

Being an aware referral source

Lead vs. referral

Start with understanding what your fellow business professionals do. Schedule one to one meetings to get to know them. Understand who their ideal clients would be.

1. **Be a good listener.** Listen for the needs of people you know with whom you meet and wish to develop a relationship with. Good referral givers mind other's people's business. Remember, when you speak, you learn what you know; when you listen, you learn what other know and have a need for.
2. **Use the phrase, "I know someone who can get that done."** As a rule, people who have a need won't necessarily ask you for a referral. If they don't know you, and sometimes even when they do, they may feel as if this would be an imposition. When you listen to the needs of others and then use the phrase "I know someone who can get that done," you are the one who takes control of the situation and creates action. This is an example of the triple win theory: You feel good about helping others; they appreciate the referral; and the person you referred appreciates you thinking of them. There is no better way to build a relationship.
3. **Share your experiences about the person you are referring.** When sharing your experiences about the person you are referring, you build confidence and trust. People do business with people they meet, feel comfortable with, and trust. Although your referral does not guarantee a sale, it will usually open the door for your associate to begin the relationship process with others. Remember, people do not want to go to the phone book (Internet) unless they must. A personal referral is the preferred way to do business.
4. **Give a business card of the person you are referring.** Always carry at least three business cards of each person in your network of key contacts. When you meet someone who has a need, be prepared not only to mention a name but also to pass along the person's business card. Doing so gives your referral added weight and immediate action, which often leads to some positive results. How do you do this? Contacts in phone? Contacts in Email? Business card organizer?
5. **Ask for calling/texting/emailing permission.** Ask the prospect if your colleague can contact them. This action can make the distinction between a good referral and a poor referral. A good referral has an immediate need, and the prospect is willing to accept a phone call, text, or email from your associate. Even if the individual does not have a direct or immediate need, securing permission for your colleague to call gives the individual an opportunity to develop a new relationship.
6. **Contact your colleague.** After referring an individual from your network of key contacts, call the individual to make him or her aware of the referral. Relay everything you know about the prospect you referred to him or her. The information you pass on to them may be invaluable. Your information may point out a common thread that can help the new relationship develop.

When all is said and done, a good referral is when you recommend someone that you know, like, and trust to someone you care about.