
IDEABRIDGE



The Referral
Builder ProgramSM



IDEABRIDGE
Corporate Growth Advisors

RE: Growth through Referral Building

Greetings,

Thank you for expressing interest in our Referral Builder Program.

This package of information highlights our most popular program to add new bank clients and dramatically improve the results of your calling officers, all without requiring sales gimmicks or aggressive cold calling tactics.

Most people are terribly uncomfortable making cold calls. But ask anyone about referrals and their face instantly lights-up and they become animated. People just love getting warm referrals!

We've taken referral building from a casual hit-or-miss encounter, to a formal process where results can be more predictable.

The Referral Builder Program was specifically designed by bankers, for bankers. It's the first and only program of its kind to take a strategic approach to referral building for banks. Hundreds of millions of dollars in new bank business has been generated using our program. Participants embrace the process because they are given the flexibility to focus only on those program tools and tactics that fit with their natural style, personality and comfort level.

This isn't about selling. It's about building quality relationships with like-minded professionals who are also trying to grow their business. In the process, tight bonds are formed, value is exchanged and all parties benefit.

We invite you to review this package of information and to contact us should you feel comfortable doing so.

Best Wishes,

John D. Callos
President & CEO
(800) 986-1230 x225
John@IdeaBridge.com



Referral Builder Program

Warm, qualified referrals are on the critical path for quickly landing new clients. But the problem has always been the lack of a systematic, strategic approach to consistently generate referrals...until now.

The Referral Builder Program is a comprehensive, six-month training program designed for bankers who want to develop more business through warm, qualified referrals. The program is designed for bankers who may be disillusioned with networking events, cold calling and low-return prospecting activities. The result is more business with less selling.

REFERRAL BUILDER PROGRAM

A PROVEN SYSTEM

This program includes significant, ongoing reinforcement of the methods, process and skills necessary to establish a referral building mindset. This mindset is shaped through the kickoff workshop, extensive workbook exercises, scripts, case studies, proprietary templates and accountability coaching. This combination of tools represents the worldwide best practice for consistently generating warm, qualified business referrals, including:

- Force-ranking all contacts by proven value, not just potential or past friendships
- Exchanging value when there are no referrals to give
- Plans tailored to one's style, skills and personality
- Concentrating first on retaining existing clients
- Leveraging current clients, vendors and advisors (low-hanging fruit)
- Uniquely-positioning one's bank to differentiate
- Using testimonial letters to improve results
- Conducting an Inner-Circle Backgrounder
- Using a Referral Resume to improve referral quality
- Online resource: www.ReferralResume.com



IS THIS PROGRAM A GOOD FIT?

Banks that achieve the greatest results in utilizing the Referral Builder Program will tend to agree with the following statements:

