

THE **2** MINUTE **NETWORKER** **WORKBOOK**



Practical Tips and Exercises to Help
You Master the Simple, Step-by-Step
System for Growing Your Business
Through Networking!

RHONDA L. SHER

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THOUSAND OAKS, CALIFORNIA

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The 2 Minute Networker Workbook

This workbook is designed as a personal development tool to be used in conjunction with The 2 Minute Networker book by Rhonda L. Sher and Paul Mirador.

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www.2MinuteNetworker.com

THE 2 MINUTE NETWORKER WORKBOOK

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Welcome to THE **2** MINUTE NETWORKER Workbook!

In this workbook, you'll learn to apply the 2 Minute Networker System – the concepts, process, and techniques for *connecting with the right people in the right places, saying the right things, and building the right relationships*. Each technique is designed to be implemented with maximum efficiency for you and the people with whom you network.

We call our program “The 2 Minute Networker” because each of the techniques you will learn has been developed, tested, and refined so that you can implement them effectively *in two minutes or less!*

You'll learn to apply the powerful networking techniques described in The 2 Minute Networker book, including:

- How to identify the *right places* to meet the people that will be your *strongest sources of mutual benefit*
- How to determine whether *each person* you meet is one with whom you *need* to establish a relationship
- How to tell *your most compelling story* about the benefits of what you do
- How to write personalized thank-you notes that launch your newly-formed relationships *into the “trust zone”*
- How to *follow up purposefully* with your new contacts and make decisions about where each person fits into your network
- How to *nurture and sustain* your new relationships and build a strong personal network

It's important to build your networking skills on the foundation principles of using your time well *and* respecting other people's time and helping them use it well. Building your connections and relationships with quick, effective, and to-the-point interactions will make a big impact on the people you meet and earn you tremendous favor and respect.

How You Will Benefit

This workbook is designed to guide you through the process of learning the skills and applying the tools to build a large number of strong business relationships. Because you've invested in this program, we believe you have a deep desire to reap the benefits that networking offers. We also believe that you have the desire and determination to do the work that's required to make the benefits yours.

We're here to help you get what you want! Our goal with this workbook is to inspire and guide you in your efforts to learn The 2 Minute Networker method, build your networking skills, and grow your business through successful networking.

How to Use This Workbook

The purpose of this workbook is to assist you in applying The 2 Minute Networker Method techniques and tools to your daily business routine.

We designed the 10-lesson structure of this workbook to be used in tandem with The 2 Minute Networker book, and to be applied in real-life networking settings. As you complete each lesson, we suggest that you take at least a week to implement and practice what you learned before moving on to the next lesson.

You will get the most out of The 2 Minute Networker Method, and this workbook, by keeping these skills improvement principles in mind:

- **Build a Strong Foundation** – Think of the lessons in this workbook as building your networking foundation. Just as a building must be built on a strong foundation or it will collapse, so must your networking strategy be built on a strong skills foundation.
- **Make Gradual Improvements** – Real change and improvement happens step-by-step. Don't try to do it all at once, or try to learn it all before you start practicing and implementing any of your new skills.
- **Be Consistent and Persistent** – Daily effort to learn and improve is the only way you will progress from novice to competent to master of each technique and, eventually, the entire Method. And stay with it! Success in any endeavor always comes to those who never give up.

Lesson 1

Know Your Reasons for Networking

Objectives

- When you complete this lesson, you will be able to do the following:**
- Identify and analyze the reasons why you need to network
 - Identify your goals – what you hope to gain/accomplish through networking
 - Assess how much time you will be able to consistently invest in building your networking skills
 - Assess how much *more* time you will need to invest to achieve your business growth goals.

Why Network?

A very basic reason to network is that it meets a fundamental human need – we are made to live in *community*. People *need* people; we are inherently *social beings*. We need other people in our lives for *support* – in good times and in bad – and to *help us grow and mature*. We need to build personal relationships in business for all of the same reasons.

Exercise 1-1

1. What are the top five reasons you want to network?

2. What do you hope to gain by incorporating networking into your daily business routine?

Some of the practical reasons to network include building more friendships, finding a better job, making career advancements, becoming a resource for others, gaining more customers and clients, and building your reputation. The focus of The 2 Minute Networker program is on helping you *use your time most effectively* in order to *generate more business through referrals* and help you grow your business.

Anyone Can Learn to Network Effectively!

Some people are blessed with a natural ability to connect with others and want to develop a repeatable system for business networking, while others are not naturally equipped and need to acquire and build the skills to succeed. Some know they need to “get out there,” but they don’t know where to begin. It really doesn’t matter where you start, *as long as you do!*

Exercise 1-2

Think about some recent opportunities you’ve experienced to connect with people you didn’t know in a business setting, such as a meeting or dinner event. Answer **yes** or **no** to the following questions:

- a. Did you return from these events without any business cards of people you met? _____

- b. Did any of the people you met try to sell you something? _____

- c. Did you just mingle with old friends while you were there? _____
- d. Did you feel uncomfortable standing among groups of people you didn't know who are smiling, eating, and talking? _____
- e. Did you only talk to the people who looked approachable as you scanned the room? _____
- f. Were you unsure what to say when you met someone new? _____

If you answered “yes” to two or more of these questions, you’ve likely come away from these experiences feeling like trying to connect with people in those types of circumstances is a waste of time, or that you’re just not very good at it. Well, it’s not a waste of time if you know the right way to go about it, and anyone can learn to be good at it!

By studying and practicing The Two Minute Networker method, and using the tools, you’ll discover how to identify the *right people* to meet. You will learn how to find the *right place* to network. You’ll get advice on *what to say*, understand the techniques for *allocating and using your time effectively*, and know how to implement the steps that are required to *nurture your new contacts* into real relationships. These are the building blocks of effective networking.

How Large is Your Network Today?

Studies have shown that the average person in business is acquainted with about 250 people. How about you – how many people do you know at some level today? Here’s a quick exercise to help you answer that question now.

Exercise 1-3

Make a list of 10 to 20 business and professional categories you’re familiar with (if you need help identifying business categories, grab a copy of the Yellow Pages). Write down *every* name that comes to mind, regardless of how long it has been since you have seen or talked with them. **Helpful Hint:** Be specific – use categories like “Auto Insurance”

or “Estate Attorney” instead of “insurance” or “lawyer” (we’ve put these two examples in the list to help you get started).

Use the blank notes pages at the end of this workbook if you need more space to record all of the names that come to mind

Category	Names
1. <u>Auto Insurance</u>	_____ _____
2. <u>Estate Attorney</u>	_____ _____
3. _____	_____ _____
4. _____	_____ _____
5. _____	_____ _____
6. _____	_____ _____
7. _____	_____ _____
8. _____	_____ _____
9. _____	_____ _____
10. _____	_____ _____
11. _____	_____ _____
12. _____	_____ _____
13. _____	_____ _____

Category	Names
14. _____	_____ _____
15. _____	_____ _____
16. _____	_____ _____
17. _____	_____ _____
18. _____	_____ _____
19. _____	_____ _____
20. _____	_____ _____

How close did you come to 250 names? Regardless of the length of your list, even if it is only a handful of names, this much is certain: even if you've never networked before, you already know enough people to begin, because everyone you know knows someone else!

Key Networking Principles

Effective networking involves much more than just attending events or meeting people in various public places. It is a disciplined pursuit that must first be understood, then practiced, and then continuously improved. The 2 Minute Networker Method is based on three *key effectiveness principles* – knowing, planning and preparing:

- Knowing why you are networking – not to sell directly, but to widen your circle of *influence and contacts* who can become future resources, customers and clients.
- Planning who you want to meet and why, and what you are prepared to *give* to them. This is about finding your Target Market(s) – potential

customers – and your *strategic partners* – people who market and sell to your target market(s) with complementary products and services.

