

Prospecting Is First Step Toward Success

New Member Prospecting

It's Not That Difficult!

Identifying prospective new members is one of the most important parts of your job as a campaign volunteer. To ensure your success this year, you will want to begin a prospect list as soon as you have completed training.

A prospect is any business or organization that is not currently a member of the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. You can verify a prospect's membership status by referring to the **Chamber's Membership List starting on page 108**. If there is still a question regarding a company's status, please call **Judy Joyce** in the Membership Department at 859 578-6394 for verification or go to our web site business listing, www.nkychamber.com

Typical prospects include

- AC/Heating Services
- Accountants
- Advertising Agencies
- Architects
- Attorneys
- Caterers
- Contractors
- Delivery Companies
- Electricians
- Engineers
- Insurance Companies
- Janitorial Services
- Landscape/Maintenance
- Manufacturers
- Personnel services
- Printers
- Security Services
- Temporary Services

Prospects are easy to identify—since only 2,000 businesses in Northern Kentucky and the region are currently members of the Chamber. The best prospects are those firms with which you or your company already has a business relationship. Good sources for prospects are your company's business associates, clients and vendors. Securing a list from your purchasing department would be helpful in identifying these firms. Also, look at your own Rolodex file for leads and people you associate with personally at church, thorough school, sports, clubs and other associations.

You will have the most success recruiting a prospect that has an established business relationship with you or your company.

Where to start?

- **Personal Relationships:** Friends, relatives and neighbors. They can give you inside information on the companies they work for as well as names of the decision-makers.
- **Your "personal accounts payable" list.** Check your doctor, dentist, dry cleaner, vet, lawyer, mechanic, electrician, and plumber.

Prospecting

Warm Leads

- Referrals from people whose names you can use
- People you know
- People you have read or heard about
- Any inside information about a company

Cold Leads

- Names from the phone book or a list
- Billboards, ads, etc.

Cardinal Rule: Warm leads are easier than cold leads. But you can turn a cold lead (ex. a name in a newspaper article) into a warm lead by having information about the person.

Special Interests: Do you belong to a professional or special interest organization? Those members are business people just like you. Where do they work? Can they give you any referrals?

Media

Read the Enquirer, Community Recordors, and/or Cincinnati Business Courier. Whenever you read an article about a company and it mentions a specific individual, call that person. Refer to the article and their company and then ask for their help: "To whom could I talk to in your company about the Chamber?"

Read "People in the News" sections of newspaper where they announce promotions, transfers, etc. Call the featured people to congratulate them and go from there!

Pay attention to advertising. If a company is spending money on advertising, they are interested in promoting their product. A Chamber membership can do that for a lot less and for an entire year, not just a one-time shot.

Television and radio advertising. Contact companies who are advertising on local TV and radio stations. They are promoting specifically to the local market, and they can also do that through the Chamber.

Billboards. Especially watch for new outdoor displays.

Referrals:

- Ask everyone for referrals.
- People you have just sold to
- Companies you know who are already members
- Your personal and business relationships
- Ask companies whom they are doing business with who could benefit from Chamber membership...
- "Your company brochure is terrific. Who did it for you? Would you mind if I call them and use your name?"
- "Who does your design?" "Who does your printing?"

Business Prospect List for Memberships, Sponsorships & Budget Reductions

Use the following form to make your list of prospective members you could recruit as new Chamber members during the campaign. The best approach is to begin contacting prospects **NOW** to ensure your success.

CONTACT	BUSINESS	PHONE
WHERE MY FIRM:		
Does its banking _____		
Gets copier equipment _____		
Gets its office supplies _____		
Gets its printing done _____		
Has its insurance _____		
Accounting/CPA counsel _____		
Landlord _____		
Caterer _____		
Courier Service _____		
Building Contractor _____		
Landscaping _____		
Interior design _____		

WHO I DO BUSINESS WITH.....

My best customer(s)/client(s) _____

Where I do my banking _____

Where I get my car repaired _____

Where I buy flowers _____

My homebuilder _____

My attorney _____

Plumbers _____

Architect _____

Electrician _____

PERSONAL CONTACTS (church, PTO, soccer, clubs, etc.) _____

Be prepared. READ THE 2010 MEMBER'S GUIDE-BENEFITS & OPPORTUNITIES

Familiarize yourself with the Chamber and the information you will discuss. Make plans to attend a "Getting the Most from Your Chamber Membership", a 90 minute free member reception which gives a complete overview of the Chamber.