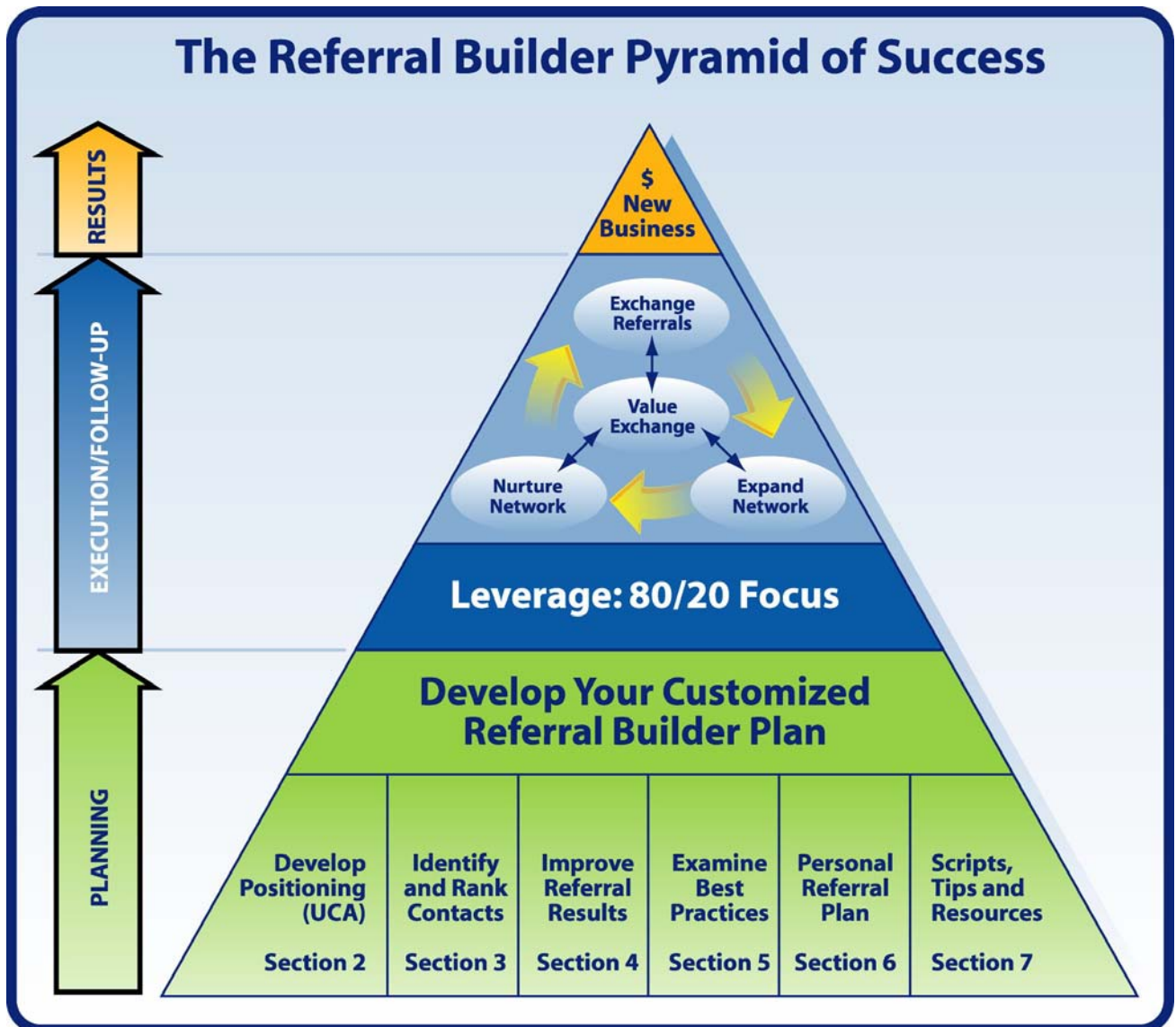
- We have strong, loyal client relationships
- Our people prefer receiving warm referrals over chasing cold leads and dealing with gatekeepers
- We want to improve new business results
- Cold calling is not as productive as it was in the past
- We need to boost our team's referral results
- Many of our people are not consistently prospecting every week
- Networking groups and business mixers are not highly-productive
- Our bank views training as an investment; we must see a return on each training dollar

Referral Builder Program

The program is based on the proven referral building best practices of some of the country's leading new business rainmakers. Participants readily embrace the program since it's tailored to their own style and personality and developed 100% for bankers. The program includes group workshops, a resource workbook, teletraining, teleconference participation and private manager training to ensure accountability for momentum and new business results...*results that can be tracked and measured.*

Now more than ever, banks are demanding training programs that deliver an ROI that they can easily track and measure. Since we believe so strongly in a measurable ROI for training, we developed and incorporated the "Referral Compass" into all of our Referral Builder Programs. The Compass allows for monthly online tracking of results, which helps us to identify those who may need more help. The Compass is a constant reminder to all participants to maintain their referral building momentum.

REFERRAL BUILDER PROGRAM





PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

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Overview

The Referral Builder ProgramSM has been developed specifically for business professionals who rely upon warm introductions and referrals as a core part of their overall business development strategy.

The objective of the Referral Builder ProgramSM:

To increase the new business results of each participant by generating more warm, qualified referrals and introductions.

This objective is accomplished through a planning process that includes templates, tools, tactics, techniques and disciplines. The final product is a customized, personal referral building strategy that leverages the unique strengths, resources, comfort level and style of each participant.

The goal is to increase the number of warm, qualified referrals.

- A name is not a referral, it's a lead. (In this program, we want referrals, not leads)
- A "quiet whisper" about a company "in-play" is not a referral, it's a rumor.
- A warm, personal introduction to a qualified prospect in a face-to-face meeting is a referral.

Our goal is to increase the number of warm, qualified referrals of each participant.

Referral Relationships are an asset.

Referral relationships represent a unique strategic resource, the value of which can be enhanced over a lifetime. Referral relationships are valuable assets because each relationship can be worth literally hundreds of thousands to tens of millions of dollars in revenue.

We will be developing an individual game plan to identify, rank, develop, nurture and enhance your referral relationship assets.

What types of professionals benefit the most from having a personal referral strategy?