- Preparing what you will say when you will meet new people, and *how you will follow up* on the first contact. This is the most important networking principle, because you must nurture and grow your new contacts into *relationships* that are mutually beneficial, and that takes time and investment in others.

Exercise 1-4

- a. Go back to your answers to Questions 1 and 2. Think of any obstacles or other issues that prevent you from a portion of your daily schedule to networking activities. Be specific.

- b. Based on your answers to Question 5, indicate how likely, on a scale of 1-5 (5 = highly likely, 1= not at all likely), you would be able to devote the following amounts of time to building your networking skills:

Less than 1 hour per week _____

1-2 hours per week _____

2-3 hours per week _____

4-5 hours per week _____

More than 5 hours per week _____

- c. Based on your answers to Question 5, indicate how likely, on a scale of 1-5 (5 = highly likely, 1= not at all likely), you would be able to devote the following amounts of time to actively building your personal network:

Less than 1 hour per week _____

1-2 hours per week _____

2-3 hours per week _____

4-5 hours per week _____

More than 5 hours per week _____

When embarking on any personal change effort, it's important to set realistic objectives based on an honest assessment of how much effort you will commit to the change process. We recommend that as you work through the lessons in this workbook, which culminate in developing your initial networking plan, you make the decision to go beyond what's comfortable in setting your goals and "stretch" yourself a bit.

Try making the decision to choose the amount of time commitment in questions 6 and 7 that you rated at a likelihood of 3; you can always back off if that proves unworkable, but we recommend pushing your commitment envelope when you first get started.

Lesson 2

What Type of Networker Are You Today?

Objectives

When you complete this lesson, you will be able to do the following:

- Assess your current level of networking skill
- Determine the level of networking proficiency to which you aspire
- Identify the steps you will need to take in order to reach your networking proficiency goal

Test Your Current Networking Skills

Whether this is totally new for you or you've been networking for years, you'll get the most out of this workbook if you have a clear sense of your starting point – where you are today. In order to help you determine where you stand today on the road to becoming an effective 2 Minute Networker, we're providing you with a simple self-assessment tool.

On the following pages is a series of ten questions relating to decisions and actions you might take in a variety of networking situations. For each question, choose the **one** lettered answer that *best describes what you would do in each situation today*. There is no right or wrong answer to any of these questions; we encourage you to think carefully about each answer and be as honest with yourself as possible. This is simply a tool to help you assess where you are today.

Keep in mind that *this test is just for you*. Giving yourself an accurate picture of your current skills and approach will help you *focus your improvement efforts in the right place at the right time*.

Exercise 2-1**2 Minute Networker Self-Assessment Test**

(For each question, circle the letter of the one answer that best represents what you would do today)

1. **At a chamber of commerce mixer, you see several people you know. You:**
 - a) Go hang out with your friends and catch up on the latest news or gossip
 - b) Go over and say hello and ask if there is anyone there they think you should meet
 - c) Get some food and drink and worry about mingling later
 - d) Greet them and let them know what your goals are for the mixer for meeting people
 - e) Try to look inviting and friendly and wait for people to approach you
 - f) Look for the people that are acting shy or hesitant to meet people and introduce yourself to them

2. **You find an ad for a networking mixer in your local paper that is happening tonight. You:**
 - a) Plan to attend and arrive early, plan what to wear, and have your business cards ready
 - b) Call and ask if it is appropriate for you to bring a friend to keep you company
 - c) Check out the web site of the organization and find out more about the nature of the event
 - d) Call someone you know and ask if they've ever been to that particular mixer and found it worthwhile
 - e) Decide not to go because it appears that the people attending will have little in common with you
 - f) Put the ad down and say to yourself that you'll maybe catch the next one

3. **You are new to your area and decide to attend a networking luncheon you heard about from an acquaintance. You:**
 - a) Find a table that is filled with friendly faces and ask if a seat is available
 - b) Sit down to an empty table and hope people come to sit down with you
 - c) Look around at the crowd and name tags and strike up a conversation with someone who looks friendly
 - d) Arrive early, find the host of the luncheon, introduce yourself, and let him or her know you'd like to offer assistance
 - e) Look around at the crowd, get a sense of who is there, and leave because it looks unproductive
 - f) Call your acquaintance and ask him or her to attend the event with you

4. You need more clients to build your business, but you hate making cold calls. Since you are very short on time but have a strong need to grow your business, you:

- a) Always read a local and a national newspaper to identify events
- b) Subscribe to trade magazines that list events in your field
- c) Never take time to read the paper and hope that someone will tell you about events you should know about
- d) Regularly call colleagues and current and past clients to inquire about ways to assist them
- e) Identify one group or event that you can consistently make time to attend and focus on just that one
- f) Search the Web for opportunities to connect with people who represent potential clients or sources of referrals

5. You often attend meetings and events that people in your profession attend. When you are there, you:

- a) Visit with your friends, socialize and catch up on what is new with your business acquaintances
- b) Read name tags, approach new people, and introduce yourself
- c) Pass out as many business cards as you can, hoping someone will refer business to you
- d) Ask the people you meet to tell you about themselves and encourage them to share their story with you
- e) Search out those people who are the most likely potential clients or sources of referrals and talk only with them
- f) Introduce different people that you know to each other because you see an opportunity for them to help each other

6. Your definition of an effective networker is someone who:

- a) Asks questions to get the other person to do the talking
- b) Tells others about their business, tells stories, and tells good jokes
- c) Introduces people to one another and asks them questions about the type of referrals they are looking for
- d) Has an outgoing personality and is able to mingle and meet with anyone
- e) Has specific goals for what is to be accomplished through networking and a plan to achieve them
- f) Passes out their business card to as many people as possible whenever they are at a networking function

- 7. You win a door prize for a day of golf that you will never use, but you know of someone who loves golf and might be a good business contact. You:**
- a) Ask a friend who knows the person to whom you want to give the golf prize to make an introduction for you
 - b) Look up the person's phone number, call him or her, and ask them if they would like the day of golf since you can't use it
 - c) Send the gift in the mail with a note asking them to call you for coffee and tell them you hope they enjoy the day of golf
 - d) Tell the host of the event where you won the prize to send it on to that person with a note from you telling them you hope they enjoy the day of golf
 - e) Decide to give it to your college buddy who is an avid golfer and is coming in to town next month
 - f) Approach one of your existing network contacts who is an avid golfer and give the prize to him
- 8. You overhear a conversation between two people at a mixer and hear about an event that you want to know more about. You:**
- a) Let the conversation go on and hope that you will get the details you need about the event
 - b) Politely ask to join the conversation mentioning you overheard about an interesting event coming up and ask for details
 - c) Give up on the idea because you don't know how to approach the people having the conversation
 - d) Wait until the conversation is over and try to approach one of the parties to ask about the event you overheard
 - e) Not wanting to interrupt, you go back to your office and research the event on the Web
 - f) Stand close enough to eavesdrop on the conversation until you hear enough details
- 9. You notice that an attractive man or woman has a million dollar bill in his or her lapel pocket. He or she looks like someone you might want to meet. You:**
- a) Say hello and ask about the million dollar bill
 - b) Walk over and hand the person a business card and ask for theirs in return
 - c) Decide that you should also probably start wearing an some sort of attention-getting device
 - d) Say to yourself that the person is a shameless self-promoter and walk away
 - e) Go to one of your close contacts and ask about why he or she thought someone would wear something like that
 - f) Read the person's name tag and, if he or she appears to be a potential good contact, introduce yourself

10. You think mixers are:

- a) Expensive, clique-like and often boring
- b) Unstructured, awkward and uncomfortable
- c) An opportunity to meet at least ten new people
- d) A time to catch up with business associates and ask them to introduce you to people there that they know
- e) A place to “see and be seen” and pass out your business card to as many people as possible
- f) A reason to go get some food and drink and maybe meet some nice people

