

# PracticeBuilding SuccessSystem

Helping Health & Wellbeing Practitioners

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Achieve Remarkable Business Results

The Step-by-Step Marketing System  
to Help Grow Your Natural Therapy Business

Step 03  
Create Your Marketing System

Module 03H

## How to Get More Referrals

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## Introduction

Dear Therapist,

Wouldn't it be nice to have a referral-based business? Not just an occasional referral, but receiving a steady stream of inquiries from qualified prospects who were already "sold" on you and your service before they even speak with you? It is possible, but it takes, time, work and patience. In this section I discuss how to create raving fans and build a referral-based business.

In addition to the strategies covered here, you should also study the section on Strategic Alliances, which shows you exactly how to form structured win-win-win relationships with people who consistently send you multiple clients.

### In this class you will:

- Learn how to get more referrals from your clients and your network.
- Read and hear sample scripts that make it easy to ask for referrals.
- Learn the secrets for creating raving fans that consistently send you clients.
- Learn how to conclude the client relationship in a way that significantly increases referrals in the future.
- Understand how to develop the necessary infrastructure and actions that will keep your referral engine alive.
- Learn why you **MUST** acknowledge people who send you referrals and how to best thank them.

This class includes the following documents saved in Microsoft Word so you can easily customise and use!

- Sample "Completion of Coaching Relationship" Wrap-Up Letter/Email
- Sample Client Accomplishment Document
- Sample Letter of Introduction

Spending the time and energy to learn how to increase your referrals or perhaps even building true referral-based business is a very good use of your time, especially if you're really in this for the long haul! This class provides a solid foundation – all you have to do is follow the guidelines and take consistent action! (Have you heard that before? :-)

Be Remarkable



abz change 😊

## Referrals - Definition and Benefits

Quite simply, a referral is someone who inquires about your therapy based on the recommendation of a third person. Having a referral-based natural therapy practice is where the majority of your clients come from referrals. Your referral-based business will still require some marketing attention and maintenance, however it requires far less time and energy than other forms of marketing.

Below are some of the benefits of creating a referral-based business. Reminding yourself why you want a referral-based business will help you take the necessary action and have the discipline to achieve it.

### People Call You

One of the best things about a referral-based business is that people call you!

### Higher Quality Prospects with an Increased “Readiness” Factor

When a referral contacts you about your treatments there is a high likelihood that person is “half-way sold” before they even speak with you. The person who is doing the referring usually paves the way, informing the prospect about your value and the benefits of your service.

This is so much more desirable than meeting someone at a networking meeting who has never even heard of your modality before and trying to “convince” them to learn more about your service.

### Minimises Your Effort

I have found that therapists who focus on building a referral-based business average one referral from each of their clients. So if you have 10 clients, you can expect to get 10 referrals. If you average a modest 50% conversion rate in your Two for One Assessment Consultations, you will get one new client for every two current clients you have! So imagine, that every two clients you secure, you are really getting 3! THAT is powerful!

When you build a healthy referral engine you become like a farmer. You still need to tend to the seeds you have planted, but there isn't as much work and effort involved. This frees up time so you can focus on providing better service to your clients, increasing your skills (which leads to more referrals!) and enjoying a great life!

### It's Fun!

When you really focus on building a referral-based business, the “marketing” you do for that strategy is all about:

- Providing great treatments, service and value to your clients
- Educating, informing and providing value to your network

For most therapists, this is the stuff you love doing anyway!

## How to Generate More Referrals

### Possible Referral Sources

Referrals can come from a variety of sources, including:

- Your current clients
- Your past clients
- People who have had Two for One Assessment Consultations with you
- Your network (addressed in the grassroots marketing section)
- Your strategic alliances (addressed in the Strategic Alliances section)

### When to Ask a Current Client for Referrals

Your clients are a great source of referrals. In order to generate more referrals from your clients you need to do the following things:

#### *At the Beginning of the Client Relationship*

At the very beginning of the client relationship tell your new client that much of your business comes from referrals. Let them know up front that if they are pleased with the results they achieve from your treatments, you *expect* that that they will refer other people to you. A great time to do this is during the first Two for One Assessment Consultation (often called the “intake session”) when you are reviewing policies and procedures. You should also include this in your Welcome Package.