Review your prospects web site for additional information. Think about the type of company you are calling on and pick two or three benefits that will answer your prospect's question, "**What's in it for me and my company?**"

Determine who in the company has the authority -to join the Chamber. Spend your time dealing directly with the decision-maker and preferably not through a secretary or receptionist. This will delay closing the membership sale.

Send an introductory letter-to the decision-maker inviting him or her to join the Chamber and stating you will be in contact with them soon.

Follow-up- on the introductory letter with a telephone call to the decision-maker. Introduce yourself as a Chamber volunteer and explain the purpose of your call. Extend a personal invitation to join the Chamber.

Find out "what is the major issue affecting your business?"

Target one or more benefits from the Member Guide to respond to the question above.

Zero in on a "hot button" as you tell them what is in it for them"—participation in networking events, new business contacts, business assistance, workforce solutions, reduce health care cost with special Chamber rates with Humana and more.

Discuss one or two programs

If your prospect is unaware of the Chamber's activities in the community, briefly discuss one or two programs—Education, Workforce, Lobbying and Small Business.

Confirm the prospect's total regional employment

As part of the process of discussing the prospect's business and benefits of Chamber membership, confirm the prospect's total regional employment so you can determine their fair share investment level.

Determine your prospect's annual investment

After gaining agreement, determine your prospect's annual investment based upon the firm's total regional employment and any other additional investments you and your prospect discussed.

Preparing your presentation

This planned approach often leads to an easy membership. It can be used in person or over the phone. Give it a try.

“John, I am _____ with _____ company. I’m volunteering my time for the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. I was looking through our membership listing and was surprised you were not a member. We need firms like yours to be members. I would like to set-up a time when I could meet with you to review the benefits of Chamber membership. Would tomorrow at 2:00 p.m. work or Thursday at 9:00 a.m. be better?”

The secret now is silence. If you speak, you may talk yourself out of a membership. The answer the prospect gives you will determine your next move. If the answer is a date, begin filling in the agreement and assume the prospect has agreed to invest.

But what if your prospect asks you to tell him more about the Chamber? This response may be from the prospect that wants to be shown his or her money will be put to good use and, more directly, how it will be of benefit. Be careful! You can get trapped into telling this person everything you know about the Chamber and giving a great education for naught. We approach this situation by **asking questions**.

“John, I know you are a busy man and I could spend the next few hours telling you “more” about the Chamber. Perhaps you could help me select the areas which are most important to you and your business.”

“Let’s look at the Chamber’s Member Guide and see what contacts, visibility or business information would mean the most to you.”

Go over the information together and when you are finished, ask some questions.

“How are you currently making business contacts? What are you doing to promote your business?”

Keep asking questions???

Alter your questions to fit the needs and/or interest of your prospects. The secret is to ASK QUESTIONS THAT LEAD TO THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS THE CHAMBER CAN SERVE.

Sometimes these questions will bring out an **objection**. The objection gives you a definite set of circumstances with which to work. Up to this point, you have been searching for a “Hot Button”. Now you have it and what you do from here will make or break the sale. Never say, **BUT** or **HOWEVER** when you answer an objection. It puts you into an argument with your prospect that no one can win. Use **“YES”** or **“INSTEAD”** when answering prospects objections.

Preparing for any sales presentation includes anticipating the objections that any decision maker may have and being able to overcome them successfully. Objections are part of the selling process. Objections usually occur when there is doubt or unanswered questions in the mind of the prospective member.

The best way to overcome an objection is by being prepared. Objections show that the prospect is interested and allows the salesperson the opportunity to provide additional information.

First, ISOLATE THE OBJECTION. When you get to this point in the presentation, you will want to eliminate as many hidden barriers as possible. This is probably the most effective means in preparing for the close. It is accomplished by making the point that if the objection stated is the only objection and if you can overcome it, will the prospect commit today?

“We don’t do business in Northern Kentucky.”

Do you live here? Do you pay taxes here? Do you use the schools or public services? Do you hire employees that were educated in NKY schools? If you answer “yes” to any of these questions, then you and your company are part of this community, and you have a stake in our quality of life, for your self and your employees, regardless of where your customers are.