**Scoring Key for the
The 2 Minute Networker Self Assessment Test**

Circle the number corresponding to the letter of your answer to each question, and then total your score:

Question 1: a – **2** b – **5** c – **1** d – **9** e – **3** f – **7**

Question 2: a – **9** b – **5** c – **3** d – **7** e – **2** f – **1**

Question 3: a – **2** b – **3** c – **7** d – **9** e – **1** f – **5**

Question 4: a – **2** b – **3** c – **1** d – **7** e – **9** f – **5**

Question 5: a – **1** b – **3** c – **2** d – **7** e – **5** f – **9**

Question 6: a – **5** b – **1** c – **7** d – **3** e – **9** f – **2**

Question 7: a – **7** b – **9** c – **5** d – **3** e – **1** f – **2**

Question 8: a – **5** b – **9** c – **1** d – **7** e – **2** f – **3**

Question 9: a – **9** b – **3** c – **5** d – **1** e – **2** f – **7**

Question 10: a – **1** b – **2** c – **9** d – **7** e – **5** f – **3**

Total Score: _____

How Did You Score?

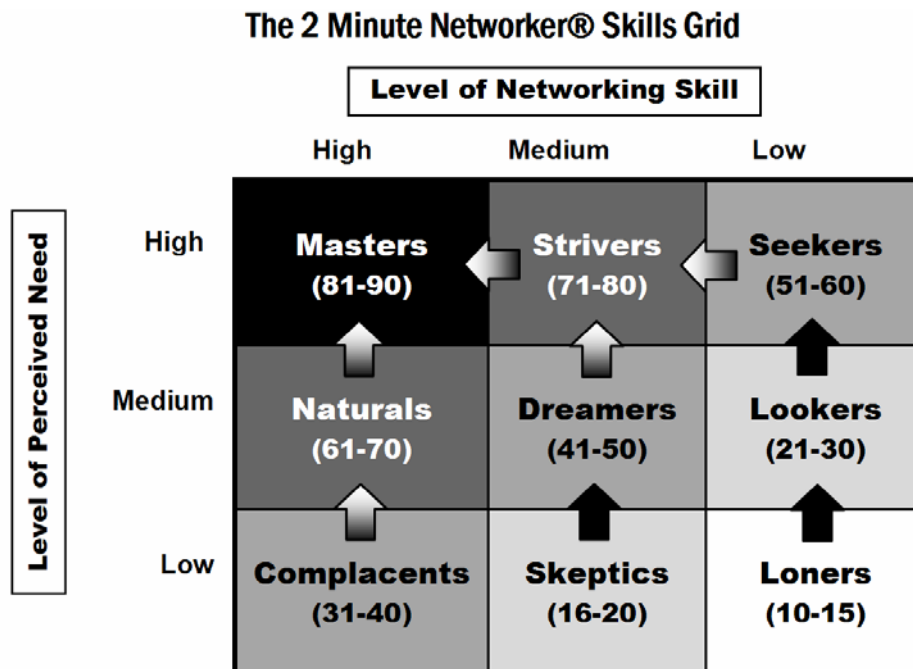
This simple test is designed to help you assess your current networking proficiency based on two personal attributes that we believe best describe someone’s effectiveness as a networker:

- Level of Perceived Need to Network
- Level of Networking Ability/Skill

Of these two attributes, we give higher importance to *level of perceived need* – if you’re in the game, or know you need to be, you stand a much better chance of winning than if you’re on the sidelines or in the stands watching!

To evaluate your score on the test, we set up low, medium and high categories for each attribute, resulting in nine “grades” of networking effectiveness. Compare your score on the test against the nine categories in the 2 Minute Networker Skills Grid shown below.

We want you to have a clear sense of where you are today and your growth path. We’ve indicated with arrows the most likely growth path, depending on your current position in the grid.



- **Masters** – As the name implies, a Master networker is someone who has, through both study and practice, become highly proficient and productive in making connections and *building relationships with the right people for mutual benefit*. For a Master, networking is as much a part of their job or profession as their actual job responsibilities. Master-level networkers place high priority on integrating the process into their daily routine, have worked hard to develop their skills, and are committed to continuous improvement of their networking skills.

A Master networker knows where to meet the right people, how to engage them in conversation, always follows up, and is discerning about relationships in which to invest. Master networkers practice active listening, are friendly, and engage in conversation with *new* people whenever the opportunity arises. Natural ability plays a substantial role in becoming a Master networker, but commitment, hard work, and consistency are more critical to networking success and can be the great equalizers in achieving Master-level proficiency.

- **Strivers** – We consider the next level of proficiency in networking to be the Striver – the person who has a high level of perceived need to network and who is in the developing stage of their personal skills. More so than someone who gets by on their natural ability or other skills that translate to the networking dynamic, the Striver intends to treat networking as an essential strategy for building their business or career and are specifically focusing on developing networking-specific knowledge, skills and disciplines.

An example of a Striver is someone who builds networking events into their calendar, attends regularly and takes steps to increase their confidence, public speaking ability, and circle of influence. They join groups, get on committees and give of themselves freely.

- **Naturals** – The next level of networker, the Natural, is the person who has a gift for connecting with people, has been blessed with other talents (such as attractiveness, intelligence, wit, or creativity) and is able to be effective based on the exercise of those talents alone. We see the natural as the mirror image of the Striver – blessed with more natural ability, but because they don't have as high a perceived need to network as the Striver, is perhaps overconfident in their natural talent and networks "opportunistically" rather than with purpose, strategy and sound technique. As long as the Natural networker's perceived need to network does not grow, neither will their proficiency – just like the weekend golfer who has natural athletic ability and a single-digit handicap but never practices or takes lessons.

An example of the Natural's approach to networking is the manicurist who sees people all day long, has great relationships but does not take the next step of connecting her clients together for their mutual benefit.

- **Seekers** – Seekers are people who are convinced of their need to network and the value of the benefits networking provides but are new at it, or have persisted in trying to network but have not obtained training or advice in how to do it effectively. Seekers are the Master networkers of tomorrow, eager to do it well but in need of training, tools and guidance.

An example of a Seeker is someone who is new to his or her profession and needs to make connections, but is not sure of the who, when, where and how. That person might be in sales and does not know who else is selling to his target market. A payroll service salesperson and a CPA make great strategic partners, because they offer complementary services to the same market. They need to seek each other out.

- **Dreamers** – Dreamers are people who basically know they need to network or have been convinced by something they've read or someone they've talked to that they need to network, decide that networking means "going to networking events" and approach as many people as they can, giving and getting as many business cards as possible, and then go home and wonder why they aren't making any connections that lead to getting new business. They have enough skill and confidence to approach people they don't know, but they don't know what to do once they've made those initial contacts. They want the benefits of successful networking, but they aren't really equipped with the know-how to make it happen.

An example of this is the real estate broker new to the industry who does not know how to let people know about the services they offer, what area they specialize in, and how they can help others.

- **Complacents** – Complacents are people who have the talents possessed by highly successful networkers, but see little need to actually go out and do it. It may be because they already have a large enough circle of contacts and referral sources that they feel that they don't need to have more. They most likely consider themselves to be already well connected and in "maintenance mode." It may also reflect a lack of appreciation for the importance of helping other people get connected – sharing their network with others in ways that will be mutually beneficial.

This might be the person who is content with what they have, such as an insurance broker with a lot of residual income, but lacks a pipeline of new business leads or referrals. Complacency is just fine if you want to stay where you are.

- **Skeptics** – Skeptics are people who don't really see the need to network, but have "tried it" and gotten little results from it, which just reinforces their belief that they have nothing to gain from making connections with people for mutual benefit. Most likely, they do not associate with other people who are networking-aware, and they have not been exposed to many sources of information about the networking process or networking resources.