- CPAs
- Attorneys
- Bankers and financial services professionals
- Business development officers
- Consultants of all kinds
- Insurance professionals
- Executive recruiters
- Money managers
- Financial planners
- Management trainers
- Advertising executives
- Real estate leasing agents
- Architects/engineers



THE IMMUTABLE LAWS OF REFERRAL BUILDING

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Outlined below are some of the fundamental, absolute truths about referral building. These laws are indisputable:

1. Without a follow-up note, most new referral sources and prospects will forget your name in less than 10 days.
2. In order for one's referral network to consistently send warm, qualified referrals, they need to have a crystal-clear understanding of exactly what you do, the problems you can solve, your unique positioning in the marketplace and the preferred kinds of situations you want to be referred into.
3. Referral building is not networking or selling. Referral building is relationship building, and that requires an investment of time to build mutual trust and a mutual exchange of value.
4. One of the best sources of new business is a warm referral from an existing client. However, asking clients for introductions to specific companies or people is often the most overlooked opportunity for new business development.
5. With respect to referral building, consistency and quality of referrals are more important than quantity of referral sources.
6. Technology cannot replace personal chemistry and "face-time." Referrals are based on relationships and trust.
7. A nod, a quiet whisper, and an "inside tip" are not referrals; they are leads. A referral consists of a warmly endorsed, face-to-face introduction to a prospect who has agreed to meet because they have a sincere interest and they trust that the referral source knows that there is a reasonably good fit.
8. Upon completing the Referral Builder ProgramSM, it's not uncommon to conclude that many so called "referral sources" are actually just social contacts, golfing buddies or good-time Charlies. It's often discovered that these people have rarely, if ever, sent a referral that actually converted to a new client.
9. Lack of follow-up is consistently ranked as the top reason why referral relationships falter.
10. The average closing ratio for hot tips and leads is less than 15% versus over 50% with warm, endorsed referrals. (Note the difference between "leads" vs. "referrals.")



CURRENT REFERRAL ASSESSMENT

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Current Situation Assessment

Prior to developing a comprehensive referral building strategy, it's important to understand one's current position.

The following questions will help you identify your current strengths, opportunities, commitment to growth and any referral source gaps.

Survey Questions (NOTE: Estimates and best guesses are OK)	Participant Answer
1. Approximately how many referral sources do you have?	
2. How many of your referral sources provided you with one or more warm, qualified referrals in the last 12 months?	
3. How many of your referral sources provided you with just one qualified referral in the last 24 months?	
4. Mentally review your entire list of referral sources. What percentage of this list has sent you any kind of referral (warm or otherwise) in the past 12 months?	
5. What percentage of your entire list of referral sources could be reasonably classified as "unproductive" in generating warm, qualified referrals?	
6. Over the last 12 months, about how many of your clients did you formally approach and ask for referrals to <u>specific</u> companies (Note: Saying, "keep me in mind for referrals" doesn't count!)?	
7. How many new business opportunities did you generate by asking these clients for referrals to <u>specific</u> companies?	
8. About what percentage of your clients have rejected your request for referrals or introductions to specific companies?	
9. In the last 12 months, approximately how many meetings did you <u>personally</u> set by "cold calling" prospects over the phone?	
10. In the last 12 months, how many people did you contact in an attempt to establish a new, productive referral source relationship?	
10. How many referrals have you received in the last 12 months?	
11. How many referrals have you given to others in the last 12 months?	
12. Over the past 12 months, how many hours each week (on average) have you devoted specifically to building your referral network and deepening the relationships with your bona fide referral sources?	
13. How many hours are you prepared to consistently spend each week on your referral building activities? (Remember, even during your busiest periods, you must still find time for referral building.)	



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REFERRAL BUILDER REFERENCE STATEMENTS

Some of our past clients and program participants include:

Client Comments:

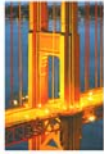
- The goals of The Referral Builder Program have been included into the performance scorecards of every one of our 100+ relationship managers throughout the state of California; if they want to bonus, they'll need to follow this program. That's how strongly management supports The Referral Builder Program!
- As for my group in San Francisco, here are the measurable, tangible results in terms of new business referral activity that has taken place in the first six months following the kickoff of The Referral Builder Program: 28 new business opportunities were generated from 60 new referral source calls. For comparison purposes, we had only generated 38 referral source calls in the prior 12 months. The Referral Builder Program helped to increase our referral source calling activity by 315% in the first six months following the kickoff workshop. These are real, tangible numbers that we have tracked.
- In short, I would highly recommend IdeaBridge to any business leader interested in taking their people, their results or their company to the next level.
- We've always known that referrals are the best source of business, but we don't always focus on them. The Referral Builder Program has really helped my team and my Region enhance existing referral relationships and make them more productive, fruitful and valuable by increasing our focus. We now have a referral building awareness that just wasn't there before. The program has given us a specific process to improve referral results (more warm referrals, more qualified referrals, less cold calling!).
- The program offers a clear focus on a systematic, measurable system rather than just vague ideas.
- I highly recommend The Referral Builder Program given the results that have been generated in the short period of time since the program's inception with our company.



