



Ideas for Networking Activities

Women's Council of REALTORS® Local Network Programs and Events

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SECTION 1

NETWORKING ACTIVITIES RELATED TO EDUCATION PROGRAM CONTENT

ACTIVITY A

Activity Goals

1. To facilitate an exchange of experience and ideas between attendees to support their business goals.
2. To help participants learn from and integrate ideas presented by program speaker(s) into their business strategy.

Room Set-up

- Roundtables for 5 to 8 attendees (if using classroom style set up, ask every other table to turn and face the table behind them to form a small group for the networking activity)

Materials Needed

- Networking worksheet for each attendee (see below)

Time Needed for Networking Activity: 45-60 minutes

Activity Instructions

Take Steps 1 and 2 BEFORE introducing the speaker...

STEP 1: Session Introduction [5 minutes]

- Welcome the attendees
- Suggested talking points to introduce session:
 - Designed a unique session in a unique format
 - Session will provide both business value *and* opportunity to learn from peers
 - We'll hear from industry expert(s) who will share tips and tools that will directly impact your business bottom line
 - You'll also have time to share at your tables to help you build on what you learn from our speaker(s) and add in the experience of your peers

STEP 2: Preparing for Networking [10 minutes]

- Introduce opportunity for networking . . . suggested talking points:
 - As successful business people and Women's Council members, we learn from the experts AND we learn from each other
 - Before we introduce our speaker(s), let's find out about the fellow business owners at our tables and one way each of you hopes to improve your business in the coming year
- Instruct participants:
 1. Distribute the worksheets in the middle of your tables.
 2. Write your name on the back of your worksheet.
 3. Then, go around the table, introduce yourself to your table mates by giving your name and a brief sketch of your business, using the questions on the back of your worksheet.
 4. After the introductions are completed, on the front of your worksheet write ONE goal you have to improve your business in the coming year.
- Direct participants to the section of their worksheet where they can take down ideas they hear from the speaker(s) related to their business goals.

- Introduce speaker(s)

[speaker(s) deliver their program]

STEP 3: Applying What We Learned [15 minutes]

- Suggested talking points . . .
 - We heard some valuable ideas from our speaker(s) that will help us with the goals we've set for our business
 - Let's draw upon this to help achieve our business goals.
- Instruct attendees:
 1. Go around the table and ask each member of your group to share the business goal she wrote down on the worksheet. As each goal is shared, the group should work together to identify one idea to help with this goal that they learned from our speaker(s).

STEP 4: Learning from Your Peers [10 minutes]

- Instruct attendees:
 1. We are now going to add to what we learned from our speaker(s) and get help in achieving our business goals from our peers.
 2. Get into pairs around your tables (there may need to be one group of three if there is an odd number at your tables).
 3. In your pairs, take turns sharing the business goal you wrote on your worksheet and give your partner ONE minute to suggest a couple of ideas you might be able to use to achieve that goal. You take ONE minute to do the same for your partner.
 4. Listen carefully and take notes in Section 2 of your worksheet. This is NOT a time to evaluate the ideas or share what you've already tried. It's a time to be open and listen.
 5. Once you've both had a chance to share and the two minutes are up, I'll call time and give you the next step.

[Attendees share in pairs; call time at the end of two minutes and give the following instruction.]

6. Now, pair up with a different person at your table and repeat the process.

[Attendees share in different pairs; call time at the end of two minutes and give the following instruction.]

STEP 5: Taking Action [5 minutes]

- Instruct attendees:
 1. Now that everyone has taken their turn, take a minute on your own and review your worksheet. Circle the one or two ideas you gained during this session – from your peers or from the speaker(s) – that you will commit to implementing in the coming year to achieve your business goal.
- Close program. Suggested talking points. . .
 - I hope you enjoyed our program and picked up many good ideas to move your business forward in the coming year.
 - Also hope you enjoyed this program format.
 - In addition to great programming, one of the most valuable benefits of Women's Council is the opportunity to share our experiences, learn from and support each other in growing our businesses.

**Women's Council Education and Networking Session
NOTETAKING SHEET**

My Goal to Improve My Business:

Section 1 Ideas to Achieve My Goal I Learned from the SPEAKER(S)	Section 2 Ideas to Achieve My Goal that I Learned from my PEERS

Final Step: Circle one or two ideas above that you will commit to implementing to achieve your business goal.

Name: _____

[when prompted, share the following with your group]

1. Name and Company
2. Market Area You Serve
3. Real Estate Specialty
(e.g., residential, first-time buyers, property management, vacation properties, etc.)
4. One Way You Excel
(e.g., marketing, social media, negotiations, building a team, etc.)