In the Abundant Private Practices, Practice Building Success System I talk a lot about professional posture. When sharing your referral policy with a new client, your professional posture will significantly impact how your request is received. Explain your policy in a straightforward, confident and matter-of-fact way!

*Sample Script for asking for referrals during the intake session:*

“Many of my clients come to me by referral and I am focused on building a referral-only business. I’m anticipating great things for you John. When that starts happening and you are really excited about your wellbeing and our work together, all I ask is that you share a little about your experience with 3 people you know who might benefit from working with me. Does that sound fair?”

Once you lay the foundation during the initial session you can then determine when to make a specific referral request. Some therapists are not comfortable asking for referrals during the course of the treatments. I believe that is a personal decision, so determine what feels right to you.

While I was visiting the United States I had cause to visit the Phoenix Healing Centre in Colorado and Dr Amber and Dr Sid had a really nice and very easy technique that might help you with referrals.

Hanging on the waiting room wall was a pretty small framed sign they had drawn themselves that said:

*The highest compliment one can give  
is the referrals of friends, associates and loved ones.  
Thank you for your trust.*

If you find it difficult to ask for referrals then something as simple as this in your waiting room will help encourage people to refer others to your practice.

***When your client experiences a big shift and starts thanking you***

Have you been in the situation when a client starts singing your praises? Perhaps after a big win? This is a perfect time to say,

“I’m so happy you are receiving so much value from our work together. One of the best ways you can thank me is by passing my name along to anyone you know who might want to enjoy these same kinds of results. I would be happy to offer a Two for One Assessment Consultation for anyone you refer.”

**Hint:** After a client has a big win or success is also a great time to ask for a testimonial! Similar to above you can say something like,

“I’m thrilled that you are receiving so much value from our work together. If you don’t mind, I’d really appreciate a written testimonial that describes the results you have experienced with the support of my services. I’m working on some new marketing materials and I’d love to include comments from some of my clients.”

**Naturally Forming Testimonials**

Some of the best testimonials I have ever received formed naturally. Clients often email and share a win or something profound that has occurred and those words come straight from the heart. They make very good testimonials because they are real. Simply reply back and ask permission to use their words. I have never had anyone refuse; in fact most are highly chuffed that their words can help. Always give full credit for their words. I think there are only three testimonials on my website that were specially written the rest are examples of naturally forming testimonials. I bet you will be able to tell the difference between the two types of testimonials. [www.margaretgill.com](http://www.margaretgill.com)

***At the conclusion of the client relationship***

While often not as powerful of a time as the “big win” time, the conclusion of the treatments is an excellent time to ask for referrals. This is especially true for people who are hesitant to ask for referrals during the course of the treatments. Similar to above, you want to simply ask if they know anyone who might be interested in learning more about your services. If you aren’t already, you could also use the conclusion of the treatments to get feedback from your client.

***Periodically after the series of treatments ends***

After the treatment relationships ends you will still be on your client’s minds. (Especially if you have an Ezine that your clients and former clients are subscribed to.) I recommend periodically contacting former clients (perhaps every 4-6 months). For example, you can place a call or send an email to

check-in. When you do this it is appropriate to remind them that you have a referral-based business and that you appreciate referrals.

## **Other Strategies for Increasing Referrals**

### ***Request a Letter of Introduction***

After a big win or at the end of the treatment period ask your client if he/she would send a letter of introduction on your behalf to people they know who might benefit from your services. This is an excellent way to generate numerous, high quality referrals!

### ***Up-Front Compensation Offer***

Create a generous incentive for your clients to refer you new clients and let them know up front! For example, you could say, "Referrals are a very important part of my business and I know the word of my clients is extremely valuable. Therefore I offer xyz whenever one of my clients recommends me to someone who then becomes a client." Your offer might be a free series of treatments, 50% off a series of treatments, one of your products such as a CD or essence, a donation to their favourite charity or whatever feels appropriate to you.

The benefit of letting people know up front is that for many people, money talks. Some people will send you referrals just because they are excited to let other people know about your service. For others, this type of added incentive will play a big role in determining how actively they promote your business.