REFERRAL BUILDER REFERENCE STATEMENTS

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- The Referral Builder Program helped our Relationship Managers improve the quality and quantity of their referrals by teaching them a way to nurture referral sources so that they are "top of mind and top of the list" when an opportunity arises. The Program gave us a system for initiating and maintaining quality referral sources that produce measurable new business results we can see and track.
- The Referral Builder Program's personal training was fantastic and extremely beneficial. I have taken lots of sales courses, but the Referral Builder Program was not about selling, it was about getting warm, qualified referrals. No other course has ever provided this kind of opportunity.
- I received sound ideas that I have implemented to get more referrals – sharing my prospect list with my inner-circle, reviewing A/R & A/P agings for referrals and asking clients for introductions. These are definitely good ideas that work!
- A systematic approach to building referral sources and obtaining leads from those sources. I like how it can be customized to your own personal style.
- I really learned how customers can be a great sources of referrals, and how to ask them for introductions.
- Closer relationships = more referrals = more business = bigger bonuses! I'm sold!
- The program has energized my marketing efforts and I am now more successful.
- I like the program's focus on identifying and nurturing my highest potential referral sources. This provides a high return on my limited referral building time.
- The program's focus on classifying referral sources by "value" was a very good idea. I got lots of good ideas that I began to implement soon after the very first workshop.
- I liked how the program focused on developing just a handful of top referral sources (inner-circle advocates) and learning the best ways to leverage our existing relationships with them and with our clients.
- Forced ranking of referral sources into the actual value they provided was an enlightening and valuable process.
- Forcing me to spend the necessary time to work on the project made me focus on what the Bank and I do well and how to sell and position our services. This helps in selling our capabilities to referral sources, clients and prospects.
- I liked the idea of gathering a lot more detailed information on my inner-circle referral sources. Your inner-circle backgrounder template is invaluable.
- The program provided me with the tools to put together a well organized, disciplined referral strategy and ideas how to implement it. I believe doing the work will be time well spent and will be more productive than direct prospecting alone.
- I have generated new incremental business directly from The Referral Builder Program.



REFERRAL BUILDER REFERENCE STATEMENTS

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- I am now generating more warm, qualified referrals.
- The program has helped my team be more efficient and effective in our business development efforts.
- The program was helpful to me in crafting a referral-building mindset to focus on a systematic approach with my referral sources. Submission to my referral sources of your Referral Resume and asking the same of them is a great idea, and it works!
- The program will assist me in getting more business for the Bank.
- I really needed to improve this area of my performance at the firm. This additional referral building focus has been very valuable to me.
- I should be able to advance my relationship with my referral sources, resulting in more new, incremental business for my team.
- I will increase the number of warm referrals which should result in increased closed business for the firm.
- This program will further cement your existing relationships with clients, add to your prospect list and lead to new business.
- The program really made one look at their current referral sources and determine whether or not they are truly valuable referral sources, or just old friends or golfing buddies.
- The program has made me more productive at generating new referrals.
- The program is all about maximizing time and increasing referral opportunities.
- Most Valuable - The concept of giving something other than a referral to a referral source every time you make contact with them was very enlightening.
- The program generated a valuable "open discussion" of tactics by our people. This was very valuable for them to determine how we are different and unique in the marketplace.
- Referral sources have been worked by myself in the past but not nearly as successfully as I'm able to now. My goal is that I will be able to generate at least 25% of my new business through my 6 new referral sources.
- The kickoff workshop was fantastic. I liked the binder and the real-life examples you presented. I've already used the forms, tools, templates and the various ideas.
- The program's focus on concentrating our time on the inner-circle advocates, the A's, was very enlightening and valuable.
- The structure of the program is solid and I really like that it is a proven system that will work every time as long as we execute.
- I recommend IdeaBridge to all of my clients who want tangible and measurable results.



