

7 Tips to Get the Most Out of Your One-to-Ones



The whole premise of BNI is to build business through building relationships. This is one of the major distinctions between BNI and other networking groups –building an in-depth understanding of one another’s core competencies. Group meetings can’t provide that. One-to-Ones are the only way to do it. What is a One-to-One? Simply put, it’s a meeting, in person, between two BNI members (or even prospective members) to deepen the understanding between them in order to foster a better business relationship.

To be effective, follow these 7 tips for effective One-to-Ones:

1. Schedule an initial one-to-one with everyone in our chapter as soon as possible,

2. A One-to-One needs to be both structured and social. The more you can find overlapping areas of professional and personal interest, the more successful your One-to-One is going to be.

3. If you ask someone for a One-to-One, then the focus of your meeting is the other person, not you. You ask in order to learn how to give referrals to that other person, not how to get them. It's Giver before Gain. You may have time in your One-to-One meeting to switch roles and focus on you, but if that doesn't happen, it's still a successful One-to-One. Of course, if someone asks you for a One-to-One, then you're in the spotlight. If nobody asks you, you may want to look at how you're interacting with other Chapter members.

4. Distribute your GAINS worksheet, or GAINS Profile. GAINS is an acronym for Goals, Accomplishments, Interests, Networks, and Skills. If you use this as a structure for your discussion, you'll find the most valuable, and useful information about your fellow BNI member. This may surprise you, but the GAINS profile can also be incredibly useful in ANY business interview situation: a new employee, a new client, or a new vendor. You want to end each One-to-One with a clearer picture of how you can bring good referrals to the other member.

5. End each One-to-One with a commitment. This may be to refer someone to the person you had a One-to-One with, or it may be to follow up with another One-to-One meeting to find out more about your BNI partner before attempting to make a good referral, or to focus on you and your business needs. It doesn't matter what you're going to do, just make sure that you're going to do something as a result of your meeting. If you don't come away with an action plan, did you really accomplish anything, or were you just socializing?

6. Always remember that a One-to-One is not a one-time deal. You should go back and do another One-to-One with all members

7. Remain focused and prioritize your one-to-ones!

So, here's a quick review:

HERE'S HOW YOU GIVE:

- One-to-Ones build relationships, which builds trust.
- If you ask for the One-to-One it's about the other person; if they ask, it's about you.
- Use the GAINS Profile and the BNI One-to-One Planner, which we'll talk about more in January.
- Come up with an action plan at the end of every One-to-One.
- Repeat One-to-Ones with all members to build deeper relationships

HOW YOU GAIN:

- One-to-Ones are how you train your sales team to bring sales to you, and how you get trained (by them) to bring referrals to them.

