



I FEEL THE NEED FOR LEADS



The Secrets of
TOP GUN
NETWORKING

by MICHAEL McDONOUGH

DE-CLASSIFIED
TOP SECRET

FOR EYES ONLY
DECLASSIFIED



MISSION AGENDA

De-Classified:

Foreword

How I Became a Top Gun Networker

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Foreword

Michael McDonough makes networking fun! I have had the privilege to know Michael for years and have seen him in both personal and professional networking environments. He's a true gentleman and people are naturally drawn to him. His innate character and charm, coupled with his tried and true techniques that he has personally mastered over his successful career, are beautifully laid out in his new eBook, '*I Feel The Need for Leads: The Secrets of Top Gun Networking*'.

Michael has shown his Master Networking skills by taking traditional networking techniques and breaking them down into manageable parts. He shows you step-by-step how to master a room and make connections that count.

Michael lives and breathes what he teaches and you can see from the professional connections that have supported him for years that he has the right stuff to be a Top Gun Networking Master!

Kimberly Reyes
Master Networker
Kimberly R. Lifestyles By Design



How I Became a Top Gun Networker

Those who know me now would probably be surprised to hear that it was only a few years ago that I was quite introverted in rooms of unfamiliar people. I remember going to a business banquet with my wife just after she joined a new company where even she didn't know many people in attendance. It was not a comfortable situation for me and she couldn't put me at ease because she has always felt more awkward in that environment than me. Fortunately, we made it through the night but I draw on that experience often when relating networking tips to others because I really do know from experience how difficult networking can be for many entrepreneurs.



I wouldn't have considered myself a shy person, after all, I had been a fairly successful financial consultant for over fifteen years at the time which required a certain degree of skill and grace working one-on-one with people, but groups of strangers was a completely different experience. Networking was not a skill I had developed and it wasn't even on my radar as a way to get business leads. WOW! If I had known then what I know now.

For ten years prior to that company banquet I considered myself a Top Gun prospector but had used a very different skill...COLD CALLING!@#\$\$%...Fortunately, I have made strides in my ability to prospect since that time.



The purpose of this eBook is to illustrate how Networking became my prospecting method of choice and reveal the secrets I've discovered along the way so you can become a Top Gun Networker like me.

FighterTown U.S.A.

My career as a Financial Consultant began as a stock broker in San Diego literally in the shadow of FighterTown U.S.A., otherwise known as Miramar Naval Air Base, the home of Top Gun pilot training and, coincidentally, it was the same year the movie Top Gun was released. In my first interview with the brokerage firm I asked the manager how we would find clients. "Good question" he said. "We have a proven method and I will teach you." He said he had made \$100,000 dollars in his first year and, with their proven method, I could make that same kind of money. As I left the interview, a formation of F-14 fighter jets flew right over me and I knew that this was going to be the career I had been waiting for...the experience of a lifetime... the right time and the right place to excel.



Cold Calling!@#\$\$%

I remember well my first day on the job as a stockbroker. I arrived with my chest out and chin up, proud as any Top Gun could be. The manager showed me my desk, he handed me a phone book and a script and said "All you have to do is make 300 calls and read this script to them." It turned out that the proven method of prospecting was COLD CALLING!@#\$\$%. He said that though this was a commission only job, it had been calculated that every dial was worth \$2.00. So, of course, I swallowed hard and went to



work. Though I had never cold called in my life, I mirrored the guy next to me who sounded like a pro and proceeded to make calls. I wasn't very good at first but improved with every contact.

I was told that in order to be successful I had to make 300 dials per day, talk to 50 people, and get 10 leads...people who sincerely wanted to hear back from me on a phenomenal stock idea. At the end of the week, I should have obtained 50 leads which would garner me 15 appointments, that I would expect to have a 30% cancellation rate, leading to 10 actual meetings where 2 would buy, no matter who showed up, two would not buy, no matter who showed up, leaving six people I could influence into making an investment with me.



(Note: Somewhere along the way, someone had figured out the activity required to become a successful stock broker. I call these the metrics of success. Every business has metrics that determine its success and it applies not only to cold calling, but also to many other marketing and prospecting methods including Networking. We'll come

back to it later but just know that you have to determine your prospecting metrics in order to produce consistent results.)

Around 5:00 pm of my first day, I began to get a little hungry so I figured it was time to go home. I had put in a full day's work and believe me it was gruesome making all of those calls. Not to mention I had come up short of the 300 dials. But I made my way to the Manager's office and said Good Night. He said "Where do you think you are going? Did you make 300 calls?" I said "No but it's late, I'm hungry and I'll do better tomorrow." He said "No, we don't leave until the calls are made...Go back to your desk!"