2. Based on the nine networker type descriptions and your own self-assessment, which type of networker do you aspire to be? Why?

3. What do you think it will take for you to get from where you are to the type of networker you aspire to be? List the steps you need to take; be specific and brainstorm freely.

Lesson 3

The 2 Minute Networker System

Objectives

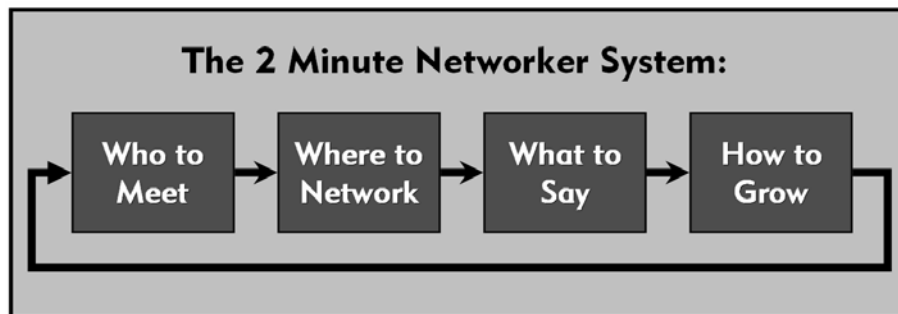
When you complete this lesson, you will be able to do the following:

- Understand the four steps of The 2 Minute Networker Method
- Analyze and document your current approach to networking
- Identify strengths in your current process on which to build
- Identify the areas in The 2 Minute Networker Method on which to focus your study and practice

Overview of The 2 Minute Networker System

Now that you've identified the reasons you need and want to network, what you hope to gain by networking, how much time you will devote to the process, and the type of networker you aspire to be, it's time to review the process of successful 2 Minute Networking.

The 2 Minute Networker System consists of four steps that are intended to be continuously repeated among an ever-expanding circle of people:



- **Who to Meet** – How to define your target market, best types of networking contacts, and the specific individuals to meet and build relationships with.

- **Where to Network** – How to identify the situations and places where you can find the right people and how to plan to be in the right places at the right times.
- **What to Say** – How to get noticed, begin and sustain good conversations, powerfully position yourself in people’s minds, and.
- **How to Grow** – How to determine whether a person you meet is someone with whom you need to build a relationship, follow up with your new contacts and nurture them into mutually-beneficial business and personal relationships.

Each of these four steps consists of a series of activities that you will work through to set networking goals, develop a strategy for your networking, integrate networking into your daily schedule, and prepare yourself to effectively interact with the people you meet to achieve your networking goals.

What’s Your Current Process?

Before you “deep dive” into the details of The 2 Minute Networker Method, we encourage you to take some time to honestly reflect on your current networking approach. Whenever we set out to change anything about ourselves, it is important to “get real” about how we currently do things because our tendency will always be to fall back on “how we’ve always done it.” It’s just our nature as people. Change always pushes against our natural tendencies, and self-awareness of those tendencies will go a long way to helping you develop the new skills and habits that will enable you to be an effective 2 Minute Networker.

To help you, here are some thought-starter questions. After you’ve worked through these thoughtfully, go ahead and sketch out your own networking process. This “as-is” analysis will be very valuable in helping you to retain and improve the good things you’re already doing and identify your focus areas in learning and applying The 2 Minute Networker Method.

Exercise 3-1

1. Who have been good contacts for you in the past? How did those contacts happen? What did you do to develop those relationships?


2. Who are the people you've invested time building relationships with that didn't pan out? Why didn't those contacts develop?

3. Who are your best customers or clients? What are all the ways you use to identify the specific people you need to meet and sell to build your business or professional practice?

4. How do you determine where you can go to meet people who could be potential customers or clients?

Exercise 3-2

Using your answers to the thought-starter questions as a guide, write down the steps or process you typically use when you network. Try to identify the way you do it *most often*; the aim is to identify your current tendencies so that you know which good things you can refine and improve and which tendencies need to change. Make a list, draw a diagram – use whatever format helps you best understand.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write or draw their response to the exercise instructions.

Lesson 4

Who to Meet: Finding Your Strategic Partners

Objectives

When you complete this lesson, you will be able to do the following:

- Define your business based on the benefits your products and services deliver to your customers and clients
- Define your Target Market – the people who will be the source of your sales revenue and profits
- Identify your potential Strategic Partners – other businesses that can help you build your business, and you theirs

How to Find Your Strategic Partners

There are four steps to determining your best strategic partner candidates:

1. Define the business you're really in
2. Define your Target Market
3. Identify business types that sell complimentary products and services to the same Target Market
4. Identify companies and individuals in your market area in each complimentary business type

Here's a breakdown of each step:

1. **What business are you really in?** To answer this question, think about what your customer gets out of what you provide – the *benefits* they receive by doing business with you. Understanding what's in it for your customer will tell you what needs and wants you're really satisfying. So, instead of "I'm a printer," your benefit-based definition of your business might be "We present companies' best image to the marketplace." If you are a realtor, your benefit-based business definition might be "I help you find your dream home."

2. **Who is my Target Market?** The best place to start in defining your Target Market is with the people you already do business with. Are you selling to consumers or to other businesses? Who are the buyers and decision makers to whom you are selling? Your target market consists of those people who are the ultimate consumers of your product and users of your service, as well as those who have a need or desire for the benefits you offer but don't yet do business with you.
3. **What other types of businesses sell to my Target Market?** Companies and individuals that sell complimentary products and services to your target market, especially those that have relationships with people in your target market with whom you're not doing business, are your potential *strategic partners*. Effective networkers know the high value of cultivating relationships with their strategic business partners. For example, if you put a banker, financial planner, insurance broker and loan officer at the same table, you could not stop this group from sharing information about how they do business, who they do business with and the tools and techniques they use.
4. **Who are the companies and people in my market area?** Once you've identified your strategic business partners, the last step is to identify the specific target companies and individuals in your market area. Learn who the contact sphere is for your industry and for sellers of complementary solutions. Your job is to identify these people, and find out where they are. A great place to find this information is from your current customers or clients. Ask them who else they do business with and you will have gone a long way to identifying the right strategic partners for your business.

Exercise 4-1

On the following page, list all of the “features and functions” – the things you do – that your products and services provide to your customers and clients on the left side, and the corresponding “benefits” your customers and clients receive from each feature/function.

Feature/Function

Benefits

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Exercise 4-2

Write a one-sentence description of “the business you’re really in” using the most important benefits you provide to your customers and clients

Exercise 4-3

Make a list of your potential strategic partners – companies that provide complimentary products and services. The best place to start in identifying your potential strategic partners is to make a list of the people you already know, see on a regular basis, and/or network with. If you don’t have such a list, start with the people that you come into contact with on a daily basis. This could include your dry cleaner, hair dresser, doctor, dentist, lawyer, grocery clerk, or auto mechanic.

Name

Contact Information

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11.	_____	_____

12.	_____	_____

13.	_____	_____

14.	_____	_____

15.	_____	_____

16.	_____	_____

17.	_____	_____

18.	_____	_____

19.	_____	_____

20.	_____	_____

The next lesson will help you identify the right places to interact with the people you know where they can introduce you to other people *they* know – this is where the power of networking begins!

Lesson 5

Where to Network: Location, Location, Location!

