

Northeast Business Connections

Policies and Procedures

Last edited on May 20, 2024

Our success as a networking chapter and as individual members are based on our mutual adherence to the following Policies & Procedures. We are all here to grow our business, network, and ourselves.

PARTICIPATION AS A MEMBER OF THIS CHAPTER:

Show up regularly and on time. We meet Tuesday mornings from 7:15-7:30 for Open Networking, followed by our chapter meeting from 7:30-8:30 and ending our time together with more networking between 8:30-9:00, unless a leadership meeting is scheduled.

We meet every Tuesday unless a cancellation has been made due to extenuating circumstances such as weather conditions or time off for vacation/holidays. Those dates will be given with advance notice to all members.

Leadership meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month, unless otherwise announced.

Attendance is key. Members may miss up to three (3) meetings per quarter and an appropriate substitute may be named in their absence. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please alert the President or Vice President by text or email. If you are unable to attend meetings due to an extenuating circumstance, the membership committee will review a request for a temporary stand-in during the duration of the situation on a case-by-case basis. If the member can no longer return to meetings then an appropriate individual from the business who represents the same classification can assume the member's seat. If there is not an appropriate individual, then the membership will be considered terminated and the seat will be opened up to new members.

If a member has low attendance (attendance rate lower than 70%), their assigned mentor or member of the Leadership Team will meet with them to bring this to their attention and assist them in getting their attendance of meetings back on track. If low attendance persists for two more months, then their continued membership with the group will be terminated.

Zoom attendance is allowed in certain circumstances. Members unable to find appropriate substitutes, members who are traveling, members with a communicable disease, etc. may request to join the meeting by Zoom. Requests should be made by 8 pm the night prior to the meeting whenever possible in order for zoom links, roster, and agenda to be given before the meeting. Consistent use of Zoom for attendance is discouraged but allowed on a case by case basis.

Substitutes may be someone from another industry or profession not already represented in the membership or a colleague from the member's company. Subbing is a great way for potential new members to visit the group. If a member's sub is from another industry, not represented, they will have the opportunity to share the member's commercial during the initial round and then share their own commercial at the end of the round when prompted by the meeting facilitator.

Former members whose industry or profession is already represented in the membership can be subs however are not allowed to do a 60 second commercial to highlight their business that is in competition with a current member. Former prospective members whose applications were not approved may not be subs. If a member is not sure if their potential sub has applied to the chapter unsuccessfully, they should ask the membership committee.

A substitute may not sub for any member more than once per quarter unless they're from that member's same company. The sponsored chair may designate an individual to be their substitute and give their name to the membership committee. To clarify:

- If a member uses a sub *from another industry or profession* for more than one absence in a quarter, they may not use the same sub for each absence that quarter and should have an appropriate substitute for each absence.
- If a member uses a sub *from their own company* for more than one absence in a quarter, they may use the same sub for each absence that quarter. If the member intends to use the same sub for all absences during the year, they're encouraged to designate that person and give their name to the membership committee.
- Attending a meeting as a substitute does not count as a visit in terms of the visits allowed by potential new members.

Meeting Cancellations: If schools, of a member in the area they're located, are closed or delayed for weather or other hazardous situations the meeting will be canceled. Please refer to local TV, weather, and other local channels to be on top of any alerts for the area. If inclement weather is forecasted to happen on a meeting morning, then by 8:00 pm the night before, members will be notified by email as to a switch in meeting format from in person to zoom.

Likewise, we will not meet on major holidays that fall on our meeting date. The chapter will provide an updated list of meetings and observed holidays and vacation dates to all members on a regular basis through email, meeting announcements, calendar updates, etc.

Come prepared: Know your commercial (time limit will be placed on these and will be communicated to membership) and be ready to share it with the group. Be sure to include your name. Company/organization name, what you do, and who a good referral for you would be. We are here to remind each other, weekly, exactly what we do, so that we may help each other with the best and most accurate referrals possible.

Make a list of your closed business, one-to-ones, and testimonials you'd like to share with the chapter. These will be shared toward the end of our meeting, so please do not include this information during your commercial.

Stay in your lane. If you joined the chapter representing a specific industry or profession and you also work in other industries or professions, you may not promote those secondary industries or professions to the group. You are encouraged to have an employee or other member of your business or organization apply for that seat. Or you may change your designation. Please reach out to the membership committee for a Change in Designation form. Once the Membership Committee receives this form, it will be brought to the next Leadership team meeting where the change in designation will be discussed and decided.

Review the agenda and follow up emails when you receive it so that you are prepared for the meetings and are in the loop of any upcoming chapter events or outings. Speaker rotations will be released to members with at least a 4-week advanced notice. It is up to the member to switch dates if the one assigned does not work. Please reach out to the Vice President to update the information as soon you're able if you plan to switch with another member. In the event you're unable to make your presentation date due to an emergency please alert the meeting facilitator as soon as possible so other arrangements can be made.

A presentation is simply a showcase or sharing of your business. You can talk about recent success stories, share testimonials from previous clients, or conduct a presentation on a topic that members would be interested in learning more about.

