

# What is the Definition of a Referral?

---

Referrals are the lifeblood of MBX, yet the definition of referral is sometimes pretty sketchy. So what is a referral?

The most fundamental definition of a referral is an opportunity to do business with someone who is in the market to buy your product or service. It's not a guaranteed sale, but an open door to discuss your business.

It's important to note, however, that there is a well defined and repeatable process for giving referrals. Knowing the process or steps is very important for increasing the probability of referral success. Please note! A referral is not a lead. Lead is an MBX four-letter word.

Here are the six steps necessary for giving a bona fide referral.

1. **Listen** for a need from someone you've met. Listening is one of the fundamental skills of a networker and is probably the most important thing s/he can do.
2. **Tell** the individual that you know someone who can provide that service.
3. If you've done business with the member, **share** your experience.
4. **Give out** the business card of the person you are referring and ask for the individual's card.
5. **Ask** if it's okay to have the member call.
6. If the answer is yes, **fill out** a referral slip and give it to the chapter member at the next meeting.

Once a referral has been given to an MBX partner, the ball is in his/her court. A phone call or a brief visit is the next step for turning a referral into business. A referral is better than a lead or cold call, because your name and business has already been shared with the prospective client, and they are expecting you to call. Pretty cool.

One other thing. Did you know that referrals come in grades. A grade C referral is one in which your name and phone number has been shared with someone who is expecting your call. This is still a good referral although it calls for a little more initiative from you to make it work.

On the other end of the spectrum is the grade A referral which is an in-person introduction that results from the hard work of your MBX referral partner.

Grade A referrals are much more likely to lead to closed business. The further along the referral spectrum that you can follow in your referral giving – the more likely you are giving truly high quality referrals to your networking partners.