



## **FAQs - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

### **Q: WHAT IS THE BNI EXPERIENCE?**

A: It is a unique concept, formed by dozens of special business services, which have been tried over twenty years, and which can be summarised as the **most successful experience in personalised networking and quality referrals by the "GIVERS GAIN" attitude: If I give you business you'll give me business and we'll both benefit as a result.**

### **Q: CAN ANYONE JOIN A CHAPTER?**

A: **Only one person from each professional speciality is permitted to join a chapter of BNI.** So if you are an **Accountant**, a **Gardener**, a **Lawyer** or a **Real Estate person** and we already have one, we can refer you to another chapter, or allow you to open another chapter.

**All participants should represent their primary occupation, not a part-time business.**

**BNI have found nearly 500 professions which can benefit from the BNI concept, although it is recommended chapters between 40 and 50 members. In some instances, we have reached up to 80 members in a chapter.**

### **Q: HOW DO YOU KNOW NEW MEMBERS ARE REPUTABLE?**

A: The application asks for references and we have a **Membership Committee** that checks them. It is word of mouth, so before they even come to a meeting they have to have spoken to someone or been invited by someone in the group. Everyone has to have a sponsor, or a Visitor Host is assigned to them, and they interview them.

**There is also a Code of Ethics to be followed.**

### **Q: WHAT IF A MEMBER GETS A REFERRAL AND DOES POOR WORK?**

A: We have a Membership Committee. Anyone who gives a lead and finds out it was not satisfactorily handled, must report it immediately is known to the Membership Committee, who will investigate and act accordingly to their findings.

### **Q: WHAT OCCUPATIONS BENEFIT THE MOST FROM NETWORKING?**

A: It is not the occupation, it is the INDIVIDUAL. The occupation can be anything. If you're FOCUSED; you have a GOAL and you're willing to WORK HARD towards it, you are the person we want in the group.

### **Q: ARE MEMBERS SUPPOSED TO BRING VISITORS?**

A: You are encouraged to bring visitors for those occupations that are open, once the visitor has been pre-screened to ensure s/he is a viable candidate. It is a closed meeting except for potential members.

**Visitors may attend up to two meetings, before they make up their mind to join. We only want members with good disposition and with positive attitude.**

### **Q: IF I SPECIALIZE IN A FIELD WITHIN MY PROFESSION, AM I EXPECTED TO BE AN EXPERT IN ALL ASPECTS OF MY PROFESSION?**

A: BNI understands that many professions are broad and that people often specialize within their profession. BNI does not expect, nor does it encourage, any professional to participate in an area in which the professional does not have expertise. On the contrary, BNI prohibits professionals from acting outside of the scope of their abilities, as it probably will give a bad image to the member involved, the chapter to which s/he belongs and the whole of BNI.

**Q: MY PROFESSION DOES NOT LET ME DIRECTLY SOLICIT BUSINESS. IS BNI STILL RIGHT FOR ME?**

A: BNI's primary objective is to assist its members in ways to improve their business and to educate them concerning how they can effectively network. Business people get business when their expertise is known and others reach a comfort level with them. BNI provides a forum that allows members to meet other business peers who need to know effective and efficient business people.

**Q: WHY DO I HAVE TO ATTEND WEEKLY, EXCEPT FOR HOLIDAYS, AUGUST AND DECEMBER, UNLESS I SEND A SUBSTITUTE?**

A: It has been tried by BNI doing fortnightly meetings. The result is a loss of 70% of the referrals achieved on a weekly base. Also, if a member could not attend a meeting, it would mean meeting the rest of the members once a month. The practise has demonstrated it would almost be losing all the benefits members get from the BNI **Givers Gain** concept. Consequently, ATTENDANCE IS CRITICAL.

**When you send a substitute, it is not count as an absence.**

**Q: WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT THE PARTICIPATION OF MEMBERS IN THE MEETINGS?**

A: Participation in the chapter by members is the KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE GROUP. Members participate by being members of the Leadership Team; Educational Co-ordinator; Membership Committee or Visitors Hosts. Members also participate marketing their profession; bringing bona-fide REFERRALS and VISITORS to their BNI chapter. The GROWTH and SUCCESS of the chapter is got primarily by MEMBERS PARTICIPATION.

**Q: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS, IN REAL MONEY TERMS, FOR THE ANNUAL FEE PAID?**

A: The annual fee paid is 487,50 euros inclusive of V.A.T. The first year, there is a subscription fee of 92,50 euros, inclusive of V.A.T. The benefits receive can be calculated at between 10.000 and 50.000 euros, comparing to similar franchising organisations, as per franchising studies available by clicking here.

**A list of the 82 Main Benefits and Services provided to Members may be obtained by [clicking here](#).**

**Q: DO I PAY A PERCENTAGE OF THE BUSINESS RECEIVE OR FOR THE MARKETING OF BNI?**

A: In BNI, opposite to what happens with practically any other franchising organisation, there is no percentage charged for the business received. We do Word of Mouth Marketing, which is the cheapest and the most successful marketing.

The only other expense members face, is the real cost of the breakfast – meeting, or the meeting room cost for seminars, shared by all the members: 400 euros per year. There are no charges for all the Seminars nor for the Manuals given.

Members, who are serving the other members as President, Vice President or Secretary / Treasurer, normally during six months periods, are credited for such periods with an extension equal to the months they have been in those positions.

**Q: HOW AM I GOING TO BE SUCCESSFUL IF I HAVE NOT HAD ANY TRAINING OR EXPERIENCE IN PERSONALISED NETWORKING?**

A: Every member is given training and gets practical expertise on many items, such as Networking skills; Presentations skills, Referral skills and others. This is part of the benefits of belonging to a BNI chapter.