REFERRAL BUILDER REFERENCE STATEMENTS

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June 23, 2003

MR. JOHN D. CALLOS, MANAGING DIRECTOR
IDEABRIDGE CONSULTING GROUP
5300 E. EL PRADO AVE.
LONG BEACH, CA 90815

DEAR JOHN,

I WANTED TO GIVE YOU AN UPDATE ON THE SUCCESS OF THE OFFICE AFTER ATTENDING AND USING THE REFERRAL BUILDER PROGRAM. FIRST, MARKETING ACTIVITY LEVELS HAVE IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY COMPARED TO LAST YEAR AS MY TEAM APPLIES THE PRINCIPALS LEARNED IN THE PROGRAM. CALLING ACTIVITY BOTH REFERRAL AND PROSPECT HAVE IMPROVED. ALL THE OFFICERS ARE CONSISTENTLY USING VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM. OF THE FOUR NEW RELATIONSHIPS OBTAINED YEAR TO DATE, TWO ARE THE DIRECT RESULT OF REFERRAL BASED MARKETING. THESE TWO RELATIONSHIPS TOTAL \$65 MILLION IN NEW LOAN OUTSTANDINGS AND WILL GENERATE \$2 MILLION IN NEW NET INCOME TO THE BANK IN FISCAL 2003.

WE ARE STILL WORKING TO FULLY INCORPORATE THE REFERRAL BUILDER PROGRAM INTO OUR DAILY ROUTINE, HOWEVER, WE ARE MUCH FURTHER ALONG THEN WE COULD HAVE BEEN WITHOUT YOUR GUIDANCE.

REGARDS,



REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT



REFERRAL BUILDER REFERENCE STATEMENTS

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UNION
BANK OF
CALIFORNIA

June 30, 2003

John D. Callos
President & CEO
IdeaBridge
5300 E. El Prado Avenue, Suite B
Long Beach, CA 90815

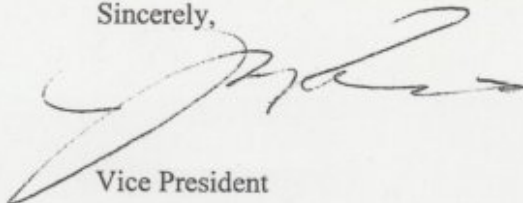
Dear John:

The Referral Resume has received rave reviews from my referral sources. My referral sources tell me that they like the concise nature of the document. In addition, my referral sources tell me that they like how the document clearly spells out my target market and more specifically, which companies I would like to meet. I have sent the Referral Resume to five referral sources and all of them have reciprocated by providing me similar information about their target markets and their top prospects.

I have obtained nine qualified referrals in the three months that I have been using the Referral Resume. I have met all of these referrals face-to-face and I have received two packages from my meetings. I am certain that I would not have received these referrals had I not used the Referral Resume.

Thanks again for all your help. I look forward to more successes using the Referral Resume. I expect to close at least one transaction from my first set of referrals.

Sincerely,



Vice President



SAMPLE CUSTOMIZED REFERRAL COMPASS

Mellon Compass - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Mellon Mellon 1st Business Bank October 7, 2003

The Mellon Compass

Home
 Submit Dashboard
 View Dashboards
 Edit Dashboard
 My Preferences
 Logout

Submit Your Dashboard

Below is the monthly goal section for your Referral Builder Dashboard.

Please indicate whether or not you are Ahead, On Track or Behind in each area. You must hit the SUBMIT button for the data to be recorded.

My Referral Building Results

1. Number of referrals received this month.	<input type="text"/>
2. Number of new loans, deposits or other referrals BOOKED this month.	<input type="text"/>
3. Dollar value of new loans booked from referrals this month.	<input type="text"/>
4. Estimated annual income that will be generated from all referral business that was BOOKED this month.	<input type="text"/>

My Referral Builder Goals

	Behind	On Track	Ahead
1. Meet with all of my As and show Referral Resume.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Meet with 2 referral sources monthly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Convert a Benchwarmer to an Inner-Circle Advocate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My Top-3 Referral Building Objectives This Month

1. <input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Left"/>	<input type="button" value="Right"/>
2. <input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Left"/>	<input type="button" value="Right"/>
3. <input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Left"/>	<input type="button" value="Right"/>

General Comments About The Program

	No	Somewhat	Very Much
1. Are you getting better results due to this Program?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Are you satisfied with your progress at Referral Building?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Are you finding value in the program?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Are you satisfied with your coach?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. How is the Referral Builder Program working for you? Please insert any recent Referral Building success stories!	<input type="text"/>		
6. How can we improve the Program and make it more valuable for you and the Bank?	<input type="text"/>		