Note: I am aware that in some professions, it is illegal to accept a referral fee. Remember, a "compensation plan" does not need to always be money. AND, for some people, a simple hand written note of thanks is all that is needed.

### ***Create Raving Fans/Add Value***

One of the secrets to creating a referral-based business is creating "raving fans." Raving fans, are people who go out of their way to talk about a product or service they have experienced! Raving fans are created when someone is so impressed about their experience with a product, service or company, that they can't stop talking about it. They are so excited they want to tell everyone they know about the great new restaurant they went to last week, or the amazing diet they are on.

As a therapist, the secret to creating raving fans is by being a great therapist. I could write a book on the things I think make a great therapist, but for now, just know that unless you are pretty darn good at what you do and have a lot of happy, paying clients, it's hard to create raving fans!

I can never hear the word Add Value and not think of Thomas Leonard, some would say he invented coaching. Thomas was a giving machine and he added so much value. Every so often there would just be an email in my inbox offering a free CD or product upgrade. His materials and teleclasses were chock full of high quality information and he never hesitated to give you inside information

and the tips and tricks that had made him successful. He shared everything he had with his clients. He gave us so much and that is why we loved him so much. The more value you provide to your clients, the higher your “Raving Fan Quotient!”

Here is a list of some of the many ways you can add value to your clients:

- Send cards (encouragement, holiday, thinking of you, congratulations)
- Acknowledge birthdays (cards and appropriate meaningful gifts – these do not need to be expensive!)
- Check-in between scheduled sessions via phone or email. Let your clients know you are thinking of them.
- Send articles that would be of interest to your client.
- Do some research or provide a resource to a client

Never forget how special a hand written note feels when you receive it. Always try to keep your communications authentic and real. A hand written note or card means so much to people in these times of text messages and computer generated letters and mail outs. To show you have thought about someone for even a few seconds can make a difference on many levels.

Here’s just one example of how Michelle, one of the founders of this program, added value to a client, which resulted in a raving fan, which resulted in great referrals.

**Add Value => Raving Fan => Referrals!**

*(In this example, more than \$8,000 worth!)*

One of my clients was grieving the death of her father. She kept talking about joining a grief support group and never took any action. After a call when she was really feeling the pain of losing her father I thought of a way to add value. I spent a total of 15 minutes researching grief support groups in her area and sending her a supportive email with details about the different groups.

The result? By making it easy for my client to take action, she joined a nurturing support group and very successfully moved through her grief. At which point she became a Raving Fan, because in her mind she might never have gone to a support group if it wasn’t for her coach. Whenever someone would ask how she was doing regarding the passing of her father she would end up talking about me and the “critical role” I played.

Focusing on adding value created a Raving fan who has sent me more than \$8,000 in business (4 clients @ \$500 x 3-9 months per client). Thomas nailed it: Add Value for the Joy of it! *Michelle Michelle Schubnel, President, Coach & Grow Rich, San Francisco*

The secret with adding value is to just do things for clients that you would naturally do for friends and family. Let them into your world and treat them like a

close friend, sometimes you will become like a close friend to them. Of course you always need to keep your professional posture and not get too close, but you can also take a step backwards if someone gets too close.

Adding value will give you great joy and believe me, you won't just get referrals in return for your effort, the warm fuzzies and fluffy bunny feelings you get coming back to you in response to your value adding will be more than you gave out.

## Maintaining A Strong Referral Engine

Maintaining a strong referral engine requires care and attention. Similar to tending a garden, you need to maintain and nurture your relationships in order to ensure that referrals keep coming! Below are some key strategies for this:

### Stay in Touch and Provide Value

Once you develop a relationship with someone who refers you clients you want to make sure you stay in contact. As any good sales person knows, it is a lot easier to leverage and maintain an existing relationship than it is to build a new one. The best way to do this is through periodic phone calls. I recommend using your reminder system in Outlook or some other contact management system that automatically reminds you when to make "checking in" phone calls.

The key is to stay in touch so potential referral sources keep you in mind. You DON'T want to ask for referrals on these calls. Rather, use them as a friendly check-in. Focus on them and what is going on in their life. Of course you can share about yourself and your business, however the goal is to reconnect, not to sell!

