

# LIBERTY CHAMBER



## REaL Networks Referral Exchange and Leads

### Guidelines

#### What are REaL Networks?

REaL Networks participation is available to Liberty Area Chamber of Commerce members in good standing. The program was formed with the mission to generate business opportunities for our members through building and strengthening professional relationships in a non-competitive and mutually supportive environment consistently.

Each network meets twice a month to build relationships, exchange leads, and to educate others about their products and services. REaL Networks membership is exclusive, in that only one representative from a particular industry category can participate in each network. If you have sub-categories in your company, you will only be allowed to represent one area of your business as a member of the network (for example, if the industry is insurance and offers auto/home, commercial, health or life services; you will be asked to represent only one of those categories depending on which category you prefer and is available).

Network referrals are built on trust. It is important to attend your meetings to follow through on all leads provided and provide viable leads to other participants.

#### Joining REaL Networks

- A. Membership in good standing with the Liberty Chamber is required to participate in a network.
- B. Chamber member businesses can have two (2) employees participating in REaL Networks.
- C. Interest Form: Prospective members are responsible for completing an interest form and submitting it to the Chamber liaison. The Chamber liaison will provide a copy to the Chair to share with the network leadership.
- D. Chamber Liaison: Nancy Bishop, [nancyb@libertychamber.com](mailto:nancyb@libertychamber.com) | 816-781-5200
- E. Cost to participate: once accepted to a network, an invoice for \$75 will be emailed to you for payment before your first meeting as a member.
- F. Network leadership will hold an orientation as new members join.
- G. Waitlist: If each network is at the maximum number (25) or if your chosen business category is not available in a network, you will be added to the waitlist. The Chamber will maintain a waiting list for Chamber members in good standing that are interested in participating in a network, but whose specified category is unavailable. The network Chair will contact individuals on the waitlist before an open category is offered to the general membership. New networks will be added as needed with a minimum of (8) representatives.
- H. The Chamber member company is the REaL Networks member, so a replacement representative should be sent immediately to maintain attendance requirements should a network representative leave the company.

## **REaL Networks Size/Time Commitment**

- A. Minimum number of members to start a new network will be **8**
- B. Maximum number of members in any network will be **25**
- C. The average time commitment for members in a non-leadership position is 6-8 hours a month.

## **REaL Networks Leadership Positions**

- A. Leadership positions in each network include: a **Chair, Vice-Chair, and Mentor**
  - a. **All leadership positions are for one year.**
  - b. To promote effective leadership continuity for the network, each officeholder will “move up” each year into the “next” role (Vice-Chair to Chair and Chair to Mentor).
  - c. Leadership elections; nominations & voting for vice-chair will be held in November
  - d. **Leadership for each network will meet quarterly** with the Chamber staff liaison for an update on network progress and Chamber upcoming events
  - e. If a leadership member leaves a REaL Network, the replacement will be filled by the next position.
- B. The **Chair**
  - a. Accepts the applications from the Chamber liaison & shares with the network leadership
  - b. Reserves the room/location needed to conduct the meeting
  - c. Prepares the room for meeting
  - d. Starts meetings on time & conducts the meetings
  - e. Represents the network to the Chamber
  - f. Meets with network members who have had unexcused absences
- C. The **Vice-Chair**
  - a. Conducts meetings in the absence of the Chair
  - b. Takes meeting attendance
  - c. Presents lead counts, tracks speaking times
  - d. Track leads passed
  - e. Takes minutes of each meeting and distributes them to the network and the Chamber liaison.
- D. The **Mentor**
  - a. Is the immediate past Chair
  - b. Responsible for the orientation of new members
  - c. Mentoring members on best practices
- E. **Substitute Chair: is to be identified should the entire leadership team be absent from a meeting.**
- F. **Greeters**
  - a. Identified by the Chair for the next meeting
  - b. Should arrive 15 minutes before the meeting to greet members and guests

## REaL Networks meeting times & locations

*Meeting locations will be determined by the Chamber & the network leadership. The location MUST be a Chamber member in good standing. Additional times & locations will be determined as needed as additional networks are added.*

- Each network meets twice a month
  - Times/Locations TBD once we've established networks for 2020
- Water will be provided; breakfast, lunch & other beverages will be each individual's responsibility*

## Attendance requirements & Notifications

- A. Networks meet twice per month.**
- B. Members are responsible for notifying the Chair, Vice-Chair, or Mentor of absences.**
- C. If a meeting is changed or canceled, the Chair will notify members of the network and the Chamber liaison of such action or any other schedule changes.
- D. Each member is allowed a total of **8 excused or unexcused absences a year.**
- E. Three (3) unexcused absences** in a row will result in a meeting with your network Chair about your status in the network (e.g., should leave of absence be needed, or other).
- F. No leave of absence will be granted unless it is directly arranged with the Chamber. If a leave is granted, the business slot will be reserved for that member for no longer than a three (3) month time period or six meetings. A substitute representative from the same company can attend in their absence.
- G. Open communication is encouraged among all members of the network.
- H. Substitutions** will be allowed within the network. The substituted representative must be from the same company and represent your specific category. You are allowed 4 substitutions per year.