“We are a new business, not yet well established.”

That’s exactly why you need the Chamber- to get the word out about your business and to make new contacts. As a member you will develop new business contacts, take advantage of opportunities to further develop your business skills, and contribute to strengthening our regional economy. The Chamber is a cost-effective way to market your new business.

If you are a first-time business owner, the Chamber can help you develop new skills you’ll need to run your business and you can get advice from other business owners.

“I belong to too many organizations.”

Choose the ones that will help your business the most. I know of no other organization like the Chamber that represents business, our marketplace and the continued improvement of our region’s quality of life. If you can’t invest your time, you can support the Chamber through your membership.

“I can’t afford any more contributions.”

The Chamber is not asking for a contribution, but for an investment. The Internal Revenue Service classifies Chamber membership as an ordinary and necessary business expense, and you should too. Pay your Chamber membership from your marketing budget. It’s a good investment in your company’s future.

The Chamber is just for big businesses, not for the little guy.”

I can understand your perception because we do represent larger businesses in the region. However, more than 80 percent of the Chamber’s members own and manage small businesses with less than 25 employees. Our programs are designed to appeal to all members and especially small businesses.

“No time for it.”

I can understand that. Many benefits require no investment of time-your listing in the membership directory and online, economic development, governmental representation. Spend a few minutes a month reviewing our newsletter and learn what’s happening and then attend events as you have the interest and time. You can designate another employee to participate.

Not every member is involved on committees or task forces. But fortunately some members are. Their investment of time benefits all members and helps advance the Chamber’s work throughout Northern Kentucky. We have a variety of programs and events. If one of these opportunities could help your business, could you find the time?

“I did belong, but didn’t get anything out of it.”

What did you hope to get from it? The Chamber is a dynamic organization. It is constantly changing to respond to the needs of the business community. Although our mission remains the same, our programs are very different from a few years ago.

It is hard to measure the economic impact of the Chamber and our government affairs activities on your bottom line---but that doesn’t mean that your business doesn’t benefit. Imagine what it would be like if there wasn’t an active pro-business organization to speak on behalf of business to elected officials. Did you try to get involved? Did your staff attend any of the Chamber’s programs?

“Let me think it over.”

What do you need to think over? Is there some else I should be speaking to who could make this decision? Will you be in a position to make a decision this week?

“I can’t afford it. Business is poor.”

If your business is poor, you can’t afford not to be a member. Chamber membership costs, as little as 90 cents per day. You can pay by check, or we can accept your credit card. The sooner you join, the sooner you can benefit from Chamber networking opportunities including our monthly breakfast program Eggs ‘N Issues, Business After Hours, Executive Roundtables and Business Referral Networks. You will also receive an immediate return on your investment with our New Member Value Book, which has **\$530.00** worth of coupons to “test drive” many of our most popular programs.

“I already belong to another Chamber.”

That’s great, but sometimes it is beneficial to belong to more than one Chamber that can expand your business contacts and provide access to the area without geographical limitations.

“Why should we join the Chamber when our home office is in another city?”

The Chamber works to strength this market and the stronger this market is, the better the performance of your branch. Although your head office may be located elsewhere, your branch is affected by local regulations and taxes, you draw your workforce from the local population, and you have the same interest as locally-owned business. Taking advantage of networking and marketing opportunities will only increase your branch sales.

Your business is successful because the economy of this region is healthy. The Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce has been a big part of that success. Many who are doing well want to give something back. Investment in the Chamber is an excellent way to give something back to Northern Kentucky.

1. Identify yourself and your firm.

"This is _____ with _____, but today I'm a volunteer for the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. I was looking through my Chamber membership roster and was surprised to see that you are not already a member. We need you and your company to be apart of the Chamber."

2. Establish rapport.

Use your best judgment in asking questions about your prospect's business. "How's business? How many people do you employ? What exactly does your company do? or Tell me more about the product and services of your company. What's your usual source of new business?"

"What is the biggest issue affecting your business?" Match a benefit to their response.

3. Make an interest creating remark.

"Our firm is a member of the Chamber and we really benefit from the activities and programs. One of the most profitable benefits is _____. You might find _____ to be of a real benefit to you and/or your business."

