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## Golden Nuggets of Networking Wisdom

By Bruce Libman

**This month's Golden Nugget comes from an excerpt from the book,  
*Total Networking Success A – Z.***

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*Amazon.com* or the  
CFL website: *www.clientsforlifeconsulting.com*

## Alphabet for Networking Success

# “G”

## is for Go-Along Endorsement

By far, the best endorsement you can get is the Go-Along. This occurs when the person who's given you the lead actually meets with you and the individual referred. The Go-Along Endorsement tells the new contact that this is an important endorsement, one the giver takes personally.

It's an introduction you must take seriously as well, whether you're the person being referred or the one being referred to.

Let's set up a Go-Along Endorsement scenario. Ed has an endorsement for you: June, a Human Resources Manager looking for better corporate health care coverage.

But more than just referring you, Ed wants the three of you to meet to make the introductions easier and, hopefully, June's transition from prospect to client smoother for both of you.



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Once Ed makes this suggestion, you can assume several things about Ed, June and the meeting.

1. Ed has a successful working relationship with June.
2. June trusts Ed's judgment.
3. Ed respects your business talents and your way of doing business.
4. Ed is confident that a sale could come from this endorsement.
5. June is serious about obtaining new health care coverage.
6. June wants to hear what you have to say.
7. Ed trusts that you won't do anything to damage his and June's relationship.

These implications can be a double-edged sword. The pressure is definitely on you to be at your best, but this is the kind of opportunity that doesn't come along often. It is the kind of opportunity a Total Networker always looks for.

Ideally, Ed will have spoken to you and June individually first. Then he'll give you June's number so that you can set up a first, get-acquainted call. Then the three of you will coordinate a time and place to get together. Since these first meetings are somewhat informal, it's best to get together on neutral ground (coffee shop, perhaps) rather than someone's office.

As the facilitator for this meeting, Ed will make the introductions and tell June how happy he is with the insurance you sold his company. In turn, he'll tell you a few positive things about June. Then Ed should sit back and let you and June get to know each other (and your work) a little better.

With an opening, personal introductions and a facilitator right on the scene, conversation with June should not be a problem, neither should a preliminary sales pitch.

NOTE: This is not the time to go into detail. The Go-Along Endorsement is simply for a facilitator to set the groundwork for a possible long-term relationship between you and a future client.

What about when you're the facilitator, or the person being referred to? Refer back to those seven assumptions mentioned earlier. If even one of them is missing, a Go-Along Endorsement could be a mistake.



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Look at it this way. Ed doesn't want his relationship with June spoiled by introducing her to someone he doesn't trust or know very well. June doesn't want to spoil her relationship with Ed by agreeing to meet when she's not really in the market for (or authorized to purchase) insurance. She should also not want to ruin a potential relationship with you for the time she may need to purchase insurance. You certainly don't want to destroy your relationship with Ed by not meeting with June or not conducting yourself properly when you do meet.

As a Total Networker, it's your job to know when a Go-Along Endorsement is called for and when it isn't. Know when to say yes, and when to say no. Saying no is especially important when someone requests you set up a Go-Along Endorsement. When you say yes, every one of those seven assumptions better be present!

Take advantage whenever a Go-Along Endorsement is offered to you. Used sparingly, and set up properly, the Go-Along Endorsement can be a moneymaker and a long-term relationship builder for all involved.