



50 Ways to Grow Referrals

By Jeri Quinn

Referrals help you grow your business faster because the new contact already trusts you allowing the sale to close faster. There are fewer customer acquisition costs. Referrals usually are good quality clients if they came from a quality source. Use these 50 ideas to grow your business. Want some help with any of them? Contact me and I'd be happy to help.

1. Give, give give. Without being attached to the expectation of a return.
2. Give referrals. Look to help others before they help you.
3. Build up your referral network so it's so big that you can introduce many of them to each other. Introduce people from one networking group to another.
4. Listen. Let people give you clues as to how to sell to them or how to get them to give you referrals. Ask them questions to keep them talking.
5. Be a joyful person, someone everyone finds uplifting and positive. You will get referrals as people get to know you and want to be around you.
6. Be extremely reliable and trustworthy. Stand for your values. Be an honorable person.
7. Target your marketing to people in the same industry who can refer each other because they talk together, participate in strategic alliances, work together on committees, attend the same trade shows, etc.



8. Target your marketing efforts to people in the same industry, trade show or group to save time on marketing research and increase your productivity.
9. Create a network of referral partners that go after the same clients so you can learn from each other, share resources.
10. Do seminars with members of your referral network.
11. Do white papers and articles with members of your referral network.
12. Do an endorsement campaign where you partner with another professional that targets the same clients. You each bring 5 or 10 clients into the campaign where you recommend each other with letters, special offers and phone introductions.
13. Keep in touch with your referral partners with a newsletter so you stay top-of-mind with them.
14. Plan a strategy to develop each referral partner, coffee, breakfast, lunch or dinner on a regular schedule.
15. Educate your referral partners with articles that help them understand what you do.
16. Deepen your relationship with referral partners or clients by taking them to a special show, performance, concert, sporting event. Don't talk business, just share the good time.
17. Send something to your referral partners that they can forward to their contacts, maybe business related, maybe just for fun.



18. Offer something for free which makes it easier for someone to refer their contact to the event. (free teleclass, free participation in a research project)
19. Use LinkedIn to connect (other social media as well) if your clients are there.
20. On LinkedIn answer questions, join groups, show off your expertise to attract referrals
21. Seek and receive LinkedIn recommendations to attract referrals
22. Look at who you want to meet on LinkedIn and then see who is in your network that is already in his. Call your contact for an introduction
23. Track companies on LinkedIn and on Google that you want to be referred to. Speak knowledgeably about the happenings in these companies to people who could possibly make the introduction.
24. Ask your clients for referrals when they are delighted with your job performance.
25. Put a note in your email signature suggesting that referrals are welcome
26. Gallop research shows that client loyalty is generated through emotional connections. So look at those emotional points of connections and see how you can match your level of spontaneity with your client's.
27. Make sure the service you provide is impeccably delicious. Let it be so delightful that they just have to tell everybody all about it.
28. Put a referral form on your website. Keep it simple.



29. When you give a presentation to a group or individually, on the evaluation forms ask participants if they'd like to have a more in-depth conversation.
30. Have a happy hour cocktail party once a quarter and get your clients to come and bring their friends. Let the bar owner fund each attendee's first drink and a few hors d'oeuvres. You're pulling lots of people into his bar. Right?
31. When you leave a prospect's office, video tape yourself thanking the person you just saw, summarizing the high points of the meeting, spelling out next steps. Send it to him immediately.
32. Support a cause, a nonprofit dealing with service, conquering disease, promoting peace or helping the environment. Work with others who support that cause or service.
33. Show appreciation. Offer thank you's for any referrals you're given.
34. Have a referral strategy session with a networking partner. Each of you prepare by identifying 5-10 prospects you have for each other. You will also decide before leaving how you will introduce each lead to each other.
35. Share with your referral partner the triggers you each use to identify when is a good time to say 'I know someone who can help with that.'
36. Have a breakfast, lunch or dinner where you invite several people that should know each other. Introduce them. Make this a regular happening that people look forward to being invited to.



37. Split your referral partners into groups based on how effective they are. A for the bet Referrers, B for the referrers that have promise, and C for those that are probably long shots. Send letters to the A's and B's more often. Send letters to the C's less often.
38. Tell people that the price of the service you provide for them is \$xx plus 2 referrals. Ask them to fulfill that responsibility as your project winds down or when the client is especially delighted. Put it on your invoice.

If you have a team, here are some more ways. The point here is to leverage your employees.

39. Delegate some of your other duties to other people so you have more time to do the above referral generation activities.
40. Block out 'Referral Engine time' to do these activities during which time your staff should not interrupt you. Wear a special hat, put a sign on the door, leave the building, do what you need to do to make the time sacred.
41. Use an administrative assistant to make appointments for you. Send an email to the person who you want to have an appointment with asking if they'd like to have lunch (or whatever) with you. Then say 'I'll have my people call your people to figure out the best date in both our schedules' It takes less time than you making your own appointments, Plus it increases your power and worth in your contact's eyes.



42. Give training in networking to all staff in your company. Let others go to places where potential referral agents hang out. Let your employees make contacts, do the initial follow up and then introduce you into the relationship.
43. Ask your employees for the names or types of people you want to meet. Sometimes we don't ask the people closest to us.
44. Make sure your employees use LinkedIn. Check out who is a 1st and 2nd level connection for each of them. Ask them to introduce you to someone you want to meet. Be respectful of their desire to say 'yes' or 'no.'
45. Your staff interacts with your clients. Let them ask for referrals from time to time. Maybe the boss in your client company who you deal with doesn't know a good referral prospect for you. But maybe your staff person who delivers the service has her own relationship with the VP in your client's organization. The VP might be able to think differently because she has different contacts and she knows your service better.
46. Have the person who does your purchasing ask the vendors he's dealing with to participate with you in finding referral sources and help in making introductions. You're in the same industry and they know the players. It's in their best interest to help you grow. Through them you might meet another company going out of business or handling a different part of the market. This contact might give you lots of customers they can't take care of.



47. Get your staff to identify how they can up-level the customer experience and create a series of WOW! Moments for the clients so clients can't help but be raving fans and tout your company's praises everywhere.
48. Treat your clients with ARE (Appreciation, Respect and Encouragement) so they treat your customers well and so they feel that they are proud to give the company referrals from their private circle of friends and family.
49. Empower your employees to make decisions in the customer's best interest with a wide latitude of available options and cost guidelines. This will make them heroes to the clients, creating word of mouth advertising for your company and plenty of referrers of referrers.
50. If you have a consumer based business, you might want to consider asking all your staff to encourage happy customers give your company a Yelp recommendation.

About the Author



Jeri Quinn at Driving IR helps leaders of small and medium sized businesses who want to grow their companies. Her specialty area is creating cultures where employees show initiative and take ownership of their work. Results include engaged employees, loyal customers/clients, lots of referrals, huge profit increases, more enjoyment and a sellable asset. What makes Jeri unique is her thirty five years experience starting, growing and selling businesses, 25 years at the helm of her own companies. You can obtain a Referral Success Kit with lots of ideas to reduce your client acquisition costs and grow your referral engine by going to her website. www.DrivingImprovedResults.com. Contact her directly at jeri@DrivingImprovedResuts.com or 212-923-5820 if you would like her to speak to your group, organization or tradeshow.