4. Create desire.

"By joining the Chamber you will receive a complimentary New Member Value Book with \$347.50 of coupons for the "Eggs and Issues" and other Chamber programs. You will be invited to a new member reception in June. By attending Chamber functions you will have opportunities to meet other Northern Kentucky business people many of whom could be potential customers or clients."

5. Close the sale.

"Your tax-deductible annual membership investment would be \$_____ that is less than _____cents per day! You will begin receiving the Business Journal, right away and a volunteer Ambassador will deliver your official new member packet. Your name and company will be listed on the Chamber's web site www.nkychamber.com."

Thank you for the supporting the Chamber. After attending at least two Chamber events during the first 90 days and if you are not satisfied, your dues will be refunded upon written request.

One of the most successful closes is the “alternative choice” close. This gives the prospect a choice of two positive answers...and if the answer is no, the door is still open for further discussion.

Examples:

1. “Which category in our Membership Directory would you rather be listed under ___ or ___?” Look your prospect right in the eye and smile
2. “Will you be the principal contact for your company, or should we designate someone else?”
3. “Would you rather write a check or use a credit card to finalize your membership?”

Remember, the longer you are silent, the better your odds are of getting the sale. Why, you ask? Because the prospect is trying to think of reasons why not to buy. If you have done a good job of offering exciting benefits of Chamber membership, they will indeed buy. Finally they say, “Put me under dry cleaners.”

This is called the **basic order blank close**. As you make your presentation, pull out the membership application. When they tell you how they wished to be listed, you start filling out the application. Where it says “Signature” you say, “All I need is your OK.”

The “YES” Close

If the prospect asks if he or she can receive a particular benefit and we know we can provide it, simply ask them for the check. “Do you want to handle this with a check?” When the prospect says “yes” they have closed themselves. Then say, “Fine, how would you like to be listed in the Membership Directory?”

The Puppy Dog Close

Here we are placing the prospect into the big picture by giving them a “taste of the product”, by enjoying a value-received benefit of Chamber membership. Invite them to an upcoming event like Eggs ‘N Issues a Business After Hours. Bring your prospect as your guest. Let him or her “buy” after testing the product.

The “Higher Authority” Close

Believe us when we say it’s OK not to be an expert on Chamber products. You are a volunteer with some knowledge of the Chamber, but it is not necessary to know all the details of all the Chamber programs.

When you are out in the field and a prospects asks you a question you cannot answer, it’s OK to tell the prospect you are a volunteer and not an expert. Simply ask your prospect if you could use the phone and call the Chamber.

“Let me get _____ on the Chamber staff to answer that for you. Hello, Janice, I’m at _____ and Mr. Jones has a question I cannot answer.” Tell Mr. Jones who you are talking to and that they will answer the question. (The prospect will be impressed with your access to the Chamber staff. We will help you make the close over the phone.)

Popular Closing Phrases

“The Chamber is presently working for you and needs to get your membership started today. Should we list your firm as _____ or do you prefer another listing?”

“If you’ll authorize it, I’ll pick up your check today. Would you like me to bring a receipt or will your check suffice?”

“I’d like to get your membership investment started today. If you’ll agree, I’ll pick up your check. Would today be OK or would tomorrow be better for you?”

Summary Points To Remember

When you **BUY** the Chamber you:

- get **representation** at all levels of government,
- get **access** to seminars, workshops and programs that non-members can’t attend,
- get **information** about how to be better in business, about the community and legislative affairs than you’ll ever get any other way,
- get **solutions** to local problems that government can’t solve alone,
- help **create** jobs through an economic development program that is extremely effective,
- help **find and train** people to fill jobs that might otherwise go unfilled.
- get an **immediate return on your investment** with the New Member Value Book, with coupons to attend programs and discounts on advertising.
- *Special rates on Humana employee health insurance, dental, vision and group life, big savings on office supplies with Office Depot, cost-saving for members with UPS.*
- **90 day Guarantee. Attend two Chamber events in first 90 days, if you are not satisfied get a full refund with written notice.**

“What is it about a better community and better profitability for you and your business that isn’t worth \$_____?”

Use or adapt this letter to invite your prospect to join the Chamber. Use your letterhead.

Date
Name
Company
Address
City ST 0000

Dear:

I am writing to you as a volunteer with the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce to introduce you to the important work of our Chamber. The Chamber is an advocate for its broad and diverse member businesses, creating a climate of growth and success. I want to encourage you to review the many valuable benefits of membership.

