Building Your Sphere of Influence

Build a business people feel comfortable recommending. Your sphere of influence is the network of people who know you, recognize your work, and may turn to you for real estate guidance or introduce you to someone who needs it.

This guide shows you how to organize that network, reconnect naturally, stay useful over time, and earn referrals through dependable service. You can work through it independently, whether you are starting your career or rebuilding your follow-up habits.

How to use this guide

Read the five sections in order. Complete each practice activity in a notebook or your customer relationship management system, usually called a CRM. Use the examples as starting points and adapt them to your voice and the actual relationship. Finish by scheduling the first month of your plan.

What you will create

- A master contact list that reflects real relationships.
- A complete contact record and a clear next step for each priority relationship.
- Personal outreach messages and a manageable communication routine.
- A process for introductions, client care, and follow-up after closing.
- A 30-day plan and a simple way to review your progress.

Your route through the guide

1 Understand your sphere of influence

2 Build your master contact database

3 Make your first outreach

4 Maintain relationships over time

5 Earn referrals and repeat business

Your first 30 days

Worksheets and progress review

Begin with your own definition of success

What would you like a stronger sphere of influence to make possible in your business? Write one concrete outcome, then identify a habit you can control. For example: “I want to stay connected with past clients, so I will reserve time every Friday for personal follow-up.”

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Building Your Sphere of Influence

1 Understand your sphere of influence

Your sphere of influence, or SOI, begins with relationships you already have. Family, friends, neighbors, former coworkers, classmates, past clients, professional contacts, and people you meet through community activities may all belong in it. A large following is useful only to the extent that it supports actual connections.

Recognize direct and indirect relationships

A direct relationship is someone who knows you personally. An indirect relationship is a connection through another person, such as a past client's coworker. That connection may become a relationship through an introduction. It does not mean you already have the person's trust or permission to contact them.

For example, a former colleague may know your reliability from years of working together. If they introduce you to a friend who needs help selling a home, their confidence can open the conversation. You must still earn the prospective client's confidence through your own conduct.

Make yourself easy to remember and recommend

People are more likely to consider you when they understand what you do, remember you, and trust your judgment. Repeated, useful contact can build familiarity. Visibility alone does not establish competence or trust; your advice, responsiveness, and follow-through give people a reason to recommend you.

Ask yourself: If this person had a real estate question today, would they think of me? If the answer is no or uncertain, identify a useful way to reconnect. A conversation may be more valuable than another promotional message.

Focus on relationships you can maintain

The company program suggests building an initial list of 150 contacts and growing toward 300 or more meaningful relationships. Use those numbers as planning goals, not a measure of your worth or a guarantee of business. Start with the people you actually know and build a routine you can sustain.

Use the support available to you

List n Show's Team Brokerage Platform supports agents through transaction coordination, technology, training, and broker support. Learn how to use those resources so you can devote time to clients and relationships. Support systems help you organize work; your own communication and follow-through shape the client's experience.

Put it into practice

List ten people who know you beyond your job title. Next to each name, write how you know them and whether they know you work in real estate. Circle three people you would like to reconnect with. Choose a genuine reason for each conversation.

Check your understanding

Does a social media follower automatically belong in your core SOI?

Suggested answer: No. Consider whether you have an actual relationship and whether the person knows who you are. Use social media to develop connections rather than treating every follower as a ready prospect.

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2 Build your master contact database

A master database helps you remember people, keep commitments, and decide whom to contact next. Begin with a spreadsheet or your approved CRM. A simple record that you maintain is more useful than a complicated system you avoid.

Build the list in several passes

- Personal connections: family, friends, current and former neighbors, and people you know through hobbies or school activities.
- Work and school connections: former colleagues, managers, classmates, alumni, and professional association contacts.
- Community connections: people you know through volunteering, civic groups, faith communities, clubs, and local businesses.
- Professional connections: contractors, lenders, accountants, attorneys, insurance professionals, movers, and other service providers you know.
- Past clients and digital connections: people you have served and people with whom you have meaningful online interactions.

Review your own address book, calendar, and past conversations to jog your memory. Add people because there is a genuine connection. Do not turn a group membership list or a list of followers into a bulk outreach list.

Record information you will use

Start with a name, how you know the person, available contact information, preferred way to communicate, last meaningful conversation, and next action with a date. Add a mailing address only when useful and appropriate. Record communication preferences and requests to stop receiving messages.

Useful relationship notes might include a shared interest, a home project the person mentioned, or a promised introduction. Keep notes relevant and respectful. Avoid collecting private details simply because your system has a field for them.

Use categories that support the next action

Tag contacts as SOI, prospect, active client, past client, or referral partner. A person can have more than one tag. Reserve "prospect" for someone who has expressed a possible real estate need, rather than assuming everyone you know is preparing to transact.

Example: Dana is a former coworker who asked about selling next spring. Tag Dana as SOI and prospect. Record the question, send the information you promised, and agree on when to reconnect. The next action should reflect Dana's interest, not an arbitrary sales sequence.

Put it into practice

Create your first list in one focused sitting. Aim for 25 names to get started, then return to the other categories. Complete five records and give each a specific next action and date. These are starter activities, not company quotas.

