



Why Have a Visitors Day?

Visitors Days are growth events specifically designed to help BNI chapters fill the room with new prospective members. There is a structured process that includes measurable activities for each member and team accountability to maximize the success of the event.

Why Chapter Growth?

The primary result of a well-executed Visitors Day is chapter growth. Growth creates new opportunities. Growth builds a strong culture. Growth helps members give and receive more referrals, develop more relationships and ultimately, make more money!

A Proven Process

For over 30 years, BNI chapters that have followed this proven Visitors Day process have enjoyed tremendous results!

As you review this handbook, and work through the process, keep in mind that every person you contact and meet is a potential new client, customer and/or referral partner.

“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.”

— Colin Powell

Week 5

Date: _____

Report Out RSVP's and 2nd Round of Calls

By now, all the people on your list should have been called and you should have a list of about 10% confirmed to attend.

Bring this list of confirmed visitors to your BNI meeting and be ready to report out the names and professions of confirmed visitors. Make second round of calls. These calls have a significant impact on the percentage of people who actually show up on Visitors Day.

Your call might sound something like this: *“Joe, I am really excited to introduce you to my team at the networking event next Thursday. Be sure to bring plenty of business cards and feel free to bring a guest.”*

Week 6

Date: _____

VISITORS DAY! Arrive Early!

Remember, Visitors Day is a 2-hour event!

Arrive early and stay late to connect with visitors. The number one reason visitors do not apply at a BNI meeting is that they were never asked to participate.

Weeks 7-9

Date: _____

Follow-Up Review/Process Applications Induct New Members

The fortune is in the follow-up, and the number one factor that draws a visitor back to your chapter vs. the one down the street is follow-up.

Call those who attended. Thank them for coming and encourage them to visit again.

Call those who said they would attend and did not show up. Let them know they were missed and invite them to visit the following week.

The Membership Committee will be processing applications and new members will be inducted in the coming weeks. Stay engaged, and help your visitors have an amazing experience.

Week 1

Date: _____

Start Your List of 40 Names

The goal of Week 1 is to begin creating a list of 40 individuals that you can invite to your BNI Visitors Day. You will need a specific person's name, address and phone number for follow-up.

Template Invitation Letters are available for you to customize and print for each recipient. Be prepared to print, address, stamp and stuff each envelope.

Week 2

Date: _____

Finish Your List of 40 Names and Start Letters

Much of your list should already be created. Use this week to finish your list and start the preparation of your letters.

All completed letters should be brought to your next chapter meeting and turned in for accountability.

Week 3

Date: _____

Bring Letters to Chapter Meeting

Bring your 1st batch of letters (unsealed) to your chapter meeting. This takes a bit of effort, but when every member does their part, success is more likely. Block time in calendar next week to make phone calls.

Week 4

Date: _____

Mail Letters and Begin Calls

This week, it is important to personally call each person that you mailed an invite to. The letters themselves don't produce results. They are simply an excuse to pick up the phone and call.

When you connect with the person, mention that you sent them an invitation for an upcoming networking event and invite them to attend. If they are available, register them online* and create a follow-up list of all your "confirmed" visitors.

**Go to your regional website and select the following: "Visit" "Chapter Search" (enter your chapter's name) "Find" (select your chapter) "Visit this chapter" Enter the visitor's email. The system will email them to complete registration. The visitor must complete this process in order to preregister themselves.*

Timeline for Success – Week 0

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

A successful Visitors Day takes planning and preparation. When all chapter members are engaged and hold each other accountable, the results can be amazing!

Week 0 _____ (date) **Talk About Event, Teammates and Timeline**

Week 1 _____ (date) **Start Your List and Bring Back 20 Names**

Week 2 _____ (date) **Continue Your List, Bring 20 More Names and Start Your Letters**

Week 3 _____ (date) **Bring First set of Letters to Meeting**

Week 4 _____ (date) **Bring Remaining Letters for Mailing and Start Calls**

Week 5 _____ (date) **Report out RSVP's and Start 2nd Round of Calls**

Week 6 _____ (date) **VISITORS DAY! Arrive Early!**

Weeks 7-9 _____ (date) **Follow-up, Review/Process Applications and Induct New Members**

Ways to Invite – Week 1

There are many different ways to invite. Some methods have higher returns than others. Below are some proven inviting ideas:

- Invitation Letters – you can use on your own company letterhead, allowing you to promote your business
- Invitation Postcards
- Invitation Business Cards
- “Tickets” to your Visitors Day Event
- “Checks” that show how much closed business members in the region give, on average
- Social Media marketing

40 Letters

Even as technology expands, mailing invitation letters (when paired with follow-up phone calls) still **proves to be a very effective way** to invite business professionals to a BNI Visitors Day. Each member is asked to create a list and send out 40 invitation letters, then follow up with phone calls.

