and IFA's.

Non – Exclusive

An example would be 4 Networking. In this case you can have as many people in one profession as you like. You could have a whole corner of accountants or plumbers.

This, it is claimed, is the way that the world is. You must face competition outside and so why not face it inside. One positive aspect is that you can meet regularly with others in your industry and compare notes, discuss trends etc.

Local / National / International

When you join one of the larger networks you will usually be able to visit groups other than the one of which you are a regular member.

This allows you to go to other groups and present your business to a brand-new 30 to 40 business people. However it may not be as great an opportunity as it sounds.

As we have said in order to get a good level of referrals it is important to build up a relationship with the other members of the group and of course to give as well as to receive. This can not be done on a single flying visit so you must be prepared to visit these additional groups several times before getting any positive results. In addition there will be many attending these meetings whose business is the same as that of people in your own group. So, who do you give the referrals to?

Do not let me discourage you. There are many types of business that actually do receive referrals on the first visit so if that's you, get visiting.

6. Business Networking Organisations – Comparison

The following is a comparison of some of the main networking organisations available in the UK. Several of these enterprises also have chapters in other countries so that members can form relationships in countries other than the UK.

There are many different characteristics to be considered each with its own implications. Here is a short list of those most likely to be of importance when selecting the Network that suits you.

National / International

This is of importance to those who wish to extend their networking to countries other than the UK.

Exclusive/ Non Exclusive Already covered.

Number of Groups If you wish to travel round and visit other chapters this is important.

Location of Local Group Worth considering - remember you may have to travel at 6.30 am in the middle of winter.

BNI - Business Network International

Set up in 1998 by the American founder Dr Ivan Misner the BNI is the largest and most widespread of the networking organisations. BNI is established in many countries throughout the world. So if international networking is your thing then the BNI is worth considering.

Value of Referrals:	£ 190 million / year	
Magazine:	Success Net	4 times / year
Attendance Requirement:	Yes	
Referral Requirement:	Yes	
Online Networking:	Yes	
Exclusive:	Yes	
Meeting Time:	7.00 – 8.30 am	
Substitutes:	-	
Worldwide:	Chapters	5,291
	Members	111,733
UK:	Chapters	640
Exclusive:	Yes	
Meetings:	Breakfast	Weekly
Short Spot:	60 Seconds	
Long Spot:	20 Minutes	
Cost of Membership	£500.00 / year	

Additional – High Quality Training available during meetings and at separate evening events.

Website: www.bni.eu/uk/

4Networking

Exploded onto the networking scene in 2006, due largely to the charismatic founder Brad Burton. This is a fast-growing high-energy Network Organisation.

Value of Referrals:	Not Known			
Magazine:	4Community			
Attendance Requirement:	No			
Referral Requirement:	No			
Online Networking:	Yes			
Exclusive:	No			
Meeting Time:	8.00 - 10.00 am			
Substitutes:	-			
Worldwide:	Chapters	N/A	Members	N/A
UK:	Chapters	200+	Members	20,000+
Exclusive:	No			
Number of Members:	Not Known			
Meetings:	Fortnightly			
Short Spot:	40 Seconds			
Long Spot:	15 Minutes (4sight slot)			

Cost of Membership

12 Months (any group):	£490.00 + VAT
12 months (single group):	£250.00 + VAT

Loyalty Membership: Existing members £245.00 every 6 months

Women's Section: Women4Networking

Additional - Three 10 minute 1-to-1 appointments each week.

Website: www.4networking.biz

Business for Breakfast

Established 2002.

Value of Referrals: Not Known

Magazine: -

Attendance Requirement: Yes (allowed absence 2 meetings / qtr)

Referral Requirement: 6 genuine referrals per year

Guest Criteria: Must bring 4 per year

Online Networking: -

Exclusive: Yes

Meeting Time: Breakfast or Lunch

Substitutes: Yes

Worldwide:	Chapters	N/A	Members	N/A
------------	----------	-----	---------	-----

UK:	Chapters	-	Members	-
-----	----------	---	---------	---

Exclusive: -

Number of Members: -

Meetings: Fortnightly

Short Spot: -

Long Spot: -

Cost of Membership

3 months	£198.00 + VAT
----------	---------------

6 months	£310.00 + VAT
----------	---------------

12 months £498.00 + VAT

Women's Section: -

Additional - Training within the group.

Website: www.business4breakfast.co.uk

Business Consort

Meetings appear to be on an irregular pattern but include small exhibitions, speakers etc.