Occasionally we will invite guests outside of our chapter to do a presentation such as a non-industry specific business or marketing topic that will benefit all members. If you have a suggestion for this type of presentation, please reach out to the Secretary to provide the name and contact information to them.

Meet with members individually. We encourage all members to do a one-to-one meeting with each other on a regular basis. The chapter may also sponsor these meetings. You are encouraged to attend.

Do not expect to receive referrals right away. It takes time for members to get to know you and your business enough to feel comfortable giving referrals. Know that it may take up to 3 months or more to develop these relationships, and cultivating these relationships takes time and effort. Be sure you're scheduling connections and staying active in the chapter. Consider joining a committee or the leadership team for members to get to know you better.

Follow-up with connections. Follow-up with referrals. Treat each referral with respect and be sure to connect with them as soon as possible. Remember to thank the person that gave you the referral. Keep the member informed on any updates and the status of the referral. If the referral wasn't the right kind of customer for you, be sure to gently share that information with the member that made the referral.

Log all referrals and closed business. Use the appropriate channels to report all referrals and closed business from other group members. Closed business includes one-time transactions and repeat business.

Consider the chapter members as your resources for yourself and your contacts and clients, even for referrals outside the chapter. If you or a client has a particular need reach out to the membership for a referral they know, like, and trust.

Don't spam. It's bad form to automatically add chapter members and meeting visitors to your newsletter list, etc. without their permission. Discourage your subs and visitors from doing this.

Boost each other up! Like, comment, and share each other's business posts on social media. If you have used a chapter member's service(s) give them a review on the appropriate channels.

Boost the group! Like comment, and share our posts on social media, especially the ones for Visitor's Day and other social and outreach events planned for the community. RSVP to meetings and events on all platforms so that attendance looks robust to potential visitors.

Our social media accounts are:

Facebook: @nebusinessconnections

RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP:

One month prior to the end of your membership year, you will receive by email a Renewal of Membership form and an invoice for your membership fee. This email will also contain your renewal date. You will need to return this form one week prior to the renewal date. If the form is not received, their membership will be suspended.

TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership to the group will be considered terminated if a member decides to voluntarily leave NBC before the membership renewal date or if the member is no longer in good standing (violates policies and procedures without improvement). The membership dues paid by said member will not be reimbursed even on a prorated basis.

VISITORS:

Members are encouraged to bring visitors to up to three (3) open meetings per quarter and unlimited social and outreach events.

Members are encouraged to promote attendance by visitors to their personal networks. The chapter will promote attendance by visitors on social media.

JOINING THE CHAPTER:

Visiting: Prospective members may attend as a visitor for up to three (3) open meetings before being required to submit an application to join. Once the application is submitted they may not attend until their application has been approved.

Professionals: Prospective members may not sign up for an industry or profession that is already represented by a chapter member in good standing.

Prospective members who apply to join the chapter representing a specific industry or profession but who also practice other professions may not promote those secondary professions to the chapter, even if there is no other member in that industry or profession in the chapter. This leaves the door open for other new members to join. If a member wishes to switch their industry or profession from the one used when they applied, or purchase an additional membership to represent a secondary industry or profession, they must submit a written request to the membership committee.

Applying: While membership to NBC is held by the business, one individual should be designated as the sponsor of the seat in the room. This individual will be the name on the application and the one expected to be seen at most of the membership meetings.

Prospective members will be given a copy of the Policies and Procedures to review and an application to complete and submit.

Timeline and fees: The membership application is \$50. The membership application fee is non-refundable and is a one-time fee at the time of applying to the chapter.

Please allow up to ten (10) days for the application to be vetted and approved. Applying near holidays may delay this process. The membership committee will be in contact with the applicant and will provide a clear timeline of the process.

Once a new member is approved to join the chapter:

- They will be given a copy of the Member Pledge to sign
- They should submit their annual non-refundable dues of \$300 at the time of acceptance. They may elect to pay their non-refundable dues monthly at \$75/mo for the first four (4) months of their membership.
- They will be added to the member list that is distributed with the Agenda, using the profession and contact information that was shared on their application.
- Their headshot, names, company and social media handles will be shared across our social media channels.
- They are encouraged to connect with other chapter members through their social media channels.
- They should add all members to their phone contacts for ease of communication and referring.
- They should like, follow, and share the chapter's social media channels.
- They should use the appropriate channels to report all referrals and closed business from other chapter members.

Member in Good Standing:

- Adheres to our policies and procedures
- Attends meetings in accordance with our attendance policy
- Member is active and involved in after-hour events, community outreach events
- Member is kind, courteous, and gets along well with other members in the chapter. They do not engage in any disruptive behavior.
- Member regularly sets up connection meetings with all members of the chapter and not exclude any member for any reason.

Members not in good standing will have their membership reviewed by the membership committee and may have their membership revoked.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Northeast Business Connections is dedicated to providing its members a positive and supportive networking chapter. We desire to help all members increase their businesses

through professional referrals and allow members to create strong business relationships with each other.