



## How to Grow Your Business by Bumping Up Your Sphere of Influence

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In last week's blog, I wrote about important prospect-to-client conversion tips. In it, I outlined what happens when you make the mistake of asking someone to do business with you before you've developed a relationship with them. Getting the "yes" answer to your proposal often requires more than just one touch point before someone decides to do business with you.

The same is true as you expand your business by expanding your sphere of influence. Your sphere of influence is not only the number of people you know but also includes influencers who have a broader network and are in the one-to-many conversation.

Years ago, when I launched one of my books, a person in my network that I knew well encouraged me to call a well-known best-selling author to ask them to endorse my book. In my heart, I felt torn because I didn't have a relationship with this best-selling author. Against my intuition, I called up the author, let him know who connected us, and I asked him if he would endorse my book. The author was so incredibly gracious and politely declined.

It was an important lesson for several reasons: listen to your intuition and remember that doing business is about cultivating relationships. "The influence game is about relationships," said Teresa de Grosbois, Founder of the Evolutionary Business Council (EBC). "You don't ask to borrow the lawn mower from the neighbor you just met." Teresa would know. She created the EBC to connect collaborative thought leaders and highly influential business leaders whose mission it is to teach the principles of success.

"Never take for granted the value of the influencer's network," said Teresa. "Last year, I had someone approach me asking to collaborate. When I agreed to expose them to my network, which is hundreds of thousands of people, they proceeded to ask me for money to sponsor their event. In their haste to complete their agenda, it was lost on them the value they were getting from the exposure alone. It lands like complaining there's no strawberries on the cake, when someone just cooked you a gourmet meal."

**There are three important tips to remember before asking an influencer to promote you to their following:**

1. Cultivate the Relationship. Even though the influencer might be someone you think you want to connect with, get to know them first. They want to get to know you, too! Years ago, when I met a brand new entrepreneur, he immediately unpacked his brochures the first time we met. I didn't even know him let alone know if there would be a good collaboration match. Enter into a meeting with a courtship in mind rather than a one-night stand.
2. Be a Giver First. Even if you have a limited network, there are many ways to give, including:
  - a. putting comments on an influencer's blog
  - b. inviting him or her to be on your radio show,
  - c. giving them exposure to your community or
  - d. inviting them to a telesummit where you promote them on your show.
3. Be Patient. When expanding your network, pile on the patience. Understand that it often takes more than one touch point before influencers may collaborate. One of my colleagues devoted 10 years of comments on an influencer's blog before they met. Only after she developed the relationship did she extend an invitation to the person to one of her workshops. Today, they powerfully promote each other.

When you show your commitment to collaboration and respond to others through your generosity, you will find that you will garner a reputation for win-grow relationships, attract a greater following and grow your influence exponentially.

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