### Utilise Your Ezine

Make sure your potential referral sources are subscribed to your Ezine. This way they will be able to stay abreast of your business. If they are not currently subscribed ask permission the next time you contact them!

### Acknowledge Your Referrals

Any time you receive a referral you should acknowledge the person who sent you the referral. Not all of the referrals you receive will become clients, however you must thank the person regardless of whether the person they referred becomes a client or not. I recommend you send a hand written note or card any time you receive a referral.

If the person who is referred becomes a client you may want to send something in addition to a hand written note. This is of course your decision, however I find you get a lot better results (i.e., more referrals in the future!) by sending a token gift.

The key is to make it personal. I had been seeing a Network Chiropractor and referred a friend to him. He sent a postcard through to thank me. The card was

pre-printed. I knew only too well that his assistant had done all the work and he probably didn't even know I had made the referral. The postcard almost had the reverse effect on me because it wasn't personal. Always think what you would like to receive if you gave a referral and was being thanked for it.

Handwritten notes and thoughtful gifts make a very strong positive impression. If you are serious about building a referral-based business you need to do these things. Create your "Referral Thank You System" and then follow it! (It's easier and you are a lot less likely to forget or procrastinate if you have that system in place :-)

## Summary

### **Choosing to Build Your Referral Engine as one of your main marketing strategies**

Deciding that you are going to really focus on building a referral-based business as one of your three Marketing Train Engine Strategies can be an excellent choice!

Don't forget, you need to choose your marketing strategies based on what you like, what you are good at and what you will actually do!

Remember, if you choose referrals as a marketing strategy, do it RIGHT and be consistent. By right, I mean tap into your professional posture. Create your proactive referral system, as I outlined here. The more proactive, systematic and thoughtful you are about this, the better results you will have!

## Sample Client Wrap-Up Email

Dear <Client Name>,

I have so enjoyed working with you during the past year. Congratulations on all of your accomplishments – internal and external! I've attached a document that outlines some of your many wins. Please take some time to acknowledge yourself and celebrate your success. You deserve it!

### Testimonial

If you are so inclined, I would greatly appreciate a written testimonial that I can use in my marketing materials (website, etc.). Anything you feel like providing would be great, and if you're open to it, I've found the most useful testimonials:

- Quantify the benefits of business coaching and describe a specific result achieved such as “my client base grew by 50%, I set up and implemented programs I'd been procrastinating over for ages, I'm now working full time in my business, I've overcome the shyness that stopped me doing public speaking, I'm so much less stressed I can actually fall asleep at night, etc.” *Note: don't use all of those – use results that are congruent with your who and what. Those are just ideas to help you customise this!*
- Speaks to the reader in the form of a referral or endorsement, such as, “I'd recommend Margaret Gill for anyone who wants to get more clients and grow their natural therapy business.”

If you do provide a testimonial please let me know if I may use your name, company and email/web address or if you would prefer I maintain your confidentiality.

### Referrals

Many of my clients come to me by way of referral. If you have enjoyed our business coaching and if it has generated the results you've wanted, I'd appreciate you forwarding my name to any natural therapists you know who might also benefit from my business coaching services.

I'm happy to conduct a two for one coaching consultation for anyone you refer.

### For the Future

Please let me know how things progress, in particular I look forward to an update on <something about the client>. Also, if something comes up and you want to schedule a one-time coaching session I'd be happy to do that for you, or if you just want to check-in, say hi, or bounce an idea off me for 5-10 minutes I'd love to hear from you, anytime.

I have no doubt that if you “work your plan” and keep those supportive structures and systems in place you will continue to enjoy success, fulfilment and joy.

All the Best,

Margaret Gill

## Sample Client Accomplishments Document

At the conclusion of the treatment (or perhaps at the end of the year) create a document for your client about their accomplishments!

Include “internal process” achievements, such as new shifts in thinking, improvement in health, ways of being, etc. and “external feats” or the specific goals and outcomes they have achieved.

Your clients will appreciate this and enjoy the satisfaction of seeing their accomplishments spelled out. In addition, it helps the client realise the power of your treatments!