One benefit of sending 40 letters is that all members are doing the same activity. It is easy to track and there is built-in accountability.

Know the Numbers

The results of sending 40 letters are very predictable. **40 letters with follow-up calls will result in your BEST event ever!**

So, **Why 40?**

40+ member chapters are well rounded and offer the most return for members. The average chapter size is 25. So, you may need 15 new members to hit 40 😊 Starting with a Goal in mind, let's work backwards.

Who Do They Know? – Week 4

From time to time someone may have already experienced BNI and may not be interested. Express understanding, then ask for a referral to a peer in their profession: *“We have business to refer to a (profession). Who do you refer your overflow business to?”* They may reassess their schedule and decide to attend, or they may give you a referral to a peer. If the person states a firm “no”, then thank them for their time and move on to your next choice.

Remember, you are **not asking them to join BNI**, you are **asking them to visit**.

You Can't Join BNI

There are a lot of organizations and clubs around that you can join. BNI is **not** one of them. **To become a member of BNI you must apply.** The chapter will check references and interview the applicant to ensure that it is a good fit.

Stop asking people to join your BNI chapter. Invite them to visit and introduce them to the people in the room. If you like them and think it might be a good fit, encourage them to **apply**.

WEEK 5 - REMINDERS FOR YOUR EVENT

- **Visitors Day is a 2-hour meeting**
- **Arrive 1 hour early** to help set up and plan to stay late to connect with visitors
- **Wear** your BNI name badge
- Make the visitors feel welcome! **Act like a host, not a guest!** **Introduce yourself** to all the visitors who come to your chapter. Remember, they are potential new business for you, so network!
- Be sure to have a **well-prepared Weekly Presentation**
- **Come prepared with lots of referrals and testimonials** to really dazzle your visitors.
- **You'll never get a second chance to make a good first impression**, so make the most of this opportunity!
- **Stay seated and help visitors fill out application or answer questions.** Do not stand until the last visitor at your table stands! Very important.

What's in It for Them? Week 4

Inviting is less about “selling” BNI, and more about helping others with the needs they have. Remember that BNI members tend to find value in one (or more) of these areas:

- **Business Generated** Helping you reach your financial goals faster.
- **Teamwork and Energy** Working together, supporting each other and having fun!
- **Relationships and Trust** The opportunity to develop long-lasting, meaningful relationships.
- **Structure and Learning** Staying on-task while growing personally and professionally.

The area that is most important to you may not be what's most important to them. Ask questions, keep the focus on their needs, and then show them how we can help.



What to Say

A simple way to help with inviting is to remember **GRIP**.

G Are you looking to **GROW** your business?

R Are **REFERRALS** important to you?

I Let me make some **INTRODUCTIONS** for you.

P Then, tell them the **PLACE**.

Keep the focus on them and connect them with others. If you get comments like “Tell me more” or “What is this about?” simply encourage them to come and experience the meeting. BNI can be difficult to understand through a short explanation. It must be experienced.

Week 1

Chapter Example:

25 Members x **40** Letters = **1,000** Invitation Letters Sent

After **Week 4** Follow-up Calls = **240** Visitors Agree to Attend (25%)

Visitors Day = **120** Visitors Actually Attend (50%)

Visitors Day = **60** Show Interest in BNI (50%)

Visitors Day = **30** Visitors Submit an Application (50%)

After each application has been processed, the chapter has potential to accept **15 new members!**

Who to Invite

Since a BNI Visitors Day has a specific focus on chapter growth, the ideal person to invite **(1) has a business that they would like to represent and grow**, and **(2) has never been to BNI before**. These people are considered **qualified visitors**.

Avoid inviting family and friends (unless they meet the two criteria above), co-workers, BNI members from other chapters or BNI alumni. **To get better results, start with qualified visitors.**

Characteristics

It's not all about the profession, it's about the person. Who comes to mind when you consider the list of characteristics below? Invite them to meet others in the room like them.

- An Entrepreneur
- A Leader
- A Driver
- A Visionary
- A Team Builder
- A Positive and Supportive Attitude
- A Desire for Referrals
- A Passion
- A Givers Gain® Mindset
- A Stable Business