I must a have looked a little upset so he said “OK, I’ll give you a break on your first day, but tomorrow be prepared to stay until you make all of the calls plus the ones you didn’t make today.” So I headed for the car, kicking every rock as far as it would go and cursing under my breath how I was never coming back, that the manger was an Ass and his proven prospecting method was B___S___. Just about then a formation of Top Gun fighter jets flew over and I remembered why I was there and I thought “this is not going to beat me...that manager was not going to get off that easy...and that I’ll be back tomorrow to kick some cold calling ass!”

For the next several months they called me “ratchet arm” because of the arm movement made by making so many calls. I made my 300 calls per day, got my 50 leads per week, set more appointments than was required and began to make some pretty good money. I soon learned, though, that the goal was to work your way out of cold calling by asking for referrals from everyone who sat down with me on an appointment.



The numbers were the same. See 2 people a day, get an average of 5 referrals from each (by asking for 10), get 50 leads per week and so forth. That formula still works today but cold calling has changed since then. No one likes to make them and no one likes to get them. We have caller ID, Voicemail and other obstacles that make it hard to make the contacts needed to get the leads required to make a sale.



The Brave New World of Networking

Everybody knows that referrals make the best prospects but those are also hard to come by. Asking for a referral is often as hard as cold calling and clients have often shared everyone they know if they are comfortable sharing at all. Enter the brave new world of Networking!

The agony of cold calling and the reluctance of asking for referrals has made Networking one of the most popular methods of prospecting for clients and spheres of influence. You'll be happy to know, however, that no one is born a Top Gun Networker. The art of Networking can be learned in a very short period of time, and I am living proof, as evidenced by my own flight to Top Gun Networker status.

Fast forward about 20 years. I had worked my way up in the Financial Services industry to Chief Operating Officer of a successful Investment Bank in San Francisco. Then the Great Recession hit and the bank was sold leaving me unemployed. I took a year off and wrote a couple of books thinking that another Executive management job would surely come my way but, alas, investment firms were dropping like flies, there were very few opportunities and a lot of guys like me available so I decided to go back into sales.

After choosing the firm that was right for me, I felt like I was back in San Diego starting all over again but I didn't have the Top Gun pilots for inspiration. I knew I didn't have 300 dials per day in me anymore, I didn't have a clientele to ask for referrals but I had to build a business.





I never thought I'd be in this position again but I had determination and a lot of experience under my belt after 20 years in the industry.

The Marketing Director at my new firm helped me put together a marketing plan that included making a list of all of my previous contacts, including previous employees, co-workers, business owners etc. Though there were a couple hundred on the list I went through that very quickly. Remember, I had experience making 300 dials per day. It only took a few days to make a couple hundred calls.

Join the Chamber of Commerce



Part of the plan was to join a Chamber of Commerce. She said I could join the San Francisco Chamber, where the company would pay half of the membership fee, or I could join the Chamber in the town where I lived but on my own dime. I decided I would rather be a large fish in a small pond and began to research the Alameda Chamber of Commerce. It may have been no coincidence that Alameda's history also included being the home of one of our country's most notable Naval Air Bases, Alameda Naval Air Station. After paying my \$10 non-member admission fee, I attended my first Chamber mixer with high expectations and a pocket full of business cards. Upon entering the room I felt like I was back at my wife's company banquet. It seemed everybody knew everybody but me. They were all standing in groups having what seemed like meaningful conversations about people and things I knew nothing about.



Once again, I felt like a fish out of water. But I still had my determination, after all, I had paid \$10 bucks and I was not going to be denied. It was truly a painful moment but I fought through my fear and devised a strategy, right there on the spot, and began to find groups of three where one person was less engaged, walked right up to that third wheel and said” Hi, my name is Michael McDonough and my job here tonight is to swap business cards with everyone at the mixer.”

Much to my surprise, no one was mean to me, I didn’t get punched in the nose and, in fact, every single person I spoke with was happy to swap cards. I realized that most of them probably felt the way I did. That’s why they were grouped with people they already knew. They were standing in their comfort zone and appreciated the fact that I made the first advance.

The next day I received a call from the Membership Director asking me to join. In my research I discovered that there was a Business Education Committee. I offered to join if I could serve on that committee. As it happened, I was offered the position of Chairman of the committee. So, of course, I took the leap. I was asked to attend the Ambassador Committee meeting the next morning where I would be introduced and I naively agreed.