Objectives

When you complete this lesson, you will be able to do the following:

- Understand the three main types of networking locations
- Research the types of networking locations that have the best potential to help you grow your business
- Determine the right individual networking venues to attend and the right times to attend to meet people in your target market and your potential strategic partners

The Three Types of Networking Locations

- **Everywhere Networking** – This may sound counter-intuitive at first, but depending on your profession, everywhere you are out in the public square – the grocery store, the salon, the sports arena or stadium, even the lines we all end up standing in – there’s opportunity to get out of yourself and just meet people. We call this “the three-foot rule” – anyone within three feet of you is someone you may want to approach. Everywhere Networking is a great way to practice the skills you’ll learn in the “What to Say” step of the Method (covered in Lessons 6 and 7), and could initiate your next referral-producing relationship.
- **Networking Events** – We place special emphasis on this type of networking venue because networking is their reason for being! These events attract a diverse crowd, so it’s very important to know in advance the type of people that attend. Everyone’s there for the same reason and has essentially the same goals. However, the people attending are all over the place in their knowledge and ability of how to network effectively, so the techniques you’ll learn in the Method will help you to clearly stand out from the pack and enable you to meet the right people.

- **Targeted Networking Opportunities** – These are the gatherings of people that attract your target market and/or your potential strategic partners. Targeted Networking Opportunities are generally your most time-effective networking options. They can be identified and planned in advance, and have the built-in regularity of contact that fosters relationship building. The most common forms of targeted networking opportunities are professional associations, networking groups, seminars and workshops, industry conventions, client events, and membership groups.

Finding the Right Locations Takes Planning

To be most effective in making the right kind of contacts, you need to make sure you place yourself in the right place at the right time so that you can meet the right people.

So where do you want to be? The “happening places” are where your potential customers and strategic partners gather. You need to do some homework and try out some places and events to identify the best locations. Here are the most common locations where networking takes place:

Local Chamber Mixers	Internet Forums
Rotary/Kiwanis Clubs	Bulletin Boards and Chats
Toastmasters Chapters	Sporting Events
Conventions	Parent-Teacher Meetings
Trade Shows	Charity Events
Conferences	Fund raisers
Workshops	Churches, Synagogues
Seminars	Parties
Airports	Bank, Movie, and Restaurant Lines
Meetings	Libraries
Networking Groups	Waiting Rooms
Alumni Groups	Hair & Nail Salons
Internet Newsgroups	Continuing Education Schools
Clubs and Fraternal Groups	Car Wash

Plan for Consistent Presence

Effective 2 Minute Networkers have worked to find the level of time investment that yields the optimum return of mutually beneficial relationships. Our experience shows that the most effective strategy to determine where to network is:

- Select the most promising groups and events based on their stated membership and attendees, and go to several consecutive meetings or events. Consult with clients, other business colleagues and friends who have business-building goals similar to yours.
- When you attend, evaluate the kinds of people you meet, their personalities, and the compatibility of their businesses with yours as potential referral sources.
- Select the most compatible groups and events, and make the commitment to attend every meeting for at least six months.
- Continuously repeat the process of identifying and evaluating new events, groups, and venues for networking. Be prepared to drop out of one or more of your current regular networking venues when you identify a superior option or if one with which you're involved is not working.

Ultimately, your best networking locations will be the places and events that you can meet the right people who will help you grow your business *and* that you can commit to attend regularly.

Sorting Out Your Networking Opportunities

Here's an exercise that will help you begin to identify the specific locations and events that will help you meet the right people and in which you can consistently participate.

Exercise 5-1

Using the list of common networking locations on the previous page, identify five potential networking locations in each of the three types – everywhere, events and targeted – and investigate their potential as

networking locations that will lead you to people that will help you build your business. Identify the kinds of people that frequent these locations, and ask your current clients, colleagues and friends for their insight into who frequents these locations. We've given you a couple of examples as thought-starters:

Location:

Types of People that Frequent:

Everywhere Networking:

On line at the bank

At the copy shop

Networking Events:

Speaker Luncheon

Targeted Networking Opportunities:

Networking Group

Seminar

Exercise 5-2

For each of the five locations, identify two key facts:

- a. the days and times that networking opportunities are available – meeting days and times for events and targeted opportunities, and prime traffic times for everywhere networking
- b. the specific locations that meetings take place or public venues you will “hang out” at:

Locations	Meeting Places	Days & Times
Everywhere Networking:		
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
Networking Events:		
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
Targeted Networking Opportunities:		
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Lesson 6

What to Say: Connecting with New People

Objectives

When you complete this lesson, you will be able to do the following:

- Prepare in advance to have productive networking experiences
- Know ten open-ended questions that you can use to start conversations with anyone
- Know six ways to gracefully end conversations in networking situations

Preparing to Meet New People

1. Your Purpose

- *Go to meet, not eat* - Make sure you eat before the event. You are there to make contacts and start new relationships, not get a free meal.
- *Identify your strategic partnering needs* – Know who is already working with your target market and meet that person. A strategic alliance can be a wealth of referrals. It is a win-win for everyone. Refer back to Lesson Five.
- *Ask for introductions* – Seek out an ambassador or host or hostess at the event and ask to be introduced to someone.
- *Practice random acts of kindness* – Open a door for someone, offer a suggestion, and try to be helpful to everyone you encounter.
- *Be a professional* – You are there to connect and build business relationships, not to flirt or find a date.

2. Approaching People

- *Be open to everyone* – Remember that everyone you meet is a potential referral source. Treat them with respect.
- *Seek out people standing alone* – They are the easiest ones to meet.

- *Seek out new members and guests* – If new members are being introduced, listen to what they say, seek them out to welcome them, and introduce yourself.
- *Be genuinely welcoming* – Be friendly, warm and welcoming to those you meet. Smile, and be positive and attentive. And have fun!
- *Have a firm handshake* – Always extend your hand to someone when you are being introduced. Make sure your hand is warm and that you say the person's name as you shake their hand.

3. Conducting Conversations

- *Make eye contact.* Make sure that the person you are speaking with knows you see them as well as hear them. Follow the signals.
- *Listen.* This is essential. Mastering the art of listening will give you all the information you are seeking.
- *Ask questions.* Make sure you listen to the answers. Networking is about asking questions and developing relationships.
- *Seed the conversation.* Be aware of current events and be able to talk about what is going on in the world.
- *Wait until you are asked for your business card* – You are there to meet people, develop rapport and create relationships. Conversation first, cards later.

4. Initiating Relationships

- *Prepare in advance for follow-up* – Make sure you have handwritten notes already stamped and ready to be mailed the next day to the people you want to follow-up with.
- *Build a contacts database* – Have a software contact database like ACT, Goldmine or Outlook to keep track of the people you meet. Or use a paper-based day planner. Whichever tool you choose, make sure it's simple and accessible for fast follow-up, and that you'll use it!
- *Follow up immediately* – Ask someone you meet and are interested in seeing again if you can call him or her to set up a time for coffee. Make a note on the back of their card and follow-up in the next day or two.

- *Always offer to give first* – You have to give to get. Think about what you can do for those you want to start a relationship with. The most important question you can ask someone is “what is a good lead for you.” Become a resource for others (Caveat: don’t refer someone until you know they meet your standards of excellence).
- *Be consistent in your involvement* – Show up regularly and get involved in the inner workings of the group. Volunteer for committees and projects that will involve the new people you meet or the types of people you need to meet.

Starting a Conversation

The best way to start a conversation with someone you do not know is to ask an open ended question. Here are a few examples:

- What other events sponsored by this group have you attended?
- How did you find out about this event?
- What did you think of the guest speaker at this evening’s dinner?

Exercise 6-1

Think about what you might say to someone who is standing nearby at an event, group meeting, or in a public place, and write a list of ten open-ended questions that you will be prepared to use at your next networking opportunity. We’ve included two examples to help you get started.

