

# SuccessNet™

NEWSLETTER FOR THE BUSINESS NETWORK INTL® January/February 1995

## Chapter Cycles

by Penny Palmer, Director, and Ivan R. Misner, Ph.D., Founder

We're once again beginning a new year and some chapters are evaluating where they are in comparison to last year and in the light of their chapter goals.

The following article originally appeared several years ago in a previous issue of *SuccessNet* and has since become our most requested reprint article. We are putting it in the first issue this year to assist you in setting your goals for a successful and profitable New Year!

Have you often wondered why some chapters are dynamic, goal-oriented, and thriving, while others are sometimes uninspired and a few are even struggling?

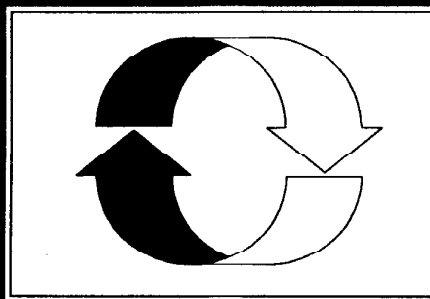
In looking at the progress of chapters over the years, it has become clear that they all go through certain cycles or phases.

We've identified three such phases. By understanding these, we believe that you can get more out of your participation in the Business Network. These phases are not necessarily chronological and can last varying amounts of time, depending on the chapter.

The first phase is what we call the **Resourceful Phase**: This is where a chapter exudes high energy and a positive

attitude. Chapters in this phase tend to try most or all the ideas offered by their Director and the Business Network. They effectively utilize many worksheets in the Chapter Tool-Kit and the Meeting Stimulants developed by the Business Network.

In addition, they tend to operate in a very friendly environment while adhering to the policies and generating many leads. Chapters in this phase are the best chapters of the Business Network. They are there to do business, but they understand the importance of adhering to a structure. Most importantly, they don't let either get in the way of having fun and developing close relationships.



The second phase is what we call the **Status Quo Phase**: This is a chapter that has become somewhat complacent. They may have been a good chapter that lost some of the spark that made them successful. Or, they may be a smaller chapter that has begun to give up on growth.

A chapter going through this cycle tends to believe that things are "OK as is" and doesn't have any pressing desire to work on enhancing their meetings or developing the quality or quantity of members.

They may take some suggestions offered by a Director but dismiss others because they think they don't apply to them. They tend to follow most (not all) of the policies and the basic structure of the meetings but have lost the enthusiasm and spirit that makes for a great group.

The third phase is what we call the **Stagnant Phase**. Chapters in this phase tend to have numerous problems. Attitudes, leads, and attendance are all poor. Unfortunately, most of the membership is focused on the problems and not positive solutions.

These chapters don't follow the agenda, structure and/or policies. In addition, Continued on Page 4

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they tend to view their local Director as an outsider rather than a resource to help them make the program work. They tend to make many exceptions for the actions of their members and generally seek the path of least resistance relating to the way they apply policies and procedures.

Almost all chapters go through the three phases or cycles listed above; however, the really successful chapters tend to spend more time in the Resourceful Phase than either of the other two phases.

Consider where your chapter is in these cycles. A good tool to use is the "Rate Your Chapter" worksheet available from your Director or the Business Network Main Office. If you determine that you are in the Status Quo or Stagnant Phase, contact your Director to get some suggestions on how you can move to the Resourceful Phase.

The Business Network now has over 330 chapters in 28 states, Puerto Rico and Canada. With that many groups, we have landed on the right combination of structure and policy to make these chapters work. Don't reinvent the wheel! The program works very well for the chapters that effectively use the tools and assistance that is provided.

Will Rogers once said, "You might be on the right track, but if you're just sitting there, you'll get run over!" We know you're on the right track by trying to build your business through a structured word of mouth program. It is important to understand that if you want your chapter to be truly successful, it should not seek the path of least resistance, but *seek the path of commitment and resourcefulness.*