

What is your networking score?

Person to person networking is positively the most effective means for generating expanding markets for your business. Not only that, networking pays a higher return on your networking investment since much of it can be done without a capital expenditure.

Since networking is such an effective and powerful means to build business income, it follows that it deserves high quality attention and investment. In other words, networking doesn't work unless you work at it.

The following networking check up will help you to assess how network-intentional you are. It will also give you some good ideas about how to proceed in the future.

For each answer, respond with 1 to 5. 1 means not at all; 5 means all the time.

1. I have written long-term networking goals. ____
2. I block out time in my weekly schedule for regular networking activities. ____
3. I can describe my ideal client in clear terms. ____
4. I have a strong team of referral partners. ____
5. I live by the philosophy that generosity is repaid with generosity. I take care of other networking partners first. ____
6. I attend at least two networking functions or activities per week. ____
7. I belong to a Web-based networking group such as LinkedIn. ____
8. I work to bring personal value to my networking relationships. ____
9. I typically am the one who puts the wheels in motion in a networking relationship. ____
10. I have a networking accountability partner. ____
11. I send thank you cards regularly to customers and referral partners. ____
12. I consistently follow up on referrals within 24 hours. ____
13. I have use every opportunity to network and promote my business. ____
14. I make helping others the focus of my lunchtime meetings. ____
15. I am good at making a connection when I meet someone new. ____
16. I am an active member of a referral networking group such as MBX. ____
17. I am an active member of a Chamber of Commerce. ____
18. My product message is about customer benefits rather than its features. ____

19. I can consistently describe my target market without saying "I'm looking for anybody who...." ____
20. I make a good first impression with my business card. ____
21. I provide information that is valuable to my audience whenever I give a presentation. ____
22. I send a newsletter to my clients. ____
23. I regularly put out press releases for my business. ____
24. I have written articles for publication. (Blogging about your business counts). ____
25. I make getting client testimonials a part of my networking and sales process. ____
26. I have provided my referral partners with success stories about my business. ____
27. I have prepared a written introduction for each time I am presented to a group. ____
28. I am comfortable sharing my accomplishments. ____
29. I make a practice of asking for feedback from clients. ____
30. I start new networking relationships by acting like a host at networking events. ____
31. I have asked my vendors for referrals. ____
32. I provide support to my target market beyond my services. ____
33. I ask for referrals every day. ____
34. I look for referrals for others daily. ____
35. I am comfortable speaking in public. ____
36. I surround myself with others who can help my clients. ____
37. I have an advisory board for my business. ____
38. I enjoy learning more about how to network effectively. ____

Total Score: _____

Scoring

190-171 Master Networker: You have skills and instincts that will continue to increase your market share of business.

170-151 Very Good Networker: You know how to network. Your thirst for learning will have you looking for strategies to further improve the return on your investment of effort in networking. With commitment, you'll be a master networker in no time!

150-131 Good Networker: You're doing many things right. Your effort can be very effective and your relationships strong. Seek out relationships and resources that will help you to improve on your networking skills and increase your referrals.

130-111 Fair Networker: Your networking could use some work. Look for ways to make networking more of an instinct. Create an effective system for ramping up your efforts. This will pay you back in increased business.

110-0 Weak Networker: Networking is an acquired skill. Focus on developing a basic networking skill set in order to network your business. Talk to experienced networkers, tap into resources: books, articles, blogs, and podcasts on business and networking. You've got nothing to lose and everything to gain—the world is waiting to know more about you and your business!

What do these scores mean? Whatever your score, remember that you're simply taking your networking temperature, so to speak; you're not engaging in any value judgments about yourself, one way or the other. Indeed, if you take this self-assessment a few months from now, the score will probably be different—assuming you make a dedicated effort to pursue continuous learning and develop your networking skills and strategies!