Check your understanding

What makes "Follow up with Dana on Tuesday about the pricing information requested" more useful than "Stay in touch"?

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Suggested answer: It names the person, the reason, and the date, so you can act on the commitment.

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3 Make your first outreach

Your first task is to reopen a conversation. Choose someone you know, recall a genuine connection, and reach out in a way that fits the relationship. A long silence does not require a long explanation. It does require honesty about why you are contacting the person.

Start with a real reason to connect

A former coworker may welcome a question about a project or career change. A past client may appreciate a check-in about the home. A friend may simply enjoy catching up. Be specific, and avoid using a personal question as a pretext for an immediate sales request.

Example for an old colleague: "Hi Sarah, I was thinking about the projects we worked on together and realized it has been a while. How have you been? I'm now working in real estate locally, and I'd enjoy catching up when you have time."

Example for a past client: "Hi Alex, how is the house treating you? Last time we spoke, you were planning the kitchen project. I'd love to hear how it turned out." Use this only if the detail is true.

Listen before offering help

Ask a question and give the person room to answer. Follow their lead about family, work, hobbies, or homeownership. You do not need to cover every subject or turn each conversation toward real estate. If a need emerges, ask whether help would be welcome.

For example: "You mentioned you are considering a move next year. Would it help if I put together some information about recent sales in your area?" A comparative market analysis, or CMA, compares relevant properties to help discuss a home's potential market position. Explain its purpose and limitations when you provide one.

Offer something useful and specific

Useful help might be a clear market explanation, a contractor contact, a lender introduction, home maintenance information, or community news. Match the offer to the person's actual question. If you do not know an answer, say so and follow up with the right resource.

Close the conversation with a clear next step

If you promise information, agree on how and when to send it. If the person wants another conversation, set a suitable time. If no business need comes up, a pleasant reconnection is still a worthwhile result. Record the relevant details and any commitment afterward.

If someone does not respond, avoid interpreting silence as interest. Consider one brief follow-up if appropriate to the relationship, then leave room for them to respond. Respect stated communication preferences.

Put it into practice

Write a two- or three-sentence message for each of the three people you selected in Section 1. Include a genuine connection and a natural question. Send the messages individually through an appropriate channel and record any promised next steps.

Check your understanding

A friend says they are happy in their home. What should you do?

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Suggested answer: Continue the relationship without trying to manufacture a transaction. Offer help when it is relevant and welcome.

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4 Maintain relationships over time

Most people will not need an agent immediately. A consistent routine helps you remain available when questions arise. Choose a rhythm you can maintain and that each person is comfortable receiving. Personal conversations and useful follow-through deserve a place alongside newsletters and social posts.

Build a flexible annual rhythm

- Monthly: offer useful market information, homeownership tips, or community news to people who want those communications.
- Quarterly: consider a personal call, text, coffee meeting, or note, adjusted to the relationship and the person's preferences.
- Annually: acknowledge a home purchase anniversary, birthday, or other milestone when appropriate and welcome.
- As needed: respond to questions, keep promises, celebrate achievements, and help with relevant introductions.

The company describes a 36-touch philosophy as an optional framework. It is not a company requirement. Monthly information, quarterly conversations, and occasional milestones do not automatically total 36 contacts. Do not add messages just to reach a number; plan useful interactions and adjust based on response.

Make communication worth receiving

A market update should explain what the information means for the recipient. A maintenance tip should be timely and practical. A handwritten note should refer to a real interaction: "It was good catching up over coffee. Thank you for sharing how your new business is going." Keep the focus on the person.

On social media, share educational content, local businesses, community events, and professional insights. Engage thoughtfully with others. Obtain permission before sharing a client's story, image, or personal details. Posts can support a relationship, but they do not tell you whether someone needs personal assistance.

Create opportunities to meet in person

Choose community involvement that matters to you, such as volunteering or participating in a local organization. Client appreciation can be simple: a coffee gathering, educational workshop, food drive, or home maintenance event. Set a realistic budget, make participation optional, and follow through on what you offer.

Give past clients a continuing place in your plan

After closing, check on the transition, respond to unresolved questions, and agree on future contact. Later conversations might involve a home anniversary, a repair resource, or a market question. Keep the relationship relevant to the person's changing needs.

Put it into practice

Choose one useful topic for next month, five people for personal check-ins, and one community activity you would participate in even without a business result. Put the work on your calendar and review whether recipients find it useful.

Check your understanding

You reached your planned contact count, but few people respond. What should you review?

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Suggested answer: The relevance, frequency, channel, and quality of your communication. More messages are not automatically the solution.

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5 Earn referrals and repeat business

A referral puts another person's confidence in you on the line. Make the introduction easy to offer and worthwhile to make. Your service should give clients and contacts a clear reason to feel comfortable recommending you.

Build confidence throughout the client experience

At the beginning of a client relationship, ask about goals, concerns, timing, and communication preferences. Explain the next steps clearly. During the transaction, keep commitments, raise issues promptly, and help the client understand decisions. When a problem arises, explain what you know, what remains uncertain, and what you will do next.

