



WEAVE A WEB OF RELATIONSHIPS: Actualizing the Spiritual and Professional Potential of Your Network *by Michele Lisenbury Christensen*

Referrals are FUN!

My coaching clients often say to me, "I can't ask for referrals! I've never been that manipulative!" But think about the times when you've run into one friend who had a need or a situation, and you KNEW another friend would LOVE to help with that problem. Was it not your great pleasure to connect the two of them? This kind of connection is the filament that weaves the web of relationships. You can transform people's lives and businesses by being well-connected and by looking for ways to create win-win-win interactions for everyone involved. Networking and referrals are opportunities to remember the truth of our relationship to one another: we are all one. When one wins, we all win. When I win by connecting them with you, we all win BIG! And when those connections popcorn back and forth all the time, we can all spend our time and energy giving, rather than beating the bushes for those who might need us!

Meetings with the Masters

One of the reasons that business is such a powerful path for personal transformation is that we can't be successful in hiding. Business results require us to connect with people, and connecting authentically and powerfully with the people you want to connect with is a fantastic way to shed limiting beliefs and practice aligning with your highest good and your (new!) favorite people.

One of the ways I personally measure success is with this question: "Am I utterly tickled with the amazing people who are showing up in my world? Am I thrilled with the ease with which new opportunities to serve and to receive come to me?" When we have a measure of success that seeks delight, we turn our focus to finding delight. And when we look for it, we find it. I encourage you to think about the kind of people who could show up in your world to signal to you, "oh, yeah! You're DEFINITELY on the right track!"

Your Meetings with the Masters will be facilitated by the following practices:

- ☑ Practice the "Arrival Gate Attitude": Whenever you leave your home or office, KNOW with every fiber of your being that you are about to connect with someone you can be of service to and someone who will be a blessing to you as well. Eagerly anticipate their appearance, as if you were waiting to greet a loved one arriving on an airplane. When they show up, let them know, explicitly or through your actions, "I knew you were on your way. I'm so glad you've arrived!"
- ☑ Give Indiscriminately: Treat everyone you know or meet as if they WERE your ideal client, referral source, or resource. Spend more energy giving than you do *assessing* whether such giving is worthwhile. Your blessings will come through the most unexpected channels!

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- ☑ Practice the Buddy System: Take a friend with you when you go to an event, but don't stay glued at the hip. Give each other signals to indicate, "introduce me to that person!" or "get me out of here!" so that you can circulate effectively.

The Referral Chain:

The Essential Links Between You and Your Next Client

Let's presume you love the idea of clients connecting with you through referrals from friends, colleagues, clients, and acquaintances. Now you start wishing people would send you referrals. Maybe you even ask them to do so. Still, these wishes and requests may fail to bear fruit because one or more of the required links in the referral chain are missing. In order for someone to refer a client to you (or hire you themselves), ALL of the following "links" need to be in place:

LINKS 1-3: YOU:

- ☑ LINK # 1: You know specifically what companies or individuals you serve well
- ☑ LINK #2: You know the specific value you create for those clients
- ☑ LINK #3: You are confident in your ability to serve any person or company who fits within your ideal client description (Link #1).

LINKS 4-10: YOUR REFERRER:

- ☑ LINK #4: Your referrer knows and likes you.
- ☑ LINK #5: Your referrer understands your product or service; they know what you are selling.
- ☑ LINK #6: Your referrer understands Link #1, WHO you serve well.
- ☑ LINK #7: Your referrer believes that you add specific value for those specific clients
- ☑ LINK #8: Your referrer knows people who you could serve well
- ☑ LINK #9: Your referrer wants to help those people by connecting them to you
- ☑ LINK #10: Your referrer has what they need to be able to effectively describe the features and benefits of your product or service well enough to pique your future client's interest so that you can connect with that client.

LINKS 11-12: THE CONNECTION:

- ☑ LINK #11: You make it easy for referrers to connect you with clients.
- ☑ LINK #12: You give prospective clients the time, information, and resources they need to buy from you.

These 12 links, when all are in place, virtually assure you of receiving ideal clients from sources those clients know and trust. As a result, your referred clients will need very little 'convincing' or additional information in order to work with you. It's great fun working on a referral basis, so it's worth the investment of time and energy ensuring these links are in place.

REFERRAL CHAIN MAINTENANCE:

These strategies aren't necessary for the first referral to happen, but think of them as "lubricant" that keeps your referral chain shiny, clean, and swinging freely from referrers to you!

- ☑ Find fun, authentic, meaningful (to them!) ways of thanking your referrers for EVERY person they send your way, whether those people buy from you or not.

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- ☑ Keep your referrers up-to-date as to what you're doing. Over time, your business changes and their networks change, so your referrers need to continually be learning more about you in a way that's fun and valuable for them. A light yet useful-info-filled newsletter helps with this, as does entertaining professionally on a regular, if not frequent, basis.
- ☑ While the last maintenance tip will minimize this, if you get an inappropriate referral, gently re-direct your referrer when you thank them. "I was so appreciative of your sending Mary with Zadelco my way. We found that she might be better served by my friend Bob over at Lexicon. I work best with *(people/companies/etc.)* who *(describe the characteristics he missed with his last referral)*. I thank you for everyone you send my way! How can I help you in your business today?"
- ☑ ... And speaking of the offer to help your referrers, one of the best ways to keep yourself and your business front-of-mind with all your referrers is to GIVE referrals. Make sure all the links of the referral chain are in place from YOU to THEM, so that you and others can help people you know by sending them to your associate. If your referrer would value referrals, yet you can't recommend them to others, it may not be an energetic match for you to receive many referrals from them. Communicate lovingly and diplomatically what it would take for you to be able to refer clients. If you are not willing to do this, understand that this relationship may not be fruitful for either of you in the referral arena.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

I can send you the link to a RealAudio recording of my recent interview with Susan RoAne, a heartfelt 'mingling maven'. This hour-long interview highlights many integrous ways of connecting with people in a networking setting, making small talk meaningful, and graciously entering and exiting conversations. Simply e-mail michele@successandspirit.com for more information.

Recommended Reading for Weaving a Web of Relationships:

The Power of Focus *by Mark Victor Hansen, Jack Canfield, and Les Hewitt*

How to Work a Room *by Susan RoAne*

Extreme Success *by Rich Fette*

How You Do Anything is How You Do Everything *by Cherie Huber*

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