Currently 2,000-area business firms, including our company, look to the Chamber to provide leadership in building a better environment in which to do business. We take advantage of the numerous programs, benefits and activities offered by the Chamber, designed to directly benefit our business. The Chamber provides unique opportunities for individuals and businesses to make a difference by connecting them to important business and community issues.

Enclosed for your information is a membership application outlining some of the Chamber's programs, benefits and services. After reviewing this information, you will see that our Northern Kentucky Chamber has much to offer you and your company. To learn more about the Chamber checkout their web site www.nkychamber.com.

I will contact you in the next few days to personally discuss the merits of a Chamber membership.

Best regards,

Your Name
Title at Your Company

*Volunteer for Northern Kentucky
Chamber of Commerce*

Contacting your Company's Vendors

Use or adapt this letter to contact your company's vendors. Invite them to join the Chamber or to sponsor a Chamber event or publication. Use your letterhead.

Date
Name
Company
Address
City ST 0000

Dear:

Something very exciting is happening at (Insert Your Company's Name). Many of our employees are involved in the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, *Taking Care of Business 2010*, a total resource development campaign. Over the next few weeks our employees will be calling on businesses like yours that are currently not members of the Chamber. We will be talking about the Chamber's numerous benefits, member services, and the Chamber's ambitious work plan for the upcoming year.

Our company has accepted a challenge to bring new members and resources to the Chamber. By providing you with helpful information on how your firm can benefit from Chamber membership and sponsorship opportunities, we want to make it easy for you to say "yes" to a good business decision.

One of our team members will be contacting you in the next few weeks. We hope you will say "yes" to a decision that will help the Chamber, the community and most of all, your business. The Chamber provides unique opportunities for individuals and businesses to make a difference by connecting them to important business and community issues.

Best regards,

Your Name
Title at Your Company

*Volunteer for Northern Kentucky
Chamber of Commerce*

Sample letter for contacting a new member prospect

Date

Name
Address
City

Name,

As you may know, (your company) is an active member of the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. Several members of our staff are involved in committees and activities of the Chamber. We have found our experience to be quite rewarding. We are currently involved in the Chamber's, *Taking Care of Business 2010*, a total resource campaign. This campaign is a concentrated initiative to build the Chamber into a stronger and even more effective advocate for businesses and provides the Chamber needed resources to assist in our region's continued growth.

I would like to take this time to personally invite you and your organization to become a Chamber member and join more than 2,000 companies in building a better environment in which to do business.

The Chamber provides unique opportunities for individuals and businesses to make a difference by connecting them to important business and community issues. With a Chamber membership you can begin taking advantage of the numerous programs, benefits and activities offered by the Chamber, designed to directly benefit your business. To find out more about what the Chamber has to offer, please refer to the enclosed material and/or visit the Chamber's web site www.nkychamber.com.

I know from our business relationship that your company prides itself on being a quality customer service organization. I'm sure your company has benefited from the robust economy we have experienced in Northern Kentucky. I believe that a strong Chamber of Commerce is vital in continuing that success. I hope you will join (your company) in supporting the Northern Kentucky of Commerce.

I will contact you in the next few days to discuss Chamber membership with you and answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(your name)

Enclosure

Sample letter for contacting a Membership Renewal

Date

Name
Address
City

Name,

Thank you for your investment in the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. Your investment has enabled the Chamber to continue its mission, which is to sustain and further a thriving business economy and to enhance our community's quality of life.

I would like to take this time to personally invite you and your company to renew their 2010-2011 Chamber membership with the more than 2,000 other member companies in building a better environment in which to do business. Through your Chamber membership you can take advantage of numerous programs, benefits and activities offered by the Chamber, designed to directly benefit your business. To find out more about what the Chamber offers visit the Chamber's web site nkychamber.com.

I know from our business relationship that your company prides itself on being a quality customer service organization. I'm sure your company has benefited from the robust economy we have experienced in Northern Kentucky. I believe that a strong Chamber of Commerce is vital in continuing that success. I hope you will renew (your company) in supporting the Northern Kentucky of Commerce.

I will contact you in the next few days to discuss your Chamber membership and answer any questions you may have. For your convenience I have enclosed a membership renewal invoice. Thank you.

Sincerely,

(your name)

Enclosure