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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.***

Bruce is the author of several books including *Total Networking Success A – Z*, which can be purchased from the

CFL/TNC website: <http://www.totalnetworkingandconsulting.com/online-store>

## Alphabet for Networking Success

# “I”

## is for the Ideal Client

Whether you know it or not, you have one Ideal Client: an individual or a company that perfectly fits your product or service.

In never-never land this Ideal Client would take your warm or cold call at first asking, place an order at the first price you give and continue buying from you until the day you retire to a life of luxury.

You don't do business in never-never land, you say. We say, find your Ideal Client, and you may get closer than you ever thought you could.

It starts with a detailed assessment of you, your product or service, and your way of doing business.

Do you even know what an Ideal Client is? An IT manager, a human resources VP, a hospital supplies buyer, a franchise operator, a marketing manager – none of these is an Ideal Client for *anybody!*



What is your sales style?

- Hard sell: “I know you said ‘No’ last week, but listen...”
- Soft sell: “Just let me know when you’re ready to order...”
- Negative sell: “You probably don’t want to spend any money on this line...”

Do you fall somewhere in between any of these or do you change to fit the situation?

What does your product actually do? What are its benefits and its shortcomings? Who are your manufacturer, your distributor and your maintenance company?

What does your sales manager/boss/company expect from you every week/month/quarter/year?

Once you’ve answered these questions honestly, you can begin to create a profile of your Ideal Client. Make that person as real as possible. In fact, write a short biography of your Ideal Client.

Start with sex. Statistically, women control the purse strings when it comes to household spending and charity giving. Men spend more on sports and related activities and equipment. What about couples? Life insurance requires at least two people, the insured and the beneficiary. But if you sell life insurance, a “couple” is too general to constitute your Ideal Client. You may want a “happily married couple” that will always keep the policy in force.

Consider age as well. That life insurance salesperson wants a happily married, established couple that can and will keep up the payments. A younger couple could be a sale, but not an Ideal Client. If you sell lawn sprinkler systems, your Ideal Client is not a senior home owner about to retire, and if you sell office building sprinkler systems, the buyer who’s about to retire isn’t your Ideal Client either.

Education can be an important factor, too. But does your Ideal Client have a lot of schooling? Maybe your highly technical product requires someone with an engineering degree to fully understand. Or, your product may be highly technical, but your Ideal Client is someone who will depend on your expertise rather than on her or his own.

Add in the zip code. Where your Ideal Client lives, works and vacations can be vital to your profile. The examples are too simple to list, with the ice cubes in Alaska cliché covering them all.

What about personality? Shy and retiring prospects and push-hard salespeople don’t mix.

Dare we mention ethnicity? An immigrant family may appreciate a salesperson with a similar background.

What about disabilities? You may have a hearing-impaired person in your family or circle of friends and have learned to sign. Your Ideal Client may also be hearing-impaired. Are you wheelchair bound? Maybe your Ideal Client is, too.



Depending on your product or service, your Ideal Client may be Catholic (internment plots)...over 6'6" tall (certain clothing lines)...foreign born (school courses)...an older woman (osteoporosis management)...gay (an incredibly untapped market)...an underachiever (self-improvement books, tapes and courses)...an elected official (PR services)...recently divorced (real estate services).

The list of individual traits and characteristics goes on and on. Be sure to include every one that you need to help you bring your Ideal Client into focus. You must be specific.

When your Ideal Client does come into focus, you may surprise even yourself at just who it is. Perhaps, he or she is part of a prospect pool no one else in your industry or company thought of as a prospect. It could be that your Ideal Client is just someone you can more easily relate to ("Tom realizes that overseas shipments can be delayed but that we'll change suppliers if necessary"). Maybe it's a perceived weakness in your approach that your Ideal Client will appreciate ("I don't have to pester Sheila with phone calls, just be ready when she needs an order filled.")

For every product and service out there — and for every salesperson out there — an Ideal Client exists. You have to sketch out just who that Ideal Client is and go find her or him!

Once you've fleshed out your Ideal Client and put the proper time and effort into reaching him or her with your sales pitch, you'll be amazed at the results.

DO NOT keep your Ideal Client to yourself. Be sure everyone in your networking group also knows who your Ideal Client is. And be sure you know everyone else's Ideal Client, too.

The more you know about other people's Ideal Client, and the more they know about yours, the better you can connect as Total Networkers.