ACTIVITY B

Activity Goals

1. To facilitate an exchange of experience and ideas between attendees to support their business goals based on the information provided by the speaker(s).
2. To help attendees learn from and integrate ideas presented by the speaker(s) into their business strategy.
3. To support attendees in forming new business relationships, adding to their professional network.

Room Set-up

- Roundtables for 5 to 8 attendees (if using classroom style set up, ask every other table to turn and face the table behind them to form a small group for the networking activity)

Materials Needed: none

Time Needed for Networking Activity: 45-60 minutes (depending on the number of topics to address)

Activity Instructions

STEP 1: Session Introduction [5 minutes]

- Welcome the attendees
- Suggested talking points to introduce session:
 - Opportunity to share ideas and experience around the X [number] of topics our speaker(s) will address: [name topics]
 - Opportunity to apply the techniques our speaker(s) will share to your own business model
 - And, finally, to decide what you will take away from this session and apply when you get back to work
 - Introduce speaker(s)

[speaker(s) deliver program]

STEP 2: Topic 1 [20 minutes] [15 minutes]

- Instruct attendees to share at their tables around the first topic, using the following questions as their guide:
 1. What was the most intriguing idea our speaker presented regarding [topic 1]?
 2. What other successful techniques have you used regarding [topic 1], and what results did they produce for your business?
 3. Choose the best idea discussed at your table and be prepared to share that idea with the whole group in the room.

[5 minutes]

- Ask each table to share the best idea they discussed at their tables. (If time does not allow each table to report, then keep track of the tables that were not able to report in this round and ensure they have a chance to report in subsequent rounds.)

STEPS 2: Additional Topics [20 minutes for each topic]

- Repeat instructions for Step 1 for each additional topic.

STEP 3: Session Close [5 minutes]

- Ask attendees to review their notes for each of the discussion rounds and circle one idea they will commit to implementing in their business when they return to work.
- If time is available, attendees at each table can share what they circled with their table mates as a way to verbally commit to implementing what they learned.
- Thank all for attending.

ACTIVITY C

Activity Goals

1. To facilitate an exchange of experience and ideas between attendees to support their business goals.
2. To support attendees in forming new business relationships, adding to their professional network.

Room Set-up

- Roundtables for 5 to 8 attendees (if using classroom style set up, ask every other table to turn and face the table behind them to form a small group for the networking activity)

Materials Needed: none

Time Needed for Networking Activity: 45-60 minutes

Activity Instructions

STEP 1: Session Introduction [2 minutes]

- Welcome the attendees
- Suggested talking points to introduce session:
 - As you know, Women's Council is dedicated to helping you grow your business and build the relationships you need to succeed
 - As part of this promise to you, we have created this program - we call it a 'game changer' session
 - Here's how it works. . .
 - In this session you will hear from speaker(s) who will give you ideas for your business
 - After our speaker(s) present, we will guide you through a networking opportunity where you will share experience with those at your tables and build new business relationships
 - At the end of the session
 - you will have new, innovative ideas you can implement in your business today, that will change your game . . . bring your business to a whole new level
 - And, you will have the resources and relationships to support you in getting there
 - Are you ready?
- Introduce speaker(s)

[speaker(s) deliver program]

STEP 2: Networking Activity Part 1 [7 minutes]

- Set up the first opportunity for networking. Suggested talking points . . .
 - As I look around the room I see successful REALTORS® – the best in the business
 - In this first networking opportunity, let's find out a little about each other so you get a sense of the expertise and experience at your table

- Take a couple of minutes and go around the table; each member state:
 - Your name
 - Your company
 - One skill or specialty you have that makes you unique in the market

[provide time for attendees to share]

STEP 2: Networking Activity Part 2 [10 minutes]

- Set up the second opportunity for networking. Suggested talking points . . .
 - Are we doing business the way we did it five years ago?
 - Our industry is constantly evolving. And we need to adapt to stay relevant.
 - Take a moment and think about what area of your business is ready for an update in order for you to stay relevant and to increase your bottom line. Write it down.
 - Then, go around the table and share what you have written down and why.
 - Here's an example. [Provide an example that's relevant to your market. For instance, "let's say you specialize in REOs and the inventory has decreased in your market. So, the area of your business that you need to update to stay relevant, is to find a new niche!"]
 - You have about 10 minutes to take these two steps.

