

SEPTEMBER 9, 2010

THIS WEEK:

The **next meeting** of the Tri-Valley Executives' Association will be held on **September 16** at Vic's All-Star Kitchen at 7:00am.

GREETERS will be **Dave Cherry** of Big O Tires and **Kevin Gundry** of Custom Exteriors.

The VALUE will be given by **Manny Martin** of Amador Valley Property Management.

Jason Cooke of Herrmann Financial will be giving his CLASSIFICATION talk.

BROCHURES:

It's time to update our brochure! Please let Cristin know if you have any changes to your listing.

THE WEEKLY "POT" REPORT:

TVEA's 50/50 raffle is up to **\$123.00**.

MEMBER NEWS:

Our condolences go to **Harvey Tulchinsky** and his wife, Karen, on the passing of their beloved dog, Sweet-pea.

Kevin Gundry of Custom Exteriors reminds us that the \$1,500 tax credit for energy efficiency upgrades will expire in less than 4 months.

The Door Doctor is having a promotion on garage door openers with battery back-up. See **Joey Minahan** for details.

PROGRAM:

By **Mark Van Slambrook** of The Swenson Group Business Technologies

Having a client share their experience with your business, can make a huge difference and be a valuable tool when working on getting new business.

Writing **referral letters** and asking clients for a letter of reference is not as hard as you think. Try to make it a part of every transaction, whether you received great service or provided it.

Please take some time and write a letter of reference for your fellow TVEA members. Maybe you don't have a lead for them at the moment, but you can still help grow their business.

Attached you will find a letter of instruction on how to write a referral letter, a referral letter form and some examples of referral comments to get your thought process in gear.

Email or give your letter to Cristin Sanchez, who will type it up and send a copy to you and the person you are referring for use in advertising, their "thank you" books or on their websites.

VALUE:

The Value of the Association for **Jan Batcheller** of Gift Source is four-fold:

1. Leads
 2. Camaraderie – she is still doing business with and getting referrals from former members.
 3. Education – she learns something about industries other than her own each time a member gives the Classification talk.
 4. Source – she is a referral source for friends and clients which is added value to her business.
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SOCIAL:

Bocce anyone? We have scheduled our third TVEA **Bocce Tournament** on Thursday, September 30th at Campo di Bocce in Livermore.

The tournament will begin at 6:30pm followed by a classic spaghetti dinner at 8:00pm. The cost will be approximately \$50/per person and will included dinner.

This will be a great event to bring your spouse, your associates or your **prospective members**. Sign up with Cristin ASAP!

There will be **NO MEETING on September 30th**.

NEW BOOK:

In January (wanted to give you all enough time to read this one) we will be discussing the ideas presented in the book **Rework** by Jason Frieod & David Hansson. The book presents itself as having new insights on business and what we do in our businesses day to day.

NEW MEMBER: WELCOME!

Classification: Insurance – Medical/Dental

Member: Raney Insurance

Represented by: **Jerry Raney**

Address: 5994 W. Las Positas #107, Pleasanton 94588

Phone: (925) 469-9000, *Cell:* (925) 895-4335

E-mail: jerry@raneyinsurance.com

Website: raneyinsurance.com

TVEA Program – September 9, 2010

Referral Letters

How to write a letter of referral that will be much appreciated:

Explain how you know the applicant.

How long have you known the person and in what relationship or circumstance?

State your qualifications for writing the referral letter.

Why should the reader be interested in your referral? How many other people of the applicant's caliber have you known, and why does the applicant stand out?

List the applicant's exceptional qualities and skills

Especially list those that are specific to the applicant's field of interest or job requirements. For example, competency in his/her field or prior experience, organizational and communication skills, academic or other achievements, interaction with others, sound judgment, reliability, analytical ability, etc.

Emphasize key points that you want the reader to note on the applicant's resume or job application.

Be sure to elaborate meaningfully; don't simply restate.

Give your judgment of the applicant, his/her qualifications and potential.

Why should he/she be considered over other people? How does he/she compare to other people you have known? Do not state weaknesses. If you can't write a positive letter of referral, you should [respectfully decline](#).

Give specific examples to back up what you have said about the person's qualifications and character.

Remember, generalized praise is a waste of space.

Unless it is absolutely relevant, do not state (directly or by implication) the applicant's race, religion, national origin, age, disability, gender or marital status.

Don't be too brief.

One or two short paragraphs are death to a referral letter. On the other hand, be succinct. Make every word count. Here is a rule of thumb: a letter of referral for employment should be one page; a letter of referral for school should be one to two pages.

Make the ending statement strong without overdoing it.

Undue praise can be viewed as biased or insincere.

List your contact information if you are willing to field follow-up correspondence.

Proofread!

The letter of referral represents both you and the applicant.

How to ask someone to write a letter of referral:

- Ask for a referral letter from people who know you and your capabilities, i.e., former employers, teachers, coaches, community or corporate leaders, influential friends—people who have known you a long time. Relatives are not a good choice. Three referral letters are enough.
- Be sure to give them enough time (3-4 weeks, if possible) to write the referral letter.
- When you talk to them, state your goals and suggest what they might write to help you achieve those goals. Coach them to be specific; general praise is a waste of space. Don't be shy. A referral letter is a sales letter to sell you. Now is the time to brag!
- Follow up your request for a referral letter by writing a review of your conversation. Give suggestions for your referral letter. You may need to put words in their mouths. When you send them the follow-up letter, be sure to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Then, feel free to contact them in a couple of weeks to confirm that they are aware of your deadlines.
- Once you receive your referral letter, send a thank-you note. Tell them about your success and how they helped you.
- Write only complimentary, yet factual, observations. Avoid unflattering or derogatory remarks. If you cannot do this, you should [decline to write a letter of referral](#).
- Remember that potential employers are adept at 'reading between the lines,' and any negative implication may destroy a person's chance at getting the new job.

How to respond if someone asks you to write a referral letter:

- Are you the right person to write a letter of referral? If you are asked to write a referral letter, you need to discuss the subject candidly with the requester. A letter of referral is most effective when a person writes it who knows the requester and his/her reputation.
- What is your company's policy regarding letters of referral. Many policies have been established as protection against potential lawsuits. The common rule is write only positive, factual referral letters.
- Do you qualify? Another consideration is your integrity—can you honestly write positive things about the requester? If not, you need to bow out gracefully without hurting feelings. On the other hand, if you qualify, you should brainstorm with the requester to write what he or she wishes to be said. Be sensitive to deadlines.

REFERRALS FROM _____

(YOUR NAME)

Company / Person:
Date(s) of Service:
Brief Description of Service (if applicable): THOUGHT STARTERS
(From LinkedIn)
Great Results: Superlative work, from concept to final output Personable: Works well with colleagues and clients Expert: Deep and detailed knowledge of the subject Good Value: Excellent work at a reasonable cost On Time: Punctual at each step of the process High Integrity: Trustworthy, consistent, and reliable Creative: Inventive, out-of-the-box ideas and implementation
Recommendation / Feedback:
<i>REFERRAL WORDS</i>
appreciate; timely; efficient; thorough; fair; competitive; customer service; quality;
applaud; high praise; recognize; acknowledge; enjoy; grateful; enhance; approve;
assurance; caring; listened; explained; detailed; benchmark; commend; cherish
admire; confidence; solid; effort; best; industry leader