At that meeting I was introduced, unbeknownst to me, as the Chamber’s newest Ambassador. I became quite active as an Ambassador and in January was voted to be Chairman of that



Committee, as well. I was well on my way to becoming a Top Gun Networker. The next year I was asked to be on the Board of Directors, then the Treasurer and within three years from joining the Chamber I was sworn in as President of the Alameda Chamber of



Commerce. The key was becoming an active contributor. By going the extra mile and making yourself invaluable by putting in the effort when others are not willing, you will always become an organization's Top Gun.

Fortunately, I do have the inspiration of several symbolic fighter jets poised around



town as monuments of Alameda's rich history as the home base for many Top Gun pilots and now the home of this Top Gun Networker. Please note that I don't mean to compare Networking to the importance of our men and women in uniform. It's just a great metaphor for being the best of the best in any field.

Uncover Additional Networking Opportunities

After being a part of the Chamber for a few weeks, I realized that I couldn't rely on the Chamber alone to provide enough networking opportunities to replace the massive number of cold calls I knew were necessary to build a business. So I began to attend other networking groups and events that were attended by professionals belonging to my targeted markets.

I joined the local Le Tip group. Many people I know belong to BNI or a local version of a similar leads group. I currently belong to one of several local leads groups in Alameda.

Once you have identified your target market, a more advanced strategy is to join an industry specific professional associations like the local Realtor Association, if Realtors



are included in your target market. Membership in these types of organizations are a great way to keep the pipeline full of prospects.

Become an Organizer

In addition to joining existing networking groups, organizing a local chapter of a large organization can be very beneficial. This idea has really been the catalyst that made me a Top Gun Networker and Community Leader.



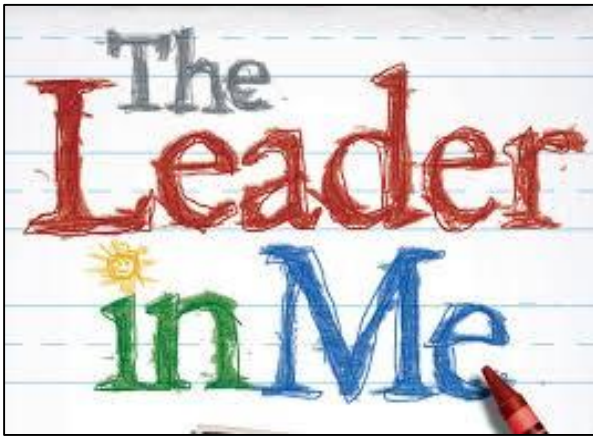
Shortly, after joining the Chamber, I attended a Sales Seminar at a local Realty company, knowing that there would be scores of realtors present which, of course, was one of my target markets. I made a point of meeting the leader of the Seminar who recognized the fact that I was there to network. He recommended another networking group called Successful Thinkers.

I took his advice and attended a meeting the next week. I enjoyed it so much I decided to ask if I could organize a chapter in Alameda. The founder of the organization felt my leadership with the Chamber gave me an advantage so he enthusiastically agreed to allow me to start a new chapter in Alameda.

I grew the chapter fairly quickly and even started a new membership in the Chamber of Commerce under the name of Successful Thinkers to create a natural link between the two organizations. It was because of the success of that chapter that I was asked to join the Board of the Chamber.



Soon after, we partnered with the Chamber becoming the official networking group and its weekly business education event. It was the success of this partnership that led to my status as a community leader and reputation as a Top Gun Networker.



One step led to another as I worked my way into the position of President of the Chamber which has opened more doors than one can imagine. Everything I have told you was integral in the success of my business, not to mention the personal satisfaction and feeling of confidence I have developed in the process.

Serve on Non-Profit Boards

Without every step of my journey, I would not have been given the many additional opportunities that have come my way since those days of making 300 cold calls. My status in the community has led to requests to serve as a member of several non-profit Boards of Directors including the Alameda Boys & Girls Club, Alameda Colleges Business Advisory Board and Argosy University's Business Advisory Board.

These opportunities not only give you access to other community and business leaders but serving gives you more than money can buy...a feeling of pride and joy, a sense of higher purpose and belonging, not to mention the appreciation from the people you serve which always warms the heart. Not get to mushy but we always have to remember the real reason behind community service is not the networking contacts, it's



the good deeds that you can bestow and the well-being of those who receive your kindness.

I have to admit, however, that a lot of doors have opened along the way because of the person I have become and the value that I have brought to others.



That's My Story, What Will Yours Be

I know it was a little long but becoming a Top Gun Networker doesn't happen overnight. I spent the time to tell you this because I wanted you to understand how I developed all of the material I will present in the Top Secret part of the book that follows.

