



# CREATIVE *matchmaking.*

How to Cultivate a Network of Endless Referrals

## Part II

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WHEN IT COMES TO EFFECTIVE AND PROFITABLE NETWORKING,  
**QUALITY TRUMPS QUANTITY EVERY TIME.**

In the March issue of **Agency Sales** (Cultivating Referrals — Part I, p.14), you met a new contact and did an excellent job of establishing an initial rapport. This was accomplished, first, by simply letting them talk about themselves and *their* business instead of you talking about yourself and *your* business. Right there, that separated you from practically every other salesperson they'd ever met. You also asked them two of the "Feel-Good Questions" as well as the "One Key Question," which together, is a powerful combination.

By the time the conversation ended and you asked for and received their business card, the new contact was very impressed with you. And, if you met in a non-event setting, that would be it. The next step would be the follow-up.

First though, if you *are* at an event of some type (Chamber of Commerce, social function, charity event, etc.) where you met this person, you can add an additional step, and this is powerful! This is part of the system that, with a bit of practice, will become second nature to you and provide terrific leverage.

Let's imagine that it's 30 minutes into the event and you've had brief but good conversations with several people (yes, you can ask the same "Feel-Good Questions" and "One Key Question"). That's fine; when it comes to effective and profitable networking, quality trumps quantity every time.

Now, you're standing alone at the hors d'oeuvres table when the copy machine salesperson you met earlier walks by. Simply re-introduce yourself to him by name. Imagine his surprise and delight that you remembered his name. You again made him feel important and good about himself, which is what you did during your previous conversation.

**Important Point:** Make sure to *immediately* let him know *your* name. What you don't want is for him to feel embarrassed and defensive because you remembered his name and he has no clue as to yours.

Now, when the opportunity presents itself – which it will – introduce him to someone else you've met. I call this "creative matchmaking." Position *yourself* as a center of influence — the one who knows the movers and shakers. People will respond to that, and you'll soon become what you project.

Give each person a nice introduction and explain what the other does.

Now take it even a step further (practically no one else but you does this!). Suggest ways they can look for business for each other. Remember the critically important step we talked about earlier: asking that person how you can tell if a person you're speaking to might be a good prospect for them.

You'll use that information for the benefit of those you are introducing. Explain to one person how to tell the signs of a good prospect for the second person, and vice versa.

Now, you might even suggest that the two of them exchange business cards so they can do some cross-selling for one another. Imagine how grateful they are to have met you. In both conversations you've done nothing but focus on them and show them you are interested in adding to *their* lives and *their* success. Without coming right out and saying it, you are displaying to them that, just by knowing you and having you as a part of their lives, they stand to gain.

The early 20<sup>th</sup> Century author, Wallace D. Wattles, author of the classic, *The Science of Getting Rich* called it "adding *increase* to people's lives." According to Wattles, we as human beings are creatures of increase and always seek out more, including more business. Thus, when we meet people who appear to help us in that quest for increase, we become attracted to them much faster than we otherwise would have.

And, of course, there is nothing phony about your desire to help them in their businesses. You find it gratifying and pleasurable to help others attain success.

Do all of this without ever mentioning your products or business. While that might sound counter-intuitive, you are now positioning yourself in their minds as a true center of influence, a connector, a "successful giver." People are very receptive to these types and want to be part of their lives. You'll be surprised, though, at how often they *will* ask you about your business — more so because *you're not* mentioning it. Even if not, however, it doesn't matter. You'll have plenty of opportunities in the very near future.

Here's one more thing you can do for added effect: partway through the conversation, politely excuse yourself and leave the two of them speaking with each other. Guess what (or who) they'll be talking about? Most likely, the one common element in their lives up to this point — *you* — and how impressed they are with you. And most likely they still don't have much of an idea as to what it is you even do, and that's okay. *They soon will.*

In the next article (part III) we'll look at profitable follow-up. Simple in its application, it's designed to ensure that when the time comes that your prospect needs your products, goods, or services (or knows someone else who does), you will be the only one who could possibly come to mind. ■



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**Bob Burg** is the author of **Endless Referrals: Network Your Everyday Contacts Into Sales** and co-author of *The Wall Street Journal* and *Business Week* bestseller, **The Go-Giver: A Little Story About A Powerful Business Idea**. For additional information about Bob, visit [burg.com](http://burg.com).