[provide time for attendees to share]

STEP 3: Networking Activity Part 3 [20 minutes]

- Set up the final opportunity for networking. Suggested talking points . . .
 - You've had a chance to share an area of your business that needs to change in order for you to stay relevant.
 - So, how are you going to do that?
 - In a minute I want you to pair up around your table; if there is an odd number at the table, then form one group of three
 - In your pairs or groups of three, share again with each other the area of your business you need to update, and then, help each other set three strategies you will implement to make this happen
 - For these strategies, you can draw from the ideas the speaker(s) provided, and also from the experience of your peers
 - For really tough goals, you can also ask for input from the whole table

[provide time for attendees to share]

[OPTIONAL segment]

- After STEP 3 above, you can add the following step:
 - Setting goals and brainstorming ideas to implement them is easy
 - The hard part is sticking to them when the craziness of everyday life sets in
 - So, we have a little help for you
 - The individual you just paired up with is now your accountability partner! It's her job to follow up with you periodically to provide encouragement, support, additional resources or ideas you need to stay on task and get your goals accomplished. And you'll do the same for her!
 - Exchange contact information with your accountability partner, and make a plan to follow-up with each other in the next 30 days to check in on how each other is doing with your business goal, and to provide any support you can.

STEP 4: Session Close [2 minutes]

- I hope you enjoyed our session. You now have the tools you need to take your business to the next level [and the accountability partner to ensure you do it!]
- Women's Council is all about the power of relationships. As members, we are committed to collaboration and to supporting each other.
- You've heard from inspiring speaker(s) who brought you new tools and resources for your business, and you've made new professional contacts for the future.
- Our business is constantly evolving and we need to push ourselves, 'change our game' to stay ahead of the curve.
- You have the tools and the people to support you... the ball is in your court.
- Thank you for attending today!

ACTIVITY D – ‘Ah-ha’ Moments (Short)

Activity Description

After the speaker(s) have presented their program, ask attendees to jot down the most intriguing idea shared by the speaker(s). Ask attendees to share what they wrote down with others at their table, including why the idea was intriguing and how it will help them (and others) be more successful.

If time permits, you can ask each table to share the most interesting idea they discussed at their table.

ACTIVITY E: *Additional Questions (short)*

Activity Description

Give each attendee a couple of index cards at the start of the session. Ask them to jot down a question or two they have on the topic the program speaker will address. If during the program, the question(s) are answered, they can tear up the index cards. If a question is not answered during the presentation, they can discuss the question with the group at their tables and seek input from their peers.

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SECTION 2

BUSINESS-BUILDING NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY F: *Feedforward*

Activity Goals

1. To tap peer experience related to a particular business skill or goal.
2. To create an environment for mentoring and support between members.

Room Set-up

- This activity does not require a particular set-up, however the room should have enough space for attendees to stand up and walk around, forming pairs.

Materials Needed: worksheet (see below)

Time Needed for Networking Activity: 20 minutes

Activity Instructions

STEP 1: Activity Introduction [2 minutes]

Suggested talking points . . .

- You are all familiar with the concept of 'feedback' - it's an important part of growing and a critical skill for leaders to perfect.
- However, there are some problems with 'feedback'.
 - It can be taken in the wrong way – the benefits of what is said can be clouded by how it is received
 - Feedback focuses on the past – on what has already occurred
- So we are going to try something different – *feedforward* . . . giving someone suggestions about the future, not the past; giving them options that might help them improve in a desired area.

STEP 2: Activity Instructions [2 minutes]

Suggested talking points . . .

- Everyone take a 'feedforward' worksheet
- At the top of the worksheet, write down one business behavior or skill you would like to change or improve [give everyone a minute to do this]
- Then, in the next 15 minutes, you will have one-on-one conversations with at least six random people in this room
 - Each conversation should last about 2 minutes.
 - During the first minute of the round, you will ask the other individual for suggestions on how to change or improve the behavior or skill you wrote at the top of your worksheet.
 - Then, for next minute in the round, you will provide the other individual with feedforward on the business behavior or skill they want to improve.

BUT, there are some important rules you need to follow:

- You are not allowed to give any feedback to this individual about the past (e.g., why something they tried did not work) especially if you have interacted with this person or have worked with them before. You are only allowed to provide ideas for the future.

- You are not allowed to comment in any way on the suggestions you are given – don't critique the suggestions or make positive comments on them – just say thank you.
 - You must do this standing up.
 - You must give your feedforward advice and receive your feedforward advice by keeping eye contact with each other as much as possible.
 - Use your worksheet to capture the ideas you receive.
- For each round, I will let you know when a minute is up at which time the other person in the pair should state the behavior or skill they want to improve and get some feedforward. At the end of each two-minute round, I'll call time and ask you to pair up with another random person in the room.

[Signal the start of the first round. Call time at one minute for the other individual in the pairs to start sharing. Call time at two minutes for individuals to find a new partner in the room.

