



Constructing Efficient Systems - Networking and Setting Up a Referral System

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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You and your clients will benefit from developing relationships with professionals in the community and ensuring that you know the proper procedures for completing an appropriate referral. One of the things that I have learned over the years is to value the services and support offered by other organizations and businesses.

When you make a point of meeting business owners, community resources and other professionals you will benefit in a number of ways.

1. **EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE** - You are on the cutting edge for information in various fields. We are in a world where there is constant change, and it would be impossible to keep up with everything. Developing relationships with people who work in various careers will provide ongoing discussion opportunities and a resource base for specific questions.
- 2.. **PARTICIPATE IN COLLABORATIVE TEAMS** - Often solutions to problems can be best handled by individuals who form alliances. Whether it is for systemic policies or individual client problems, a team often is able to present creative and personalized solutions.
3. **DEVELOP EXTENSIVE REFERRAL RESOURCES** - Learning about the mandates and referral processes for other resources, will allow you to ensure that your clients' needs can be met when you do not have the competency required. Financial planners, lawyers, psychiatrists, or inpatient addiction programs all have specific referral procedures. Knowing the people involved will help you to understand these and allow you to help your client through the transition process.
4. **ENJOY SUPPORT** - Everyone needs support, especially when careers are demanding. It can be very comforting to know that someone understands your situation or can offer you helpful advice for a specific situation. Over the years, I have been so thankful to have built relationships with people who encourage me in my career and support me when I'm tired or unsure about something.