Submit Cancel


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Internet



Logout		Attachment	Sales Blueprint	PDF Document
		Attachment	Testimonial Letters	PDF Document
		Attachment	Negotiation Strategies of Rainmakers	PDF Document
		Attachment	Pre-Call Plan	PDF Document
		Attachment	My Referral Resume Template	Word Document
	2/10/2008	Email	Email to be included in the participant database (From: John Callos)	Email Message
	2/22/2008	Email	Email with Participant Database, TeleTraining Details & Quick Tip (From: John Callos)	Email Message
		Attachment	Participant List	PDF Document
	3/10/2008	Email	Email with TeleTraining Reminder & Quick Tip (From: John Callos)	Email Message
	3/13/2008	Phone	TeleTraining Session # 1 <i>(Note: to download the MP3 of the session, either click on the link to the right titled "MP3 Audio," or right click on it and choose "Save Target As..." to save it to your local computer.)</i>	MP3 Audio
	4/10/2008	Phone	TeleTraining Session # 2 <i>(Note: to download the MP3 of the session, either click on the link to the right titled "MP3 Audio," or right click on it and choose "Save Target As..." to save it to your local computer.)</i>	MP3 Audio
	5/8/2008	Phone	TeleTraining Session # 3 <i>(Note: to download the MP3 of the session, either click on the link to the right titled "MP3</i>	MP3 Audio

Save This Resume

 **IDEA BRIDGE**
Corporate Growth Advisors

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Referral Resume

About IdeaBridge	About IdeaBridge
The Ideal Referral	We are an executive coaching, leadership development and sales training organization that caters specifically to the banking industry.
What are Warm Referrals?	
Here's how I can help you grow your Business...	Our services are linked to advice and programs aimed at two core areas: increasing sales results and improving the leadership effectiveness of senior bank executives; we typically begin our work with a bank's CEO/President, a Board member, or a Vice Chairman.
My Professional Background & Experience	
Do you know these People?	Clients find our approach unique among all others because we work diligently with all participants, expect results, are on constant stand-by to help anyone and we follow-up constantly. As former bankers ourselves, we have developed uniquely-relevant programs and materials that our bank participants find appealing and approachable. Rather than a one-time pep talk, or the flavor of the month initiative, we tend to stay involved from six months to multiple years, depending on the program and the bank's objectives.
Why send me a Referral?	
If you don't have any Referrals...	
My Background & Interests	We have a unique set of values that serve as the foundation of our executive development and



Now more than ever, businesses are demanding training programs that deliver an ROI that they can easily track and measure.

We recognize the importance of tracking results. Therefore, we've incorporated our "Referral Compass" into most of our programs. The Compass allows for monthly online tracking of results, which helps us to identify those who may need more help. The Compass is also a terrific tool to track the program's ROI and it's a constant reminder to all participants to maintain their referral building momentum and activities.

The program is based on the proven referral building best practices of some of the country's leading new business rainmakers. Participants readily embrace the program since it's tailored to their own style and personality. The program includes group sessions, a resource workbook, and private coaching to ensure accountability for momentum and new business results...*results that can be tracked and measured.*

PROGRAM OPTIONS & OUTLINE	Bronze Three Month Program	Silver Six Month Program	Gold Nine Month Program	Rainmaker Twelve Month Program
Referral Builder Group Kickoff Workshop	½ Day in Person	½ Day in Person	½ Day in Person	½ Day in Person
Group Follow-up Review Sessions	None	1 In-Person	2 In-Person	3 In-Person
Group Follow-up Telephone & Online Training	3 months	6 months	9 months	12 months
One-on-One Phone Accountability Sessions	None	1 Each	2 Each	3 Each
Proprietary online Accountability Compass "The Referral Builder Compass" for tracking	3 months LIMITED	6 months STANDARD	9 months ENHANCED	12 months ENHANCED
Online Resource Library and Training Materials	3 months	6 months	9 months	12 months
Phone and email assistance for all Participants	LIMITED	LIMITED	UNLIMITED	UNLIMITED
Per Person (pp) Investment x # Participants = Total Investment	\$1,500/pp x <input type="text"/> = \$ <input type="text"/>	\$2,500/pp x <input type="text"/> = \$ <input type="text"/>	\$3,500/pp x <input type="text"/> = \$ <input type="text"/>	\$4,950/pp x <input type="text"/> = \$ <input type="text"/>
Optional: Ongoing Monthly Compass & Resource Library Access After Program Completion	\$1,000/Group per Month + \$10/pp per Month			

To bring The Referral Builder Program to your company, list the number of participants and circle the program option you have selected.

Name/Title: _____ Company: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Number of Participants: _____ Phone: _____

Program Option (please circle one): Bronze Silver Gold Rainmaker

Preferred Kickoff Date: _____ Follow-up Workshop Date: _____



Networking is Dead

by John D. Callos

Many bankers will readily spend their weekends doing extensive credit write-ups and industry risk analysis, but ask them to develop new business and their prickly glare says it all: “I didn’t go to school to be a salesperson!”