Repeat the process for a total of six two-minute rounds.]

STEP 3: Session Close [2 minutes]

Suggested talking points . . .

- I hope you can all see the tremendous depth of experience and expertise that lies within your fellow members!
- I also hope you can also see how willing members of Women's Council are to share of that expertise and support each other.
- This exchange of value between members is one of the most precious benefits of membership in Women's Council. Take advantage of it!

Business Behavior or Skill I want to change or improve:

Feedforward I receive from my peers:

ACTIVITY G: *Building a Support Network*

Activity Goals

1. To tap peer experience related to a particular business skill or goal.
2. To create an environment for mentoring and support between members.

Room Set-up

- Roundtables for 5 to 8 attendees

Materials Needed: Index cards (one per attendee)

Time Needed for Networking Activity: 20-25 minutes

Activity Instructions

STEP 1: Activity Instructions – Part 1 [5-7 minutes]

- Ask each attendee to share at their tables two facts about their business that are true right now (e.g., operate with a team; specialize in retirement homes, etc.). This will give everyone at the table a quick sense of the experience and expertise of those in the group.

STEP 2: Activity Instructions – Part 2 [15-20 minutes]

- Ask each attendee to take an index card and jot down a business goal they have for the coming year, then put the card face down in the middle of the table.
- Once this is done, attendees should go around the table, drawing a card from the middle of the table and reading the business goal written on the card (if attendees draw their own card, they should choose another). The person whose goal is read should identify themselves.
- Once the goal is read, individuals at the table identify whether or not they can help this individual with his or her goal. If so, contact information can be exchanged and follow-up planned.
- If no one at the table can assist with a certain goal, the group at the table should discuss others within the membership who might be able to assist. Group members who know these individuals should agree to put them in touch with the individual whose goal was read so he or she can receive the support needed.

ACTIVITY H: *Learning from Praise* (short)

Activity Description

Ask attendees to share with others at their tables the last time a client or fellow REALTOR® gave them a business-related compliment, what they did and why they believe it generated such positive feedback.

Once these stories are shared, the group at each table should discuss the experiences and identify what they have learned about effective business practices.

If time is available, ask each table to report to the entire room one successful business practice they learned from listening to members' positive experiences.

ACTIVITY I: *Learning from the Best* (short)

Activity Description

Ask attendees to share with the group someone they admire in business, and what this individual does that is exceptional. From all the examples shared, work with the group to capture common best business practices that make these individuals exceptional.

ACTIVITY J: *Contribute-Need* (short)

Activity Description

Give each attendees two index cards of different colors. Designate one color to signify 'needs' the attendees have; designate the other color to signify skills or experience attendees have that they can share or contribute to others. Ask attendees to complete the following:

- On front of the 'need' cards, attendees should write down something they need in the way of support for their business. They should write their name on the back of the need card.
- On the front of the 'contribute' cards, attendees should write down a skill or experience they can share or contribute to help the group. They should write their name on the back of the contribute card.
- Cards should be placed in two piles in the middle of the table by color.
- Using the cards, the group should work to match the needs group members have with the group skills or experience that can support those needs.

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SECTION 3

GETTING-TO-KNOW- YOU NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY K: *Making the Most of Our Differences*

Activity Goals

1. To find out (and feel a sense of camaraderie in) what members have in common.
2. To find out (and learn from) the differences between members.
3. To get to know other members and have the basis for forming business relationships.

Room Set-up

- This activity does not require a particular set-up, however the room should have enough space for attendees to stand up and walk around, forming groups of three and then groups of six.

Materials Needed: Activity worksheet (see below)

Time Needed for Networking Activity: 20-25 minutes

Activity Instructions

STEP 1: Networking Activity Instructions – ROUND 1 [7 minutes]

Suggested talking points . . .

- Get up on your feet. . . and form groups of three with other individuals in the room you do not know
 - Introduce yourselves to each other
 - Find three things that you all have in common (2 must be business related, 1 must be personal)
 - Find three things that represent differences among you (2 must be business related, 1 must be personal)
 - Write them down on your worksheet in the ROUND 1 column. . . you have 5 minutes to get this accomplished

STEP 2: Networking Activity Instructions – ROUND 2 [10 minutes]

Suggested talking points . . .

- Merge your group of three with another group of three to form a group of six
 - Take the same steps as in Round 1 . . . introduce yourselves to each other
 - Now, find three things have in common and three things that are different among the six of you (2 business related and 1 personal in each case)
 - Write them down on your worksheet in the ROUND 2 column

STEP 3: Discuss the Results [3-5 minutes]

Suggested talking points . . .