1. What is your opinion of the person who spoke this evening?

2. Why did you decide to attend this event?

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

Ending a Conversation Gracefully

Once you are engaged in conversation with someone, often it is difficult to break away so you can meet others. Here are few tips to help you with this situation:

- Tell the person you really enjoyed speaking with them and know they probably want to meet others as well. Suggest exchanging business cards and getting in touch soon.
- If a friend is attending the event, have a pre-arranged signal for the friend to come over to say he or she wants to introduce you to someone.
- If you determine the person is not someone you want to pursue a further connection with, politely but assertively tell the person that you need to move on and thank them for the time they spent with you.
- If all else fails, ask the person if they know where the restrooms are (caution – be sure and go to the restroom, or else you’ll be observed by the person as insincere).

Exercise 6-2

Imagine yourself engaged in a conversation that you feel has run its course, and you want to move on to meet other people. Write three statements that you will be prepared to use with someone you want to meet with again, and three statements to use with someone you don’t. We’ve given you one example of each as thought-starters.

Ending Conversations – Want to meet them again:

1. It was really a pleasure meeting you this evening. I’d like to know more about your business and how we, at some point, may be able to help each other; may I call you in the next few days to arrange a time to meet for coffee?

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Ending Conversations – Do not want to meet them again:

1. It's been great meeting you and getting to know you a bit. I'm here to meet other people as well, and I know you are too, so I'm going to move on now. Thanks again for your time.

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Lesson 7

What to Say: Your Elevator Speech

Objectives

When you complete this lesson, you will be able to do the following:

- Understand the elements of a great elevator speech
- Enhance your elevator speech with enthusiastic presentation
- End your elevator speech with questions that begin to uncover the interests and needs of your contact

What Makes a Great Elevator Speech?

1. A Focus on Benefits

Most people simply state their name and say their profession, like “Hi, I’m Sally Jones and I sell residential real estate.” Instead of that, Sally might say, “Hi, I am Sally and I help people feel at home. I specialize in making changes easy and effortless for those selling and buying homes.” Do you see the difference? The first describes what Sally does, but the second describes the *benefits she delivers* to her customers.

2. Unique Positioning

Communicate how the benefits you deliver are different from everyone else. The world is full of real estate people, insurance sales professionals, web designers, trainers, mortgage consultants and so on; your elevator speech needs to “elevate and separate” you from the crowd.

3. A Projection of Your Personality

Your personality and interests are just as important as your qualifications and credentials in developing your image. For example, an insurance broker who has a passion for baseball always wears a tie that has baseball images on it. It’s a part of his personality and a great prop and conversation starter. Another example is a woman who wears a red, white and blue scarf

at all business events and gives them to her clients (she gives ties to men). Her patriotic personality shines through.

4. Logical Flow

Your elevator speech needs to tell a succinct, compelling story about your business. Here's our suggested flow:

- Your name and title/occupation
- Brief description of your product/service/solution
- The benefits it delivers
- The need or problem it addresses
- Why it is different and better than others

Sometimes it's more dramatic to save your name until the end of the elevator speech, particularly when you're giving it in front of a group. You can adapt this to what makes sense for your particular solution. Your goal is to be remembered and stand out from the rest.

The "One Sheet" Summary

An excellent tool for reinforcing your elevator speech is a "one sheet" statement of who you are and what you do. Its purpose is to provide background about you, a mini resume and some personal information. The "One Sheet" is valuable in networking groups as well as for giving to others who want to know more about you. Here's an example:

Rhonda L. Sher

Professional Background: Owner of The 2 Minute Networker, a complete resource to learn and improve business networking skills. Author of the 2 Minute Networker book, teacher of workshops, and coach for many companies who want to increase referrals through networking.

Client list: Clients include Chambers of Commerce, financial planners, insurance professionals and entrepreneurs.

Education: Bachelors Degree in Legal Studies.

Associations: Networking Referral Group, All-Industries Referral Group, Leads to Business, Woodland Hills Chamber of Commerce

Hobbies: Writing, reading, exercise, shopping, arts and crafts

Exercise 7-1

Refer back to the benefits analysis and one-sentence description you developed in Exercises 4-1 and 4-2. Write two versions of your elevator speech – a 30-second version and a 15-second version that focuses on the most important and impactful benefits your business delivers. We give you a sample elevator speech to help you visualize your own.

Sample Elevator Speech:

“My business is providing peace of mind to middle-aged adults that their family and finances will be protected against the devastating effects of a debilitating illness. I provide long-term care insurance at affordable rates to people in their 40s and 50s that secures their future estate now, during their prime earning years. What’s unique about my approach is that I not only find the best plan for your needs from over 20 long-term care insurance providers, but I guarantee that the plan I recommend to you is the lowest-cost, highest-value policy available on the market – or I’ll pay your premiums for one whole year! Would you like to be secure in the knowledge that your family’s legacy is protected?”

30-Second Elevator Speech:

Exercise 7-2

Develop a “One Sheet” about yourself and your business using the following categories:

Name: _____

Professional Background: _____

Key Clients: _____

Education: _____

Associations: _____

Hobbies/Interests: _____

Exercise 7-3

Practice your elevator speech with three to five people that you can trust to give you constructive and instructive feedback. Record the things that they liked and the things that need to be improved in the space below:

What my listeners heard:

The message my listeners took away:

What I need to improve:

Lesson 8

How to Grow Relationships: Managing your Contacts

Objectives

When you complete this lesson, you will be able to do the following:

- Implement a system for remembering people's names when you meet them for the first time
- Implement a system for processing and managing the business cards you collect through your networking activities
- Follow up with your new contacts with techniques proven to create goodwill and build trust

Your First Challenge – Remembering Names

When you see someone who is not wearing a nametag, it can often be very frustrating when you can't remember the person's name when you know that you've met them before. There are some tips and techniques that can make remembering names easier.

We'll start with some simple techniques, and then share a powerful system that, with some time investment on your part, will help you become a master at remembering names.

- **Listen, Repeat, Listen**

When you are first introduced to someone, use his or her name several times when you talk to them. If you don't hear their name when it was originally told to you, ask for it again. Repeat it and that will help you remember it when the person walks away.

- **Visualization**

Visualize something out of the ordinary about someone's appearance or an action that ties in with his or her name. Write the information on the back of their business card when you have left that person. After the event, go home, look at your business cards you received

and, see a “picture” in your mind of the person as you look at the name.

- **A Certain Look**

A good memory technique for remembering names is to link someone’s name to a feature or characteristic. For example, if Barbara is a blonde, you might think of her as the Golden Girl. If a gentleman is named Tom, you might remember him if he’s tall as “Tall Tom.”

- **The Fame Factor**

Many people resemble someone famous or they have the name of someone famous. For example, Lois might remind you of the character Lois Lane. Notice what it is about that person that would bring the character to mind, say it over and over in your mind, make a note on the back of the business card they give you.

- **Face Association**

When you are introduced, look at a person’s face discreetly. Try to find a facial feature that is unique or unusual. This could be anything such as a beard, eyes, nose, mouth etc. Then, create an association between that characteristic, the face, and the name in your mind.

- **The Old Introduction Trick**

When someone you know walks by, introduce him or her and allow your guest to introduce him or herself. Repeat it to be sure it is embedded in your memory.

- **When in Doubt, Ask**

Sometimes it’s best to be honest and say, “You know, I’m not good with names; sometimes I can’t even remember my own phone number. What was your name again?” When you hear the name, repeat it.

A Powerful System for Remembering Names

A while back we were introduced to what we believe is the best system available to help you remember names – “Head Hints – The Simple Way to be Good with Names” by Jeff Korn (goodwithnames.com).

The main principle of the Head Hints system is to use a simple “first letter hint” of a person’s name to spark your memory. Jeff believes that every person has a “sign” or distinguishing location on their head – the *head hint* – which gives you the first-letter hint of their name. The locations are the same for every person.