## Industry Representation

- A. Each Chamber member can have a maximum of two representatives.** Each individual will represent one industry-specific category.  
The following industry-specific categories can have sub-categories:
  - a. Financial Institutions: Business or Personal
  - b. Insurance: Auto/Home, Commercial, Health or Life
  - c. Senior Housing: Assisted Living, Independent Living or Memory Care
- B. The networks are industry/category driven;** each member of the network can only represent their company based upon the industry/category under which they joined the network.

## Expenses

- A. The cost to participate in REaL Networks is a non-refundable fee of \$75 per year.** Fees are due before participating in the approved network and renewed yearly.
- B. Participation is a benefit of being a member of the Liberty Chamber and is not available to non-members.**
- C. Members are responsible for their meal costs.**

## REaL Networks Business Meetings

**Every six months, each network is required to hold a formal business meeting** & include the Chamber liaison. The purpose of the meeting is to review group progress in terms of membership, lead generation, lead quality, and rules of conduct. This strategic planning session promotes brainstorming of new ways to share leads, adjustments to assist individuals to succeed better and to review rules. All network members are required to attend the business meeting. The leadership of each network will solicit agenda items several weeks before the meeting.

### Guests

- A. Each network is encouraged to have guests & visitors at each meeting.
- B. Network members are encouraged to invite guests in categories not represented in the network.
- C. **ALL guests** must notify the network Chair or the Chamber liaison before attending a meeting and provide name, company, title, type of business, phone, and email information for follow-up purposes.
- D. **Guests** who are **current members** of the Chamber are invited to attend **one** meeting with up to **two** networks which have their specific business category available to gauge the potential “fit.”
- E. **Guests who are non-Chamber members** are invited to visit **one** meeting at **one** network, which has their specific business category available. Chamber membership & network fees must be paid to participate.
- F. **Guests** will not represent businesses that conflict with any existing network member.
- G. **Guests** will not make presentations to the network.
- H. **Guests** will pay for their meals or the meal will be paid for by the person who invited them.
- I. **Guests** will be introduced to the network but are not allowed to talk about their business or distribute business cards during the meeting.
- J. **Each network member commits to bring two Chamber member referrals per year** and is encouraged to bring guests with prior notification.

### Switching Your Network Membership & Conflicts

- A. If you wish to change your network membership from one network to another, the Chamber and the leadership of both networks must be notified and involved in the decision - moving is not an automatic process. Current network members do not have the “first right” to move into an available opening in another network unless starting a new network with a minimum of eight (8) members. You may only change networks one (1) time.
- B. Personal conflicts between members of the network are to be resolved between the affected members. If businesses are unable to resolve differences, then it will be brought to the network leadership for review.

## What is a Lead?

- A. Members must bring one qualified lead to each meeting. A qualified lead is a specific, direct lead for products and/or services that is likely to result in a business arrangement with a network member.
- B. Lead must contain:
  - a. Contact name and title
  - b. Company
  - c. Industry or product sold
  - d. Address
  - e. Phone
  - f. Email
  - g. Website
- C. A lead can also be anything specifically tagged as a lead by a member of the network.
- D. Leads can also be given outside the network to a Chamber member if the industry is not represented.
- E. Each network meeting will include a detailed discussion of the previous week's leads shared and results of that sharing.

## Passing Leads - What are the possibilities?

- A. To members of your primary network
- B. To members of other REaL Networks if a category is not represented
- C. To other members of the Liberty Chamber if a category is not represented
- D. To the Chamber liaison for new Chamber memberships
- E. All leads are tracked electronically
- F. The Chamber will periodically and formally recognize the top leads performers in each network.**
- G. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to contact the network Vice-Chair regarding leads you may have missed.

## One-to-Ones

Each network member is encouraged to schedule at least **two** one-to-one meetings per quarter outside of regular meeting times to learn more about each other's businesses & who is the best lead/referral.

## Testimonials

These should focus on members of your network, or those in another Chamber network, who represents a business category not filled in your network. Testimonials should never be given for anyone who conflicts with a network member.

Network members must commit to nondisclosure of information that might be construed as derogatory in any nature to the other Chamber members. Information at meetings should be understood as neither coming from the Chamber nor substantiated by the Chamber.

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## REaL Networks Participation

By signing below, I hereby indicate that I have read and agree to abide by the above listed policies. Please return via email or in-person to the Chair of your accepted network to be held on file.

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Signature & Printed name

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Date