Attrition is inevitable

Face it. Despite our best efforts at retention, there will always be client attrition. Certain industries become high risk and must be exited. Clients move out of the area. The new CFO decides to bring her previous banker along with her and now you’re out. The need to add new clients—not just getting more business from the same ones, but actually adding new names to your client roster—is both universal and perpetual; we can never stop developing new clients. Without a steady stream of new clients in addition to repeat business from existing clients, banks are subject to the same economic reality as any other business

enterprise. Due to the inevitability of client attrition, if your bank isn’t growing, then it’s slowly dying. If your portfolio is declining, what should be done?

Rally the troops?

Most relationship managers go to the bank’s annual planning offsite and listen intently to the requisite business development speaker to get them fired up about ‘networking’ and other means to beat the bushes for new business. These one-time inspirational pep talks are predictable if nothing else: they fail to consistently produce any lasting, meaningful results. Why? Because these polished pep talks don’t result in any significant change other than a momentary motivational ripple that quickly dissipates. When Monday morning rolls along, the handouts, along with all those great intentions, disappear under a pile of credit write-ups, compliance circulars, and urgent phone messages.

So what should one do to motivate bankers who bristle at the slightest mention that they are responsible for helping develop new business?

The answer is simple. Don't try to "motivate" them and please, don't send them to traditional sales training classes. Forget about the conventional 'networking' events and social mixers as a core strategy for developing new business. Sure, everyone stumbles upon some business from time to time, but the overall results from these activities will rarely justify the cost in terms of dollars or time.

Referral Building is the answer

Now let's be clear: referral building is not networking, bank-sponsored wine tastings, luxury sports boxes, golf outings or genteel mixers in your conference room with estate planning attorneys and CPAs. It's much more personal than that.

While many bankers find cold calling to be distasteful and undignified, they absolutely love referrals from clients, friends and colleagues since they are passed along with the implied endorsement of the referrer.

Before we take the plunge on many key decisions, we often seek to mitigate the risk of a blind, untested experience. We want the opinion, the advice and the referral of a trusted friend or colleague. There's no debating that referrals are the best source of new client relationships. But how do we ensure that people will remember to refer us when they learn of an opportunity?

Start with your clients

Networking and collecting business cards simply does not work. It's a very low return on time—in fact—usually a total waste of time. Instead, start with current clients. The lowest hanging fruit is ripe for the picking and it's in plain sight. Yet most professionals make only a half-hearted attempt at harvesting the mother lode of all new business opportunities.