Here’s an illustration of how you apply the Head Hints System:

- You meet someone
- They tell you their name
- You STOP – and grab it mentally
- Your eyes will then locate the Head Hint for the first letter of the person’s name. If the person’s name is Johnny, you locate the head hint for the letter ‘J’ – which happens to be the “jaw.”

The aim of the Head Hints System is to make remembering names easy and logical. Jeff offers the “Head Hint Golden Rule” for putting the system into practice:

Head Hint Golden Rule:

- When you concentrate and focus on a specific point on the head or face (Head Hints), that will become their “distinguishable mark.”
- Your eyes will go toward his Head Hint (the Jaw), giving you the letter ‘J’ which is a hint to his name – Johnny.
- It’s like he’s holding a little sign for us to read.

Exercise 8-1

Review the various name-remembering techniques and systems, decide which ones you believe you can use well, and choose your top three methods that you will be prepared to practice at your next networking opportunity.

Technique	Yes	No
Listen, Repeat, Listen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visualization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Certain Look	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Fame Factor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Face Association	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Old Introduction Trick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When In Doubt, Ask	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head Hints	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My Top Three Name-Remembering Techniques:

First Choice _____

Second Choice _____

Third Choice _____

Using Business Cards to Build Your Business

Business cards can be an invaluable tool to generate sales and referrals, but they must be used properly and put into the hands of the right people.

Have More Than One

You may want to consider having more than one business card; it's hard to reach everyone with one message. Many entrepreneurs have more than one role and use multiple cards in different situations.

Business Card Basics

There are a few basics to remember about business cards that every effective 2 Minute Networker needs to know:

- Always have a clean and neat supply of your cards with you that are easily accessible.
- Have your cards professionally made. With low-cost options like VistaPrint.com, you can have high-quality cards made for very low cost.
- Photos, if included, should be recent and professional-looking.
- Make sure the reader can tell what services you provide when looking at your card.
- Make sure your card has accurate current information such as your name, title, address, phone number, fax, email and website.
- Design a card that reflects your unique personality.
- Format your card to be card scanner friendly.
- Give people a reason to keep your card for a long time – put valuable information on the back such as a “tip schedule” or a map or a coupon.
- Make sure your card is not misleading.

Unusual Business Card Ideas

Try stretching your mind for ways to design a business card that helps to differentiate you and establish your Unique Selling Proposition. Here are some suggestions:

- Attach your business card to something people will remember. Some ideas that have worked include putting your card on the back of a “million dollar bill,” or attaching it to a bag of peanuts saying your service “costs just peanuts.”

- Develop a “bookmark-sized” business card that contains valuable information or references.
- Offer to endorse other business professionals, enclosing their information and business card in your mailings if they will do the same for you. Offer joint specials for presenting business cards of the professionals in your networking circle to each other’s businesses.
- If you put a metallic sign on your vehicle that identifies your business, put a holder on the sign for business cards that says “Please Take One.”
- Ask your local restaurant if you can place a fishbowl to collect business cards in their place of business and agree to give a free dinner to the winner.
- Ask someone whose business card you receive for the month and day of their birthday. Put this in a system and send a card to each person.
- Leave business cards in books, which promote your business at the local bookstore. If someone is looking for a service that you sell and your card falls out of the book, you may have a new customer.
- Leave a business card at every business in your area to help promote your business. Ask the owner if they would be willing to leave a cardholder with your cards at their place of business and be sure to take one of theirs to let them know you will promote their business as well.

Exercise 8-2

Examine business cards you’ve received from others; research business card uses and techniques online and/or at your local library. Then, list 10 ways that you can use your business card more effectively as a business-building tool:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Following Up With Purpose

When you have made connections with people that you believe have the potential to become mutually-beneficial relationships, it's important to take immediate action beyond the exchange of business cards and cordial good-byes. Follow-up is critical to nurturing your new contacts and exhibiting the kind of giving, others-focused character that will build the relationships that lead to referrals. We'll work through the best methods for written and phone follow-up that begin to build trust onto the rapport established in your networking encounters.

Effective Business Follow-Up Notes

Here are some tips for writing business notes:

- **Make it personal** – Use the pronouns “I” and “you” just as you would if you were speaking to that person (you can also use “we” if you are referring to your company). Make sure that the person reading it knows it is specifically for them by making mention of something unique to them.

- **Take the time to write it well** – Use good grammar, correct spelling, and make it legible! There’s nothing worse than getting a letter that misspells a name or is impossible to read. If you take the time to send it, take the time to write it as well as you can.
- **Make it handwritten** – This is a great touch; it is more likely to be remembered, to be opened when the envelope is handwritten and has a very personal touch to it.
- **Be lively** – Make your note come alive with expression. Use words like “I was delighted” or “it was great” as opposed to I wanted to tell you...
- **Be yourself** – Make sure your unique personality comes through in a personal note.
- **Enclose a business card** – In the event that yours got lost or you did not give one to someone when you met, slip an extra into the envelope.
- **Express appreciation** – Everyone loves to be appreciated. Be genuine and, where appropriate, be sure to express your sincere gratitude.

“Pleasure to Meet You” Notes

When you meet someone for the first time at a networking event or industry meeting, and you’ve determined you want to develop a relationship with that person, the “it was a pleasure to meet you note” is a simple and quick way to reinforce the connection you made and express your appreciation for having met the person.

We suggest the “it was a pleasure to meet you note” as the most appropriate response to a first meeting. It allows you to express appreciation for the person without creating any assumed value in the mind of the recipient about their reaction to you.

“Thank You” Notes

The courtesy of the thank you note is an expression of appreciation that unfortunately is becoming rarer and rarer in today’s American culture. Here again is another opportunity for The 2 Minute Networker to stand out from the pack and connect with people’s deep inner need for appreciation.

Sample Follow-Up Note

Here's a sample follow-up note that we have actually used and that has been well received. As you read it, look back at the effective follow-up note writing tips you just read and see if you can identify where some of the techniques were used.

Dear Joe:

I really enjoyed the time we spent at the Chamber mixer on Thursday evening. The information you gave me about your rotary group was really helpful and I plan to contact them this week.

You shared some great ideas with me and I look forward to getting to know you better. I will give you a call at the end of the week to set a date to get together.

Again, it was great meeting you.

Warm regards,

Rhonda L. Sher

Follow-up Phone Calls

You will have occasion to call someone you met in the course of your networking and ask them to lunch or for coffee to learn more about their business. You can open the call with something like this:

Hello John, this is Paul Mirador, and we met at the XYZ meeting two nights ago. I really enjoyed hearing about your prospecting system and would love to learn more about how I can refer business to you. Are you free for lunch on Thursday or Friday?

The conversation can move from there to set a date. Follow-up calls are such a simple and personal way to reinforce the connection you made with a new person, as well as someone with whom you have a long-standing relationship.

"Get-to-Know" Meetings

When a contact with a new person gets to the stage of the next meeting, you've reached a critical point in the process of initiating a new

relationship. Whether it's a 20-minute coffee discussion or a longer time spent over lunch, the get-to-know meeting is the opportunity for both you and your new contact to size each other up personally, learn enough about each other's business to identify the partnering and client sharing potentials, and determine the appropriate next steps.

Of course, the overriding philosophy for both parties in the get-to-know meeting should be "how can I help this person be more successful?" It's the "givers gain" philosophy in action.

Exercise 8-3

Write sample "Pleasure to Meet You" and "Thank You" notes in the space below for one of your actual networking contacts made within the last week (if you haven't any, write fictitious notes).

Sample "Pleasure to Meet You" Note:

Sample “Thank You” Note:

Exercise 8-4

Write a call script for arranging a “Get to Know You” Meeting with someone you have already followed up with via a handwritten note.

