

## Networking Referrals: Five Tips of the Trade

by Charles Lightwalker, Ph.D.

Referral techniques are inexpensive and easy to implement and will make your business prosper. So here are five techniques that you can use to increase your client base and bottom line.

1. Approach other holistic healthcare professionals who work in or near your office.
2. Join a networking group.
3. Join or start a holistic chamber of commerce.
4. Joint ventures.
5. Build alliances.

So now let look at each of these five techniques with more depth.

### Approach other holistic professionals

If there is a chiropractor down the street from your office, approach them as well as the acupuncturist up the street, and the yoga teacher who teaches in the studio across the street. Offer to swap referrals, display their business cards and brochures in your office, and they will display yours in theirs.

### Networking Groups

Networking groups are social gatherings of professionals who know lots of other holistic professionals. It is easier to approach people when you can say a mutual friend or acquaintance suggested you contact them. So ask members of your networking group for referrals to other holistic healthcare professionals they know. Then take those referrals and call them or stop by their office when they are not busy.

Mention you got their name from a person in your networking group. Ask them if you can set up a time to meet for coffee/tea or lunch, to get to know one another

better. You should let them know that because your businesses are holistic in nature, you might be able to refer business to each other.

When you meet with them bring plenty of business cards, brochures, and testimonials you have received from clients. Tell them about yourself, your background, training, and ask them what they are looking for in a referral client.

### Join or create a holistic chamber of commerce

Creating a holistic chamber of commerce is one of the most wonderful things you can do to help yourself and the holistic healthcare industry bring awareness to the community about alternative forms of healthcare that are available.

Networking with other holistic healthcare professionals is a great way to get more business. A good way is to start a holistic chamber of commerce by approaching other professionals that you have gone to in the past that you have liked, or get a recommendation from other people you know. You also can get names from the internet yellow pages or telephone directory. Then set a time and date, pick a place to meet, and begin the process of forming a holistic chamber of commerce. For more information on holistic chambers of commerce visit the following websites: [www.washington-holistic-chamber.org](http://www.washington-holistic-chamber.org), <http://azholisticchamber.com>, [www.neholisticchamber.org](http://www.neholisticchamber.org), and [www.nvhcc.com](http://www.nvhcc.com).

### Joint Ventures

Joint ventures is another technique in which holistic practitioners send out to their client list a letter or e-mail

endorsing the another practitioner's holistic services, and offers a discount on the first session or visit.

Here is a sample of a letter I have used:

Dear (insert name),  
I just wanted to let you know I had a wonderful healing session with Dr. Charles Lightwalker at the Family of Light Healing Centre, at 3814 E. 9th Avenue. I was having trouble sleeping at night and after one sound healing session with Charles, I was able to sleep peacefully and sound. Charles specializes in medical intuition evaluations, giving insight into one's overall health condition.

Charles has generously offered a 25% discount to all my clients for their first session. You can reach Charles at 509-389-7290.

Sincerely,  
Chris Chiropractor

Then you write a similar letter about Chris Chiropractor to all your clients. Remember your client list is your most important asset, and should never be given to anyone. You should compose the referral letter yourself. This is a great way to get more business and to increase the clientele for both practitioners.

### Build Alliances

There will be times when you have more business than you can handle. There will be times when your competitors will have more business than they can handle. The solution is to set up alliances with competitors, whereby you send extra business to each other.

Contact other holistic practitioners who offer services like yours and suggest to them an alliance, whereby both of you agree to send the

other overflow business. By forming alliances with competitors, you don't have to turn away business and not receive compensation. By referring to practitioners you have an alliance agreement with, you can set up a referral fee. And remember to thank the practitioner who refers you clients. Always send them a handwritten thank you card. They will appreciate your thank you and continue to refer clients to you.

Always remember the best way to get other holistic healthcare practitioners to refer business to you is for you to refer business to them.

Here is my list of holistic healthcare professionals to visit to create referrals:

1. Acupuncturist
2. Aromatherapist
3. Chiropractor

4. Counselor
  5. Homeopath
  6. Hypnotherapist
  7. Massage Therapist
  8. Medical Intuitives
  9. Naturopath
  10. Personal Trainer
  11. Physical Therapist
  12. Reiki Therapist
  13. Sound Therapist
  14. Spiritual Healer
  15. Yoga Teacher
- So now go build the refer-

ral network that will help you succeed at creating a thriving successful holistic enterprise. For more information on marketing your business visit [www.thefamilyoflight.net/businesscounseling.html](http://www.thefamilyoflight.net/businesscounseling.html)

*Charles Lightwalker is director of the Family of Light Healing Centre, and has been an intuitive business counselor for 25 years.*

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