

Prospecting - The First Step Towards Success

Identifying good prospects is one of the most important parts of your job as a Winner's Circle volunteer. To ensure your success, you will want to begin a prospect list as soon as you have completed training.

A new member prospect is any business or organization that is not currently a Commerce Lexington member.

A current member with an interest in participating with the communities top business leaders to further the efforts of the chamber may make an additional investment to become a member of the Board of Trustees.

Any member can benefit from marketing to fellow Commerce Lexington members through event and publication sponsorships.

A company that would like to participate as an event or publication sponsor may give needed products or services in lieu of cash as an in-kind trade provider.

The best prospects are those firms or people that you or your company already have a relationship with. Good sources for prospects are your company's business associates, clients, and vendors. Securing a list from your purchasing department would be helpful in identifying these firms. Look at your contact lists for leads!

Consider your business relationships

- Customers
- Company vendor lists
- Competitors
- Other companies in your office building or complex

Consider your personal relationships

- Friends, relatives, neighbors. They can give you inside information on companies they work for as well as name of the decision makers.
- Your "personal accounts payable" list. For starters, check your doctor, dentist, dry cleaner, vet, lawyer, mechanic, electrician, and plumber.

Consider your special interests

- Do you belong to a professional or special interest organization? Those members are business people too. Where do they work? Can they give you any referrals?

Watch for other ideas

- Read the local newspapers. Whenever you read an article about a company, think about how they might benefit from a Commerce Lexington membership or if they're already a member, how a sponsorship may be beneficial.
- Read the "people in the news" sections of newspapers where they announce promotions, transfers, etc. Call the featured people to congratulate them and go from there!
- Pay attention to advertising. If a company is spending money on advertising, they are interested in promoting their product and they may want to do that through Commerce Lexington memberships and sponsorships.

Ask for referrals

Ask everyone for referrals, including:

- People with whom you have just finished a successful membership or sponsorship sale
- Companies you know who are already members

Tips for Effective Selling

Here are some tips to help you in your selling efforts.

- Ensure that your "product knowledge" is exceptional. Learn all that you can about Commerce Lexington. Read all Commerce Lexington publications, and attend as many events as possible.
- Have an attitude based on helping others meet their needs, and a thorough understanding of how the benefits of Commerce Lexington memberships and sponsorships will help them.
- Visualize every step you'll take when contacting your prospect. This helps raise your comfort level.
- Rehearse how you will respond every time your prospect gives you a question or a concern.
- Think about the type of company you are calling on and pick two or three benefits that will answer your prospect's question, "what's in it for me and my company?" Have specific ideas of how membership or sponsorship might benefit the prospect.

Overcoming Objections

"We don't do business in the Lexington area"

Do you live here? Do you pay taxes here? Regardless of where your customers are, if this community and its quality of life are important to you, your employees and your business, join Commerce Lexington and help advance the Lexington community.

"We are a new business and are not yet well established"

That's the very reason you should join or get more involved with Commerce Lexington. You will develop new business contacts, take advantage of opportunities to further develop your business, and contribute to strengthening our regional economy. Membership is an effective way to market your business.

"I belong to too many organizations"

So give priority to the ones that are in business to help your business. There is no other organization like Commerce Lexington that represent businesses, our marketplace, and the continued improvement of your region's quality of life.

"I can't afford any more contributions"

Membership is not a contribution but an investment and sponsorships are a very cost effective and targeted use of your marketing budget. It's a good investment in your company's future.

"I have no time for it"

Not every member is involved on committees or task forces. But fortunately some members are. Their investment of time benefits all members and helps advance Commerce Lexington's work throughout the Lexington area. As a member, however, you may find that participating is easier than you thought. We have meetings at breakfast, lunch, and early evening.

"I did belong, but didn't get anything out of it"

What did you hope to get from it? Did you get involved at all? Did you attend any meetings? Most importantly, did you attend those functions designed to advance your business?

"Commerce Lexington is just for big businesses, not the little guy"

This is a common misconception. In fact, more than 80% of the Chamber's members own and manage small businesses. It's true that many large companies have more people available to become involved with committees and other activities. Commerce Lexington's programs are designed to appeal to all members, especially small businesses.

Sample Membership Letter

Use or adapt this letter to sell a new membership. Some of your best prospects are your company’s vendors. Invite them to join your company as a member of Commerce Lexington. Use your company’s letterhead. You can print these online from www.CommerceLexington.com

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Date

Name
Company
Address
City, State Zip

Dear:

I am writing to you as a volunteer of Commerce Lexington to introduce the important work the chamber does and encourage you to become a member.

Over 1,700 business firms, including our company, look to Commerce Lexington to provide leadership in building a better environment in which to do business. We also take advantage of the numerous programs and services designed by Commerce Lexington to directly benefit our business.

As a member of Commerce Lexington, not only do business owners receive benefits that help their business grow, but their investment also strengthens the organization’s commitment to advancing the Bluegrass business community and the area’s quality of life. Commerce Lexington provides representation at all levels of government, offers informative small business programs and great marketing and professional development opportunities, as well as many networking events. Commerce Lexington seeks to provide members with the information and opportunities they need to make their business a success.

I will call you within a week to further discuss the benefits of a membership with Commerce Lexington. I hope you will join our company in working to advance the community with Commerce Lexington.

Best regards,

Your Name
Title at your Company

Volunteer for Commerce Lexington – The Winner’s Circle Total Resource Campaign

Sample Event or Publication Sponsorship Letter

Use or adapt this letter to contact existing members. Some of your best prospects are your company's vendors. Invite them to join your company in sponsoring an event or publication. Use your company's letterhead. You can print these online from www.CommerceLexington.com

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Date

Name
Company
Address
City, State Zip

Dear:

I am writing you as a volunteer of Commerce Lexington to encourage you to get involved and effectively market your business through Commerce Lexington event and publication sponsorships.

Our company looks to Commerce Lexington to provide leadership in building a better environment in which to do business. We also take advantage of the numerous marketing opportunities designed to directly benefit our business.

Many companies value being identified with Commerce Lexington programs, events, and publications. The audience you can reach through this marketing avenue is likely your targeted customers. Commerce Lexington sponsorships are cost effective ways to reach your customers while providing valuable support to the organization. The following are just a few suggestions you might consider.

- Event or Publication Sponsorship\$\$\$\$\$
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I will call you within a week to explore these and other Commerce Lexington event and publication sponsorship opportunities.

Best regards,

Your Name
Title at your Company

Volunteer for Commerce Lexington – The Winner’s Circle Total Resource Campaign

Building Your Prospect List

It's all about relationships – yours!

My Company's Source For...

...accounting _____

...advertising _____

...banking and financial services _____

...building contractor _____

...catering _____

...coffee and beverage services _____

...computer training _____

...copier services and supplies _____

...courier service _____

...graphic design _____

...insurance _____

...interior design _____

...internet access provider _____

...janitorial _____

...landscaping _____

...long distance carrier _____

...office equipment _____

...office leasing _____

...photography and framing _____

...printing _____

My Personal Source For...

...real estate broker _____

...apartment complex _____

...auto dealer/mechanic _____

...banking _____

...dentist _____

...dry cleaning _____

...electrical repairs _____

...flowers _____

...insurance agent _____

...lawn service _____

...legal services _____

...physician _____

...plumbing/home repairs _____

...servicing my car _____

...stock broker _____

...veterinarian _____

People I Know Who Are in Business...

...neighbors _____

...relatives _____

...friends in church _____

...golfing/tennis _____

...old college friends _____

...parents of children's friends _____