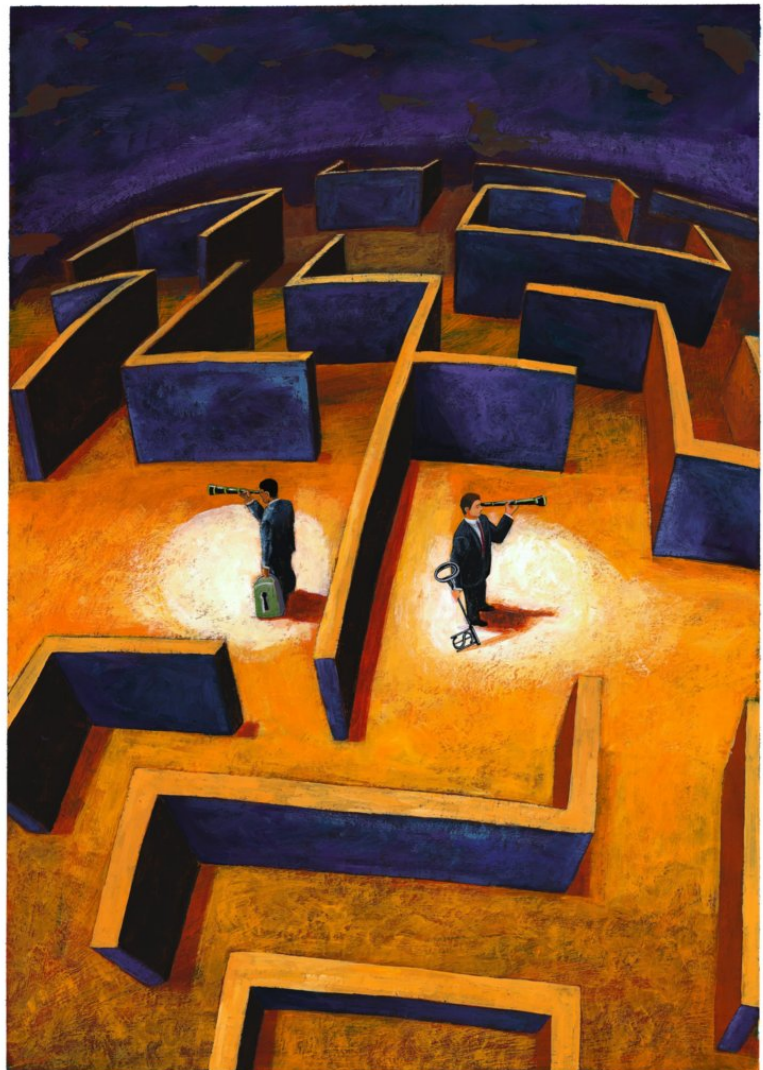
The best (quick) source of new business

The best source of new business is always going to be a referral from a delighted client. These client relationships can be easily leveraged into referral relationships. In fact, 86% of clients surveyed said that they'd gladly make a referral, yet only 12% recall being asked

within the past year. Therefore, before one leaps in pursuit of numerous networking and referral building strategies, the first thing you should do is to pay attention to your existing clients. Once existing clients have been effectively mined for opportunities, it's time to start the external referral building process.

Referral building is the answer

Referral building is the process of developing relationships with a group of like-minded professionals that share a common level of trust and respect. So much so, that they are happy to attach their name and reputation to the person they are referring. This endorsement serves as an implied stamp of approval and results in an opportunity that has a significantly greater chance of converting into a new client than does a 'hot tip' or a 'lead' from a networking contact. The masters of referral building are called Referral RainmakersSM.



So what's a Referral Rainmaker?

We've all seen them. They're the ones who develop more business than they alone can handle. Typically, they consistently create enough new business to keep several other people busy. And they do this year in and year out. And when it comes to their Rolodex, they don't operate under the misguided notion that bigger is better. They understand that more business cards does not equate to more referrals.

Referral RainmakersSM are the most highly evolved and specialized business development practitioners in the banking industry. Referral RainmakersSM share some common traits.

- They are the primary developers of new business for their region. Year after year, they will consistently develop more new opportunities than 90% of all other relationship managers in the region.
- They are some of the highest paid in the bank.
- They are relentless at follow-up.

A timid request or a candid discussion?

The key to referral building is to develop a group of people who understand what we do, how we are different and why others should be doing business with us. But referrals won't happen simply by making a timid hint at the end of a 90-minute lunch to "keep me in mind." Sure, they say they will, but this rarely works. It's time to stop kidding ourselves and to start focusing on a high-leverage, high return-on-time (ROT) approach to business development. It's time to have a conversation with each of your referral sources about their role in helping you build your business and your commitment to helping them build theirs.

Guard your time

Referral RainmakersSM don't waste time with referral wannabes seeking free lunches, golf and good times. These are all fine for friends and family, but don't delude yourself into believing that outings with these Good Time Charlies are a "referral source call." They are not.

Who are these good time free loaders? Good Time Charlies will rarely, if ever, deliver a solid business referral. Here's the acid test: in the past two years of actively working with this referral source, have they presented you with an opportunity that you ultimately landed as a new bank client? If not, then you should seriously reconsider whether or not the relationship should be continued. We argue that in most cases, such people should be eliminated from your Rolodex of referral sources.

Not all referrals are created equal

Some referrals are not referrals at all. In fact, often they can be a total waste of your time. You'll know if it's a bad referral because you'll start to squirm in your chair. Your mind will be wandering during the meeting and you'll be wondering how you ever got into this mess and how quickly you can get out! The best referrals are from people who really understand your background and skills, why you are different and how you've helped others in the past. Referral RainmakersSM don't make time for meetings that aren't a good fit, and they don't feel that they owe it to anybody to go on a meeting simply because it was a referral.



Are they a bon fide referral source?

Ask yourself these questions: Have they given you a warm referral in the past year? Do they send you referrals that are a good fit or have they been a waste of your time? How many actual client relationships have resulted from this person? How much time have you been investing in this person? Has there been an adequate return on your time? Do they really go the extra mile to personally introduce you? Do they offer a “warm endorsement” or just an introduction?

First steps

So before you ask someone to start planning for the firm’s next wine tasting event and social mixer, the

first thing you should do is to focus everyone on referral building efforts within your existing client base. And rather than a meek reference to “keep us in mind,” one must specifically engage the client in a referral building conversation.

This conversation should include agreement around mutual expectations for referrals that fit within your target market, your current credit box as well as the expectation for a personal introduction and a warm endorsement.

This strategy is not only on the most direct critical path to quickly landing new clients—you just may save a couple of cases of wine for your celebration dinner!