Ask for feedback before closing as well as afterward. A question such as "Is there anything you need explained more clearly?" can reveal a concern while you still have time to address it. Support from transaction coordination and brokerage systems helps you manage the process, while you remain attentive to the client's experience.

Invite introductions without creating an obligation

When the conversation makes it appropriate, say: "If someone you care about has questions about buying or selling, I'd be happy to help. Please feel free to introduce us." You can make your availability clear without asking someone to produce a list of names.

Use language that is true for you. If you are new, do not claim that you have built your business through referrals. You can say: "I'm building my real estate practice and would welcome the chance to be a resource for people you know."

Handle the introduction carefully

- Thank the person who offered the introduction and ask whether the other person is expecting to hear from you.
- Suggest a shared introduction when appropriate so the prospective client can choose to engage.
- Respond promptly, explain who connected you, and ask what help would be useful.
- Record the source, the person's stated need, and the next step you agreed to take.
- Thank the referring contact without disclosing private details about the prospective client or transaction.

Example: "Hi Morgan, Jamie introduced us and mentioned you have questions about selling. I'd be glad to hear what you are considering. Is there a convenient time for a brief conversation?"

Earn the opportunity to serve someone again

A past client's needs can change over years. Keep your records current, maintain useful contact, and offer help without assuming that a previous transaction guarantees future business. Professional referral partners also deserve reliable communication and thoughtful service to anyone they introduce.

Put it into practice

Write your own introduction invitation and a short thank-you note. Then review one recent client experience. Identify one service habit you will improve before your next transaction.

Check your understanding

Does a referral entitle the referring person to updates about the client?

Suggested answer: No. Show appreciation while protecting the client's information. Discuss sharing only with appropriate permission.

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Your first 30 days

Use this starter plan to turn the guide into a routine. The activity counts below are suggested exercises, not company requirements or predictions of results. Adjust them to your schedule, experience, and relationships.

Week 1 Build the foundation

Create your master list, choose your system, and enter the people you can identify now. Work through personal, professional, community, digital, and past-client categories. Remove duplicate records and identify missing information. Choose ten people for an initial round of individual outreach.

By the end of the week: you have a usable list, ten priority contacts, and time reserved for outreach.

Week 2 Reconnect and listen

Send personal messages or make calls at a pace that lets you respond thoughtfully. Start with the ten people you chose. Record the conversation, communication preferences, and any next action. Deliver promised information before starting another round of outreach.

By the end of the week: your records show actual conversations and commitments, including people who do not currently need real estate help.

Week 3 Establish the ongoing rhythm

Schedule your personal check-ins and choose one useful piece of information to share with an appropriate audience. Identify upcoming home anniversaries or other welcome milestones. Select a community activity or a simple gathering that fits your interests and budget.

By the end of the week: the next month's relationship work has dates on your calendar.

Week 4 Review and improve

Look at what you completed and how people responded. Review any overdue promises first. Check whether the cadence and channel suit each relationship. Practice your introduction invitation and make sure you know how to handle a referral from first contact through follow-up.

By the end of the week: you have a revised plan for the next 30 days and a recurring weekly review.

Protect the time for follow-through

For example, reserve two short outreach blocks and one review block each week. Size the blocks to your workload. Use the review to complete overdue actions, update records, and choose the next people to contact. Your plan should make it easier to keep promises.

Use brokerage support deliberately

Confirm how your brokerage wants you to use the CRM, transaction coordination, and marketing systems. Use approved communication practices and ask your broker about questions involving outreach, contact data, or referral arrangements. Never assume a personal relationship makes every form of marketing appropriate.

Relationships can support a lasting career, but no contact count or schedule guarantees transactions. Evaluate your habits by the usefulness of your communication, the quality of your service, and the commitments you keep.

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Worksheets and progress review

Copy these prompts into your CRM or notebook. Use them during your weekly review so the guide remains part of your work after the first month.

Contact record

Name and how we know each other: _____

Contact details and preferred channel: _____

Tags and any real estate interest the person has expressed: _____

Last meaningful conversation and relevant notes: _____

Communication preferences and permissions: _____

What I promised and when it is due: _____

Next action and date: _____

Outreach preparation

Who am I contacting, and why now? What genuine detail connects us? What question would I naturally ask? If real estate comes up, what specific help can I provide? What should I avoid assuming?

Weekly review

Promises completed and commitments still due: _____

Meaningful conversations and what I learned: _____

Contact records updated: _____

Introductions received and next steps agreed: _____

Useful information or resources shared: _____

People to contact next week and why: _____

Monthly business review

Track introductions, consultations, signed client relationships, and completed transactions over time. Record the source when known. Compare these outcomes with your conversations and service habits without treating every interaction as a sales test. Allow for the time between a conversation and a possible future need.

Final self check

- I can explain who belongs in my SOI and why relationship quality matters.
- My priority contacts have accurate records and useful next actions.
- I can reconnect, listen, and offer help in my own voice.
- My calendar includes a realistic routine for staying connected.
- I can invite and handle an introduction with professionalism and discretion.

Choose one action from this page and complete it today. A useful system begins with a commitment you keep, then grows through consistent care for the people you know.

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