Value of Referrals:	Not Known
Magazine:	Mingle (300,000 distribution)
Attendance Requirement:	No
Referral Requirement:	No
Online Networking:	No
Exclusive:	-
Meeting Time:	-
Substitutes:	-

World-wide	Chapters	N/A	Members	N/A
UK	Chapters	-	Members	-

Number of Members:	-
Meetings:	-
Short Spot:	-
Long Spot:	-

Cost of Membership

12 months:	£199.00
12 month sales & lead generation package	£749.00 + VAT
Women's Section:	-

Additional: -

Website: www.business4breakfast.co.uk

BOB Clubs Business Over Breakfast

Value of Referrals:	Not Known			
Magazine:	No			
Attendance Requirement:	-			
Referral Requirement:	-			
Online Networking:	Yes			
Exclusive:	Yes			
Meeting Time	Breakfast 07.00 to 08.00 start (varies) Check with individual group			
Substitutes:	-			
Worldwide: Yes	Chapters	N/A	Members	N/A
UK	Chapters	-	Members	-
Number of Members:	-			
Meetings:	Fortnightly			
Short Spot:	-			
Long Spot:	-			

Cost of Membership

12 months:	Registration	£95.00
	Annual Membership	£225.00

Women's Section: No

Additional: -

Website: www.bobclubs.com

TLGC - The Lead Generation Club

Set up in 2003 by Brian Abrahams. This club is for Directors and owners of independent businesses and senior executives of corporations. Very little hard information available.

Value of Referrals:			Not Known
Magazine:		No	
Attendance Requirement:			None
Referral Requirement:		-	
Online Networking:		-	
Exclusive:		-	
Meeting Time:		-	
Substitutes:			Not required
Worldwide:	Chapters	N/A	Members N/A
UK	Chapters	-	Members -
Exclusive:		-	
Number of Members:		-	
Meetings:		-	
Short Spot:		-	
Long Spot:		-	
Cost of Membership			
3 months:		-	
6 months:		-	

12 months: -

Women's Section: -

Additional Points: -

Website: www.tlqc.co.uk

Local Network Groups

All the preceding directories have been those who boast a considerable number of groups throughout the country all working on the same principals.

Here are, however, an increasing number of 'stand-alone' network groups with no connection to any other organisation. These groups have usually been founded by three or four people with some experience of networking, who have decided that it would be beneficial to network with other businesses in their area.

It may well be the case that many of these groups are in areas not well served by the larger organisations or it may simply be that they feel able to do the job better.

In any event it is worth seeking out such groups especially if you are in the type of business that can do well selling at a local level.

The most obvious advantage is that of cost. Whilst you will expect to pay in the region of £500.00 per year to join one of the large networks, local groups will usually be significantly cheaper.

There are many charging £100.00 per year or less and I have visited one or two locally that charged only £10.00 per meeting (the cost of refreshments) and no membership fee. What a bargain!

Whilst you obviously will not get the same level of training and support from a local network you could get great benefits from joining one. You could even consider joining a local network as well as one of the nationals.

Finding a Local Business Networking Group

To help you find a local Network, try searching Google (UK only) for 'business networking clubs'. It may be worthwhile adding the county or nearest large town to get a more conveniently located group.

The website below gives you the facility to search for local networking groups by county however it is by no means complete and I would still recommend a Google search.

www.networkingclubs.co.uk

Ladies Only

Here's a site specifically for the ladies, although every one of the groups previously mentioned has a large female membership and some even have a separate women's section.

Women in Business Network: www.wibn.co.uk

6. Speed Networking

In the beginning was 'Speed Dating' but now it has spread to the world of networking. Speed Networking usually appears in two forms:

- As a change from the usual meeting procedure in regular groups. It adds a little bit of fun and makes a pleasant change.
- As a standalone event at special network gatherings or at large exhibitions.

What is Speed Networking?

Usually the room to be used contains a continuous row of tables with many chairs facing each other down each side. At an exhibition or large event you can have as many as ninety pairs of chairs.

All the participants sit down, they are in pairs facing each other and we are ready to start. First of all they exchange business cards. The first one of the pair then has a short time usually 1 minute to explain his business to the person opposite to him and then the bell rings. The other partner takes over. He explains his business and after one minute the bell rings again.

That's it. Next all the people on one side of the tables move up one place so that now everyone is sitting opposite a new partner.

Again they exchange cards and explain their business for one minute.

So it continues until everyone has had one minute to present his or her business to everyone else and exchange cards.

No points for concluding that by this time everyone will have explained their business to ninety people for a minute each. Now if anyone thinks that this is easy I would take time to think again.

The noise generated by, in this example, ninety people talking at once is very considerable and the effort required to talk over it and listen through it is draining.

It is not surprising that people often give up in the middle of large speed networking events. Whilst it is just a bit of a challenge with two teams of fifteen at your local group, the large events are something else.

Is Speed Networking Effective?

As a reliable method of networking, to be used on a regular basis, I would have to say no. As a bit of fun and a change from the usual it's fine. Just don't go along hoping to come home with hundreds of leads.

Obviously it goes against all the processes that make networking successful. There is no developing of the business relationship and the resulting trust. There is no passing of referrals in the true sense, but you never know, there might just be someone sat there who wants your service or product.

Having said all this there is one valid use for speed networking and that is as a means of collecting contact details for future mail shots or as additions to email lists.

If you wish to do this just simply ask the person opposite would mind if you sent them your brochure, newsletter, or whatever and if they say yes simply note this on the back of the business card. When you return to the office, add all those who were agreeable, to your database, and –voila- ninety new contacts with full contact information and permission.