Example:

“Hello George, this is Bob Johnson...I’m calling to see if you would be open to getting together with me for coffee in the next several days. I’d like to get to know you and your business better, so that I can determine how I may be able to refer potential clients and partners to you.”

Lesson 9

How to Grow Relationships: Nurturing Your Network

Objectives

When you complete this lesson, you will be able to do the following:

- Capture the information about each contact that will best facilitate building relationships
- Implement a daily action plan for nurturing your business and personal networks
- Understand the long-term action plan elements that need to be consistently executed over time

Nurturing a network is a combination of careful organization and plain-old thoughtfulness. For 2 Minute Networkers, there are two levels at which the nurturing process should take place – daily actions and a long-range action plan.

Daily Action Reminders

Here are six suggestions on things to pay attention to and do every day to make your network grow and develop. Aim to devote at least 30 minutes per day to these actions:

- Maintain files of people in your network: Each file contains contact information, likes, dislikes, interests and special qualities.
- Capture information: Listen for other people's unique qualities. When you learn something interesting, write it down.
- Stay in touch: Relationships need constant work. Remember people's birthdays and holidays. Send congratulations and thank-you notes.
- Do volunteer work: Volunteering broadens and diversifies your network. You'll develop new skills and meet many new people.

- Be visible: Look for opportunities to be a spokesperson. Public speaking will bring you acceptance and recognition, and people will want to get to know you.
- Always do your best: Networking can't cover up incompetence. Even if you're volunteering, make sure you excel at what you do.

A 10-Point Plan for Nurturing Your Network

Here is The 2 Minute Networker's *10-point development plan* for effectively sustaining, nurturing, and growing your business and personal networks:

1. Maintain contact with people you know. Out of sight means out of mind.
2. Focus on building rapport with new contacts. Establishing a basis of common ground is the critical first step in building a new relationship.
3. Go out of your way to help people. If you approach everyone from a position of giving, your standing in their eyes will soar. If you admire someone, or the way they have gone about doing something, tell them! And tell those you come in contact with who can benefit from that information.
4. Build a reputation of excellence by being professional, courteous, honest, and thorough. Publish articles, write a newsletter, and build your credibility.
5. Create friendships. Some industries and groups are very close-knit, so there's a reasonable chance that a person you bad-mouth is known to your contact. It's a *very* small world.
6. Be conscious of your approach and body language. Be courteous, aware of other people's space, and open to receiving new people in conversation.
7. Follow up on all appropriate leads. Pursue every lead you are given, and always thank those who have helped you. If a lead is not appropriate for your business, redirect it to another professional who can help the person referred to you.

- 8. Mentor others. This is especially important for those who are new to your profession or group. Not only do you help them, but you'll also learn a lot from them.
- 9. Remain visible. If you see an article or something that might be of interest to a past client or a member of your network, forward it to them with a brief note.
- 10. Trust your instincts. Trust is an essential part of networking — you will be getting to know another person well enough to be able to find some common ground. There will be people who you don't like on first meeting. If so, fine – move on.

Exercise 9-1

Construct a template for how you will capture and store information about your clients, prospects and strategic partners, keeping in mind the need for information that will help you to implement the daily and long term action plans.

Example:

Name of contact: _____

Where we met: _____

Items discussed: _____

Outstanding items about this person: _____

How this person fits into my target market or strategic partner group:

Follow-up actions: _____

Exercise 9-2

Develop a weekly schedule of activities you will do on a daily basis to nurture your network as it builds. Use whatever system – paper or electronic – to maintain and update your weekly networking action plan.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Lesson 10

Putting it All Together – Your Networking Plan

Objectives

When you complete this lesson, you will be able to do the following:

- Develop a personal networking strategy based on the four steps of the 2 Minute Networker Method
- Develop monthly, weekly, and daily action plans to implement your networking strategy
- Assess the results you achieve relative to the time you invest and the skills you apply to your networking efforts.

What Goes Into Your Networking Plan

- **Assessments** – Your reasons for networking, size of your current network, and your current networking Skills Grid profile
- **Goals and Objectives** – What you hope to accomplish through networking in broad-brush terms, specific targets you want to reach in defined time periods – annually, quarterly, and/or monthly.
- **Who You Will Meet** – Definitions of your Target Market and potential Strategic Partners. These will be described in terms of type as well as individual companies and people.
- **Where You Will Network** – Assessment and decisions on which networking venues attract the people you need to meet.
- **What You Will Say** – Conversation starters, open-ended questions, your elevator speech, your follow-up question, criteria for ending conversations and parting ways or seeking a “get to know you” appointment.

- **How You Will Grow Relationships** – Choice of methods to remember names of your contacts, business card marketing tactics, follow-up procedures, nurturing activities.
- **Evaluation and Feedback** – Identifying and selecting mentors, how you will solicit feedback from mentors, colleagues, clients and contacts.

Exercise 10-1

Using the following templates, and the exercises you completed in this workbook, develop a draft of your one-year networking plan. We suggest that you complete a full first draft, leave it for at least two days, and then review it for modifications.

When you come back to your plan for a first revision, ask your peers and experienced networkers you know for their feedback and input.

Individual remote consultation (via phone/e-mail) is also available from Rhonda L. Sher. Call 1-888-WWW-2MIN for availability and fees, or send an e-mail to Rhonda at: consulting@2MinuteNetworker.com.

Assessments

My reasons for networking:

The size and composition of my current network:

My current networking skills profile:

Strengths:

Areas for improvement:

Goals and Objectives

<p>Long-Term Goals (number of people in my network, types of people, volume of referrals I send, volume of referrals I receive)</p>	
<p>Current Year Objectives (increase in number, change in composition, number of leads provided, number of leads received)</p>	
<p>Quarterly Targets:</p>	
<p>Q1</p>	<p>Q2</p>
<p>Q3</p>	<p>Q4</p>

Step 1: Who I Will Meet

The business that I am really in (benefits-based definition):

My Target Market:

- Consumer:
 - Age/income/occupations

 - Lifestyle and attitudes

 - Needs

 - Locations

- Business-to-business:
 - Types of companies (size, industry, location)

Step 2: Where I Will Network

Everywhere Networking Opportunities:

Networking Events:

Recurring event locations and dates:

Annual and/or one-time event locations and dates:

Step 3: What I Will Say to My New Contacts

Preparation routine:

- Purpose for attending:

- Plan for approaching people:

- Physical posture for conducting conversations:

- Preparing to initiate relationships:

Conversation Starters:

- Open-ended questions:

- Conversation topics – currents, general

- Ending Conversations:
 - Want to meet again

 - Don't want to meet again

Your Elevator Speech:

- Key Benefits

- Unique Positioning

- How to Project My Personality

- Speech flow:

Step 4: How I Will Grow Relationships

Managing contacts:

- Name remembering system & contact information management:

- How I will use my business cards as business-building tools:

- My business note writing and follow-up process:
 - Pleasure to Meet You Notes

 - Thank You Notes

 - Follow-up phone calls

Nurturing Action Plan:

- Capturing and maintaining contact and customer information
- Ongoing regular communication with network members:
- Volunteering plan:
- Referral-giving plan:
- Mentoring plan – receiving and giving:

Evaluation and Feedback

From Mentors:	
Things I'm doing well:	Areas I need to improve:
From Peers:	
Things I'm doing well:	Areas I need to improve:
From Strategic Partners:	
Things I'm doing well:	Areas I need to improve:

From Customers and Clients:	
Things I'm doing well:	Areas I need to improve:

Give Us Your Feedback!

Congratulations! Now that you've completed this workbook, we'd like to know how it was helpful to you in your networking efforts. Drop us an e-mail at:

success@2MinuteNetworker.com

Need More Copies?

For additional copies of this workbook, or to order other 2 Minute Networker resources, please visit our website:

www.2MinuteNetworker.com

Thank You!