- [bring the entire group back together and ask the following questions to have them think about the experience]
 - What do we have in common? How are our businesses alike?
 - And equally as valuable, in what ways did we find that our businesses are different?
 - How can we benefit from our differences as members of Women's Council?

STEP 4: Session Close [1 minute]

- You've now gotten to know five new professional friends and a little about their businesses.... take advantage of the differences in your experience and expertise and build this resource into your professional network!

Making the Most of Our Differences Worksheet

ROUND 1	ROUND 2
<p><i>3 ways we are similar:</i></p> <p>1. [Business]</p> <p>2. [Business]</p> <p>3. [Personal]</p>	<p><i>3 ways we are similar:</i></p> <p>1. [Business]</p> <p>2. [Business]</p> <p>3. [Personal]</p>
<p><i>3 ways we are different:</i></p> <p>1. [Business]</p> <p>2. [Business]</p> <p>3. [Personal]</p>	<p><i>3 ways we are different:</i></p> <p>1. [Business]</p> <p>2. [Business]</p> <p>3. [Personal]</p>
<p><i>Ways I can benefit from our differences:</i></p>	

ACTIVITY L: *30-second Monologue (short)*

Activity Description

Ask attendees to create and deliver a 30-second presentation on their business to the group as a means of self-introduction. (If a large number of attendees, or if time is short, attendees can present to each other in small groups.)

ACTIVITY M: *Speed Networking (short)*

Activity Description

Ask attendees form two lines facing each other. In quick, timed rounds, one line of attendees moves one person to the right. During each round attendees across from each other introducing themselves, stating a couple of key facts about their business. In each round the person at the end of the line with no one facing her, moves to the start of the line. The activity is over when attendees in the first line have spoken to all the individuals in the second line.

ACTIVITY N: *Two Truths and a Dream (short)*

Activity Description

Ask attendees to share with each other three things about their business, two things that are true today, and one thing that is a dream, or something they would like to see come true.

ACTIVITY O: *First Impressions (short)*

Activity Description

Give each attendee index cards (enough for them to give one to each other person at the table). Ask attendees to write down on the index cards a positive first impression they got about each person at the table. They should then give those cards to the proper person. Attendees should then have a dialog about the importance of first impressions, sharing examples of the impressions they got about each other and why.

ACTIVITY P: *Association (short)*

Activity Description

Ask attendees the question, "As a businessperson, if you were a car, what car would you be and why?" Attendees should think about this and then share their answers with the others at their table, so that others will get to know a little about their business style.

ACTIVITY Q: *Alliteration Introduction (short)*

Activity Description

Ask attendees to introduce themselves to others at their table, by stating their name and an adjective that describes their business style that starts with the same letter as their first name. Example: 'Driven Danielle'.

ACTIVITY R: *Past/Present/Future* (short)

Activity Description

Ask attendees to share with each other a little about their business, stating:

- 2 achievements or events in the past that have made you the REALTOR® you are today
- 2 things about your business today that you believe contribute to your success
- 2 ways you'd like your business to grow or change that will ensure your success in the future

ACTIVITY S: *Tent Card Introduction* (short)

Activity Description

Give each attendee a blank tent card and a marker. Ask attendees to fill in their tent card as follows:

- On one side: write your name and something unique about yourself (personal)
- On the other side: in each of four corners of the tent card, write one thing that represents something about your business experience
- Use the tent card to introduce yourself to others at the table

Tent cards remain on the table to remind group members of the experience of their peers.

ACTIVITY T: *Team Resume* (short)

Activity Description

Ask attendees to share with each other a little about their business experience, expertise and skills. After each individual has shared, the group should work together to create a one-page resume on flip chart paper, summarizing the group's business experience and qualifications. These 'team resumes' can be posted in the meeting room as a reflection of the depth of experience and expertise within the membership.

ACTIVITY U: *Personal Effects* (short)

Activity Description

Ask attendees to take two things out of their purse, wallet, pocket, briefcases, etc. that in some way reflect their business style or personality, experience or expertise. They should then share with others at their tables, explaining why they chose the items they did.

ACTIVITY V: *Peer Introductions* (short)

Activity Description

Ask attendees to pair up and jot down three business-related questions they would want to know about the person sitting next to them. Based on the answers they receive to these questions, they then introduce their partner to the others in the group.

ACTIVITY W: *About Us* (short)

Activity Description

Divide attendees into small groups. Give each group a piece of flip chart paper and a marker. Ask the groups to draw a circle in the middle of the flip chart paper. Inside the circle, the group writes at least three things that everyone in the group has in common with regard to their business. Outside the circle, the group writes something unique (business-related) about each person in the group. The group can then pull from their common or unique experience as needed during the program.