

## Ways to Better Connect Your Business to Your Community

As referenced in the best-selling books Fundamentals and Multi-Unit Leadership available on Amazon.

### STEP 1

#### Identify and Connect with Your Community Groups

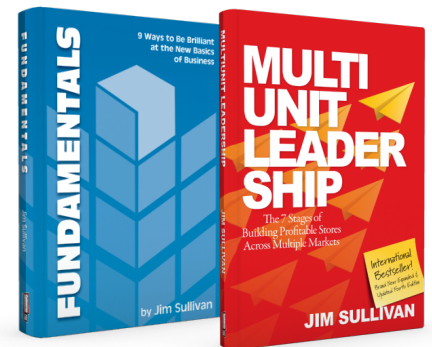
- Demographics
- Local government
- Local Businesses
- Influentials (1 out of 9 customers influence the other eight)
- Schools
- Civic, fraternal, business and religious organizations
- Chamber of Commerce

### STEP 2

#### Know the Smaller Community

Target Your Trade Area (see with fresh eyes daily)

With a fellow manager, take a drive around the 1–5 mile radius of your business and note all the potential business generators/pockets of population that you, including:



Business Generator	Who to Contact
Schools	
Houses of Worship	
Apartment Complexes	
Shopping Centers	
Office Complexes	
Residential Areas	
Community Organizations	
Construction Sites	

Business Generator	Who to Contact
Factories and Plants	
Hospitals	
Military Bases	
Daycare Centers	
Senior Centers	
Competition	
Radio Stations	
Auto Repair Shops	

## STEP 3

### Know the Bigger Community

**Demographics:** *Can you answer these questions about your community?*

- Population (growing or declining?)
- Median Age/Family-to-singles ratio
- Average household income
- Major ethnic groups in area (growing or declining?) Are there any special occasions/milestones/holidays that these groups may celebrate? List the name and dates.
- Connect with community “influentials.” (Politicians, radio, web, TV notables)

**Government:**

- Mayor or City Manager’s name
- Names of your city/town/village council members
- Chief of Police
- Fire Department Chief
- Parks/Recreation chief: who’s having reunions, parties, gatherings?
- Names/Dates of major festivals, street fairs, fundraisers, etc.
- Who coordinates special events (parades, festivals, fairs, special events) for the city?

**Local Businesses/Business People:** Before you can drive more business you must first learn to spot opportunity within the pockets of population that surround your business and identify the decision-makers/influencers within those population centers/organizations. Consider what kind of unique offer you might make to help attract their colleagues, friends, members and friends into your business.

- Name the local leaders and executive committees for five charitable organizations and/or nonprofit groups in your trade area
- List the names of five local religious leaders and their congregation names
- Names of local sport complexes or health clubs in the area and their manager's name (i.e., YMCA)
- Name of area funeral homes and their owners (a lot of hungry friends and families might use a restaurant's delivery or takeout services)
- Names of five best-selling realtors in your trading area
- List three hotels in your area and the name of their managers
- List five businesses with 50 employees or more that operate within 3 miles of your store
- List five businesses with 50 employees or less that operate within 3 miles of your store
- Within 5 miles, list the malls/shopping centers/major office complexes/ hospitals/ major libraries/movie theaters /local performing arts centers/senior centers/ daycare centers/construction projects
- Name five major tour group or charter travel companies/ travel agents/florists/hair salons/ meeting-wedding-event planners in your area
- Do you have a local small business owners group in the area? If yes, have you spoken to them about having the meetings at your restaurant? Do you attend the meetings? Population (growing or declining?)

### **Seasonality:**

- Is your operation affected by changes in seasons? How much?
- When is your "Busy Season"? Why?
- When is your "Slow Season"? Why?
- How can we merchandise and sell more gift cards year-round?
- Detail your sales history: estimate your average monthly sales (or customer counts) for every month and devise ways to raise sales by 5% each month

## **Organizations:**

- Do you have a great working relationship with your Convention Bureau? Hotels?
- Contact small regional associations and special interest groups.
- Establish strong working relationship with local tourist attractions.
- Promote special programs – Frequent Business Traveler, Airline Corporate, Supersaver
- Weekend, Business Traveler Department, Honeymoon Package, etc.
- Identify tour operators using regional attractions or points of interest for both overnight and lunch stops within your area.
- Establish a brochure for the incentive and high level corporate markets.
- What are the 5 key charities within your community? Who are the contact people?
- Who are the executives and key committee members of the local:
  - Tourist and convention bureau
  - Chamber of Commerce/Junior League/ Women’s Club/ Knights of Columbus/ American Legion/ VFW/ Elks/ Kiwanis/ Red Hat Society/
  - Optimists
  - Political parties
  - Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts
  - Better Business Bureau
  - Local pro/semi-pro sports teams
- List any other groups, people, or businesses you think could positively impact your business by developing a relationship with them

## **Schools:**

- List three local high school, middle school, elementary and college coaches or athletic department heads Where do their teams or bands eat (or stay) enroute to away games or events?
- Name the Principals from your local High School, Middle School, and Elementary Schools. How about their PTA committees?
- What organizations within those schools have fundraising drives that could leverage your business’s products or services?
- List major colleges and/or technical schools in the area
- Names of the “R.A.’s” (Residence Advisors) who are in charge of the dormitories
- List major clubs or organizations with which students are involved in these colleges, and the president/organizer’s name

## ***And Just as a Reminder....***

- Keep current Customers happy (this promotes word-of-mouth business)
- Consistently great service generates positive word-of-mouth and repeat business
- Make weekly visits to all businesses w/in a 1-5 mile radius. Tie your store Manager's bonus to making these community contacts and driving business w/them
- Realtors know who's moving to your area before anyone else. Connect.
- "Try-vertising" (samples)
- Identify community "influentials" (see above)
- Leverage Social Media to connect with your community and customers [?] Chamber of Commerce Events
- Business Events (Job fairs, sales kickoffs, fundraisers, charities, customer visits, rec. leagues, picnics, late night planning)
- Watch church bulletins/websites/newspapers for Anniversaries/Baptisms/ Showers
- Homecoming Dinners/Graduation parties
- Sell Gift Cards year round
- Local Business Sales Meetings
- Bus Tours/ Pharmacy Reps
- "Invisible" Customers (FedEx, postal employees, delivery people, UPS, etc) can they be loyal customers too?
- Restaurants:
  - ✓ Construction sites (catering)
  - ✓ Automotive repair shops
  - ✓ Weddings/Bridal Consultants (1% of Americans marry annually)
  - ✓ Brave Patient Rewards (Kids)
  - ✓ Edible Book Marks (kids reading)
  - ✓ Free Meal (Kid's birthdays)



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