I realized in writing this book that my networking success was no accident. You will recognize some of the components to becoming a Top Gun Networker are consistent with my story. I happened to fly the right route and now I'm hoping to put you on the flight path to excellence.

My goal is to deliver to you all of the tools and techniques I learned over the last several years so you can become a Top Gun Networker and take your business to higher levels of success.



HIGH FLIGHT

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
of sun-split clouds, — and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of—wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air....
Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark nor even eagle flew—
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

- *John Gillespie Magee*

TOP SECRET

FOR EYES ONLY



Pre-Flight Preparation

- Pre-Flight Preparation -

TOP SECRET

Set a Goal

Target Your Connections

Do Your Research

Prepare Your LogLine





Set a Goal

- Who Do You Need to Know
- Who Needs to Know You
- How Many Contacts Do you Need per week to Reach Your Income Goal
- Determine the Number of Events per Week You Must Attend to Reach Contact Requirement

Target Your Connections

- Find Event Calendars in Relevant Markets
- Join Chamber of Commerce, Professional Business Associations and Alumni Networks
- Become an Organizer
- Serve on Non-Profit Boards
- Strategize How to Get Into the Right Circles



Do Your Research

- Search Social Media Sites to Determine Who Will Attend the Event
- Learn the first and Last Names of Attendees
- View Company Newsletters and Websites to Gain Insight on Attendee's Business
- Prepare Engaging Questions Focused on Their Interests and Industry Challenges
- Stay Informed on Current Events and Sports to Have Back-up Conversation Topics

- Pre-Flight Preparation -





Prepare Your Logline

Elevator Speeches are dead. Loglines are the new way to grab attention. The idea is not to tell them a load of details about your business but entice them with a short blurb that makes them ask “Tell me more”.

Whereas, an Elevator Speech was all about you and your business, a Logline is all about the prospect and how you can solve their problem or fill a need.

Three Steps to Developing an effective Logline:

#1. Answer these four questions:

- *Who specifically needs what you have to offer?*
- *What do they need and want?*
- *What are the obstacles in their way?*
- *How can you uniquely help them overcome the obstacles?*

#2. Add the Provocative Secret Sauce

Replace dull words with more descriptive words or phrases to make the Logline enticing. Phrases like Select investors, underserved markets, personalized strategies or Three-step method draws in the contact

#3. Count Your Words

- *Goal of approximately 15 words or less*
- *Language they understand*
- *Simple, repeatable and natural to deliver*

As you learn use Loglines effectively, you will be one step ahead of your competition and on your way to having your product or service in front of those who can buy it.



Mission: Networking

- Mission: Networking -

TOP SECRET

Create a Flight Plan

Mission Protocol

Tactical Engagement

Wing Man Networking





Create a Flight Plan

– Mission: Networking –

Dress for Success

Plan your style to suit your target market i.e. Conservative for CPA's, Engineers, Lawyers, Bankers, etc. ; Colorful for Expressive types; Casual, Formal, Business attire to fit the occasion and attendees.

Arrive early and greet people as they arrive

Be the first person each attendee sees when they walk in the door to create an immediate bond.

Introduce yourself clearly and confidently

Act as if you're the host or hostess of the space even when you're not. This gives you the confidence to make a great first impression.

Observe the Rule of Three

Approach groups of three people. There is usually one who is less engaged. This is a good way to break into a new circle of people

Practice the Rule of Five

Limit your conversations to a maximum of five minutes. This allows you to make a greater number of contacts. Always end a conversation with an offer to help, support or meet one-on-one



Mission Protocol

- Wear a Nametag on the Right; Add a Conversation Starter to Your Nametag
- Smile
- Make Eye Contact
- Address contact by name
- Start a Conversation with a Sincere Compliment
- Be a Good Listener; 80/20 Rule
- Watch Your Body Language
- Don't Continue to Scan the Room while Engaged
- Don't Cross Your Arms
- Circle Your Phone Number Before Handing a Contact your Business Card
- Make Each Contact Feel Like the Most Important Person in the Room

- Mission: Networking -



Tactical Engagement

Ask Powerful and Enticing Questions to identify potential prospects, power partners and begin to build relationships

- What Attracted You to this Group?
- How Did You Find Out About the Group?
- What Do You Do When You're Not Working?
- Do You Know Anyone in the Room?
- Is There Anyone Specific to Whom I Can Introduce You?
- What Type of Professional Do You Consider a Power Partner?
- What Is Your Ideal Client Profile?
- How Can I Help You Move You Grow Your Business?
- Would You Like to Get Together for Coffee?

