

Strategically Expand Your Influence

...Use Handwritten Notes to Build Connections

by Vanessa Lowry

Expanding your influence is important to quickly attain success through leverage. This is true whether you own your own business, are an executive with a corporation or have the responsibility of bringing in sales. Read on for key strategies to expand influence by building relationships using handwritten notes.

Expand your influence through regular contact. An entire chapter of *"The Woman's Advantage"* is devoted to Expanding Your Area of Influence. Author, Mary Cantando, suggests a key strategy of identifying a **"Top Ten List"** with whom you make a positive personal contact every month — sending them a referral or a note card with an article of interest. This regular contact must be of value to them and very personal.

The second strategy that Mary describes is to identify a **"Top 100 List"**. Create a plan to connect with each of these individuals once a month for a year. The connections for the top 100 don't have to be as personal as your top ten, but should be more personal than your monthly e-newsletter. This is what she says about the Top 100 List... *"While these connections don't have to be so customized and time-consuming as those for your Top Ten List, be sure they are meaningful. You may see 6 of these individuals at a National Association of Women Business Owners meeting; then cross those 6 off that month's list. Maybe you sent Valentine's Day cards to 20 of them and copies of a relevant article to another 20, and so forth."* She goes on to say that the interaction needs to be about them, not about you!

Expand your influence by extending just a little extra effort. Sally Hogshead, author of *"Radical Careering,"* has this to say about using handwritten notes to separate yourself from others. *"Half of all professionals are below average. It's a bell curve. Becoming even a measly 10% better can take you from a B+ to an A+. Achievers are separated from the masses by the merest fractions. ... Here's a happy thought: Even the simplest details (showing up on time, writing thank-you notes, following up on calls) put you ahead of the pack."* And, in case you are wondering why giving an extra 10% is important, this is Sally's definition of Careering: *"Careering is the profound, and glorious, and terrifying, and absurdly difficult, but infinitely rewarding process of transforming your current self into your ultimate self. Careerists become the most valuable people in any company for a very simple reason: They live according to what's possible, instead of being confined by what is."*

Expand your influence using handwritten notes. Handwritten notes can be a unique tactic in building influence in a highly personal way. Profits in Progress helps individuals integrate this valuable tool into their business strategies with our Note-Working Success System™ — designed to make it easy to write 3 notes a day in less than 10 minutes. Here is how executive coach, Kimberly Jackson of The KARE Group utilizes our system and how her client is using handwritten notes to strategically increase her influence.

"Since I started using the Note-working Success System™, I've been more active in solidifying what business professionals stay in my network and what role they play in my work-life. First I categorize the business cards gathered from those I meet into four separate piles:



1. Network resource person
2. Business prospect
3. Strategic business partner
4. Strategic referral partner

The process above allows me to direct my energies where needed. I also use the note card system for staying in touch with existing clients as well as in-active clients."

"As an executive coach, I always bring resources to my clients. When I brought the Note-working Success System™ to an

executive vice president client of mine, she agreed to begin using handwritten notes in a few different ways — a totally different approach than mine — by writing personal note cards:

- of encouragement ("way to go" or "thinking of you") to individuals in her department
- to colleagues and their direct reporters
- delivered in-person while "making the rounds" in the company's departments and including company perks (such as an extra hour for lunch, or a bump up to business class airfare, better parking space for a month, etc.)

By doing this, Kimberly's VP client noticed two changes: improved company morale and improved communications."

"Writing a note is so simple, but people don't do it. But Profits in Progress gives us a process — making it easy to do. Overall, it's been very helpful for me to have an organized note card system on which I can rely. So I love it."

Expand your influence by increasing your people power.

Donna Fisher writes about *"The Power of Praise"* and comments, **"Make sure you are giving and receiving positive feedback in your life on a daily basis. Sprinkle the word 'thanks' throughout your day.** Tell people specifically how they influence your life in a positive way. **Handwritten notes convey the personal touch we often yearn for in our society** — you'll brighten someone's day and maintain your own attitude of gratitude. My favorite story about sending notes is from someone who attended a musical performance and sent the performer a one-word note: 'Stunning!' That person's experience and appreciation was so eloquently and beautifully conveyed with that one word!" The bottom line is to act on the thoughts of praise as you have them.

Expand your influence with a strategic plan utilizing specific and personal actions. Use handwritten notes to build your "people power" through praise. Leverage your success through your Top 10 and Top 100 key contacts every month over the next year. **Expand your influence by helping others learn from your example! Share stories of your success** with me at results@profitsinprogress.com. **Start Note-Working today!**

Find out more about the books and companies referenced in this article...

Mary Cantando, author of *"The Woman's Advantage"*,
www.WomansAdvantage.biz

Sally Hogshead, author of *"Radical Careering"*, www.radicalcareering.com

Kimberly Jackson, PhD, Founder/CEO/Executive Coach, The KARE Group,
www.theKAREgroup.com

Donna Fisher, author of five books, including *"People Power: 12 Power Principles to Enrich Your Business, Career & Personal Networks"*;
www.donnafisher.com/increaseyourpower.html

Start your habit now of handwriting personal notes — expand your influence and build connections.

Write 3 notes a day in less than 10 minutes with the Note-Working Success System™, find out more at www.ProfitsinProgress.com • 678-521-8820