



Networking: BDU's Five Key Tips for Attracting Influencers

Description

Most sales professionals understand that networking is a key component to business success. Perhaps you've attended a handful of networking events but haven't gotten much out of them. At Business Development University, helping you take things to the next level is what we do. Here are some key tips for attracting influencers.

Networking is so much more than just showing up and talking with a few people about what you do. It's a wonderful way to build a network of influencers around you to keep your pipeline filled continuously with good, qualified prospects.

5 Key Tips For Attracting Influencers

How do you make networking work for you? Here are five important things to keep in mind:

1. **Networking is the best way to fill your sales pipeline with qualified prospects on a consistent basis.** This is true for two reasons. First, you will have a much higher close ratio for prospects sourced from referrals as opposed to traditional prospecting efforts. And secondly, strong Centers of Influence (COIs) can provide an ongoing source of referrals. It's like the difference between fishing with a rod and a net; would you rather work on catching one fish at a time or grab up a whole bunch at once? Your COIs are your fishing net and can constantly refer you to new business opportunities.
2. **Networking takes time, so be prepared to put in that time.** So many people attend just a few events and feel that it's just not working for them. They didn't put in the time and effort needed to be successful at networking. Take a look, for example, at your relationship with your best friend. Most likely, the two of you didn't become close overnight. It took time for this person to become your best friend. Networking works the same way and, over time, you'll build a strong network just like you built your strong friendship.
3. **Giving referrals gets referrals.** The number one key to getting referrals on a consistent basis is to give referrals on a consistent basis. If you can't make a referral to a prospect or suspect, perhaps you can refer to a potential COI. It is similar to the matching card game we played as kids, where the objective was to find the match for the picture on each card. Work on matching up

people in your network based on their target markets and synergies. By providing your network with continuous referrals, you'll find that they will reciprocate. However, networking shouldn't be tit for tat, and you shouldn't make a referral expecting one back.

4. **Be purposeful.** As mentioned above, networking takes time and effort. It can be time-consuming, so evaluate which groups, organizations, events and people are worth your time. Don't just do an activity for activity's sake. Think about the corresponding results. For example, if you are planning on attending an event such as an awards ceremony, you may want to set a goal of finding two people to meet and set up appointments with on the spot.
5. **Squeeze the lemon.** This is the concept of [getting the most out of everything you do](#). When you are meeting with your clients or COIs, make sure that you make the most of your meetings by asking for referrals or even a LinkedIn recommendation if they complement you or the work that you do. You can also make sure that you gather key information or perhaps find other ways to work together. And lastly, make sure that you set up defined next steps. Squeeze the most out of your networking efforts so that you maximize your networking ROI!

BDU also has a great free tool for you to use as a guideline for conducting one-on-one meetings with your COIs, including questions to ask and key information to uncover. [Download BDU's Networking Meeting Checklist](#), and other helpful BDUtensils, and start maximizing your networking opportunities right away.

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Author

lisa-peskin