This sample below is an actual list of accomplishments of one of my clients with the identity hidden to protect confidentiality.

### <Client Name> – Accomplishments

Wow! What a year! Here is a brief summary of some of the numerous areas of growth and accomplishments you have enjoyed this year. Clearly there are many, many more... As such, I encourage you to add to this list and acknowledge yourself for the successes you’ve achieved and the high degree of personal growth you’ve experienced. The level of commitment, self-awareness and focus that you have brought to your life is fantastic!

#### Internal Process

- Commitment to living your life fully, based on your true values, goals and desires.
- Explored long term goals and dreams and gained clarity on how work at company name, writing and personal time all fit together.
- Overcame fear of networking and reaching out to people during informational interview process.
- Realised you had more contacts than you thought and learned that taking action opens doors you didn’t even know where there.
- Identified numerous “Keys to Success,” including: importance of developing specific habits and regimes that provide the necessary structure to support achievement.
- Learned that you really are a “morning person” and the key to regular exercise was having a paradigm shift regarding the time of day.
- Embraced and implemented concepts from First Things First, including “Sharpening the Saw,” “The 4 Quadrant System” and focusing on the “Big Rocks.”
- Realised the importance of being a priority in your own life
- Developed understanding of introvert personality traits and importance of solitude and recharging in order to fully engage in extrovert activities.
- Learned how to manage your boss’ expectations.

- Realised the benefits of not focusing on looking good and pleasing everyone and that it is okay (and necessary) to say no to certain things.
- Created the “marathon vs. sprint” distinction enabling better management of your numerous work tasks.

#### External Feats

- Invested significant time and energy exploring full-time writing.
- Performed in-depth career research, including numerous informational interviews.
- Purchased Writer’s Handbook and gained clarity on direction of novel.
- Significant writing and editing of travel journals. Submitted to publisher and created a plan for completion.
- Developed and maintained weekly jogging and weight training routine.
- Joined Weight Watchers, followed program, lost 40 pounds, reached ideal weight, received “key” and developed long term maintenance plan!
- Evaluated opportunity to move to India and decided it wasn’t in alignment with what you and your wife really want for your life.
- Engaged in fiscal fitness, created budget and set long term financial goals.
- Wrote personal mission statement.
- Began keeping track of time at your place of work.
- Implemented “First Things First” time management tools, resulting in focus on the truly important items, more delegation and better focus.
- Changed the way you handled email so that it does not consume your day.
- Developed and implemented a fulfilling “hands on” style of coaching and managing your staff.
- Fed your soul through regular connection with friends and family.

**Congratulations!**

## Sample Letter of Introduction

Below is a sample letter that you could give to a client and have them send to their network on your behalf.

Dear <name>,

As you may know, for the past several years I have been trying to overcome my health issues. I am happy to say that I have finally found an answer to my challenges and am on the way to creating more balance in my life and I am slowly but surely achieving a healthy active body. I have recently started a program of natural therapies. And while I certainly put in the time and energy to make this happen, it never would have come to fruition without the tremendous support and guidance I received from my therapist, Joe Smith.

The process wasn't always easy, but it was certainly powerful. And making this investment in myself and my health is one of the best things I have ever done.

Joe is a truly gifted therapist. I highly recommend his services to anyone who is challenged with health issues and is trying to find balance in their life.

Joe offers Two for One consultations for anyone who wants to learn more about the benefits of working with a natural therapist. I encourage you to contact Joe and schedule a session, just tell him I sent you.

Joe's contact details are:

Joe Smith

Email: [joe@greattherapies.com](mailto:joe@greattherapies.com)

Telephone: 03-922-2399

Website: [www.greattherapies.com](http://www.greattherapies.com)

All the best,

<client name>

## Create *Your Strategy* for Getting More Referrals

The things I am currently doing to generate referrals and provide great service to my clients are:

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Ideas I have for generating more referrals are:

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The next steps I will to take to grow my referral engine are:

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What I can do THIS WEEK to generate some referrals:

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## Gratitude Sheets

This week I am grateful for:

106.

107.

108.

109.

110.

111.

112.