- Mission: Networking -



Wing Man Networking

Networking can often be a daunting mission for those who tend to be more introverted. Top Gun pilots **NEVER** fly alone and neither should you. Adopting a Wing Man strategy not only keeps you safe it can double your lead production.

Here's How It Works:

1. Choose a Wing Man
 - Someone you know well
 - Preferably a Professional you consider a Power Partner
 - If You are an Introvert, Choose an Extrovert
 - It's an added benefit if they already know some of the attendees
2. Enter the Room together
 - Get a feel for the room
 - Initially meet a few contacts together
 - After you feel comfortable, split up and begin to work the room in opposite directions
3. Meet half-way around the room
 - Compare notes
 - Share and Discuss contacts you have made
 - Split up again and Continue around the room
4. Meet again at the original entrance
 - Work the room again but stay together
 - Identify contacts you have each met on previous round
 - Introduce each other to key contacts that represent potential Power Partners or Prospects
5. Leave Together and Celebrate your Success!

— Mission: Networking —



De-Briefing Follow Up

-De-Briefing Follow Up-

'TOP SECRET'

Sort Your Contacts

Research Your Contacts

Develop Relationships

Create a Tracking System





De-Briefing Follow Up

The real secret to Top Gun Networking is in the follow up. This is the step where you turn contacts into prospects and prospects into customers.

Sort Your Contacts

Immediately after an event sort your contact's business cards into categories including potential clients, power partners, spheres of influence and social contacts

Do Your Follow Up Research

Visit each of your contacts LinkedIn, Facebook, Business and Personal Websites, Newsletters and Blogs to learn more about their business, challenges or interests

Develop Relationships

- Send an email within two days
- Give contact a compliment regarding an interesting aspect of their business, webpage or other interest that you discovered in your research
- Request a 1-to-1 meeting to discuss mutual ways of helping each other
- Find a common bond
- Always offer to help the contact in some aspect of their business or other interest
- Never pitch your business until the contact appears comfortable and ready to receive your information



Create a Tracking System

It is always your responsibility to maintain the relationship with your contacts through consistent communication.

Do not rely on the contact to keep in touch or send you referrals on their own.

In order to maintain consistent contact you must create a system that helps you remember key information about the contact and prompts you to reach out to them at a mutually agreed upon future date.

Whether you use card file or Customer Relationship Management software, the following information about your contact should be included:

1. Name
2. Address
3. Phone number
4. Email address
5. Where you met
6. What you spoke about
7. The Contact's interests
8. How you may benefit contact
9. Common contacts
10. Next follow up date



Conclusion

If you need a constant flow of new clients to grow your business, you should consider yourself a professional prospector. Don't look at yourself as a financial advisor, an Insurance salesman or a sales person of any kind. You are a prospector. Nick Murray makes that point very well in his book *The Game of Numbers* which is on my recommended reading list.

How you go about performing your prospecting duties is entirely up to you but I have to say from experience that networking is by far the most enjoyable method I have found. Compared to the grueling process of making 300 cold calls each day or the anxiety of asking your clients to provide you with a constant stream of referrals, networking is like a stroll in the park.

My days are filled with endless opportunities to meet interesting people, learn new concepts and enjoy life from all angles. A typical day for me starts with a leads group breakfast or Board meeting before a morning business meeting. Then I'm off to a networking luncheon or lunch with a prospect or power partner.

On a productive afternoon I'll meet with two prospects and meet a power partner on the deck of a nice restaurant for a glass of wine before dinner. I've been known to have dinner meetings with business partners to discuss a particular project and then go to a City Council meeting to rub elbows with local politicians.



All of my networking activities have one goal in mind...Building Relationships. A foundation of strong relationships, along with a strong product or service and hard work sounds like a formula for a successful business.

Becoming a Top Gun Networker takes skill and effort but, unlike becoming a Top Gun Fighter Pilot, anyone can do it. I wish you massive success and hope this book plays a small part in making you a Top Gun Networker.



About the Author

Michael McDonough has been a Financial Consultant for over 25 years. He currently represents a global asset management and financial services leader where he specializes in risk management for small to mid-sized businesses. He is Creator and Executive Producer of nVisionTV Network's television series *Spotlight on Excellence*, President of the Alameda Chamber of Commerce, Leader of the Alameda East Bay Successful Thinkers Network, is on the Board of the Alameda Boys and Girls Club and on Advisory Boards for the College of Alameda and Argosy University. Michael McDonough is an accomplished artist, author and dynamic keynote speaker.