

BYLAWS OF BEST NETWORK

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this Association shall be BEST (Business Excellence of the Southern Tier) Network, hereinafter known as BEST.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

- A. BEST is an Association of non-competing, professional business people who meet on a bi-weekly basis to share information pertaining to the local business communities as well as each individual business.
- B. Information is shared in the form of leads. These leads are shared as a group in an effort to help members expand their businesses and keep themselves aware of changes in the community.

ARTICLE III

Members

- A. Membership in BEST is not restricted by reason of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or age.
- B. Each member is allowed to represent only one business field EXCLUSIVELY. This Principle of Exclusivity encourages the free and easy exchange of leads among members, minimizing competitiveness when two or more same-field businesses vie with each other for the same lead.
- C. Prospective member applications must be reviewed by the Board, after conflicts and references have been checked, before a prospective member may be allowed to join. An applicant shall be eligible to join no sooner than 2 weeks from their date of application.

- D. To remain active, members have a responsibility to attend at least 1 of 2 meetings a month and are required to provide leads bi-weekly to share with other members. Members who expect to miss more than 2 consecutive meetings should contact a Board member with an explanation.
- E. Each BEST member is expected to use the leads obtained through our Association EXCLUSIVELY for the business under which membership was granted. BEST uses the honor system. If that trust is violated, the offended member may bring the matter up to the Board.
- F. Membership Fees:
 - 1. There is an initial fee of \$10.00 to join BEST to cover costs such as providing members with start-up information, association pamphlets, etc.
 - 2. Membership dues of \$10 a quarter are due at the beginning of each calendar quarter: January, April, July, and October. A late fee of \$5 will be assessed on dues not paid until the following quarter.
 - 3. When a member receives business from a lead supplied by another member, the recipient of the business lead pays the Association \$1.00. This is a token "Thank You" to BEST and the member who provided the lead. All dollars collected will be used to help fund BEST activities. When payment of the \$1.00 is made for a lead sale, the Treasurer must be notified of the name of payer and the name of the member who supplied the lead. This information will be used in future recognition of contributing members.

G. Leads

- 1. Leads are the essence of BEST. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, leads must still be sent regularly.

H. Meetings

- 1. BEST membership will meet every other Tuesday for one hour to exchange leads and update member businesses on activities within the Southern Tier.
- 2. Showcase Presentation. At each meeting, one member will be allowed time (15 minute maximum) for a Showcase Presentation of the products and/or services offered by his/her business. This is an opportunity to get one's message across to new members as well as existing members who may have overlooked a possible lead for another BEST member.
- 3. Members may request that their business be the subject of a 15 minute brainstorming session.

I. Guests

1. BEST members are always encouraged to bring guests as potential applicants for BEST membership. Most importantly, it is the inviting member's responsibility to check with the Board to ascertain if there is a duplicate business-field representation of the guest with a current member's business. The Board shall review prospective member applications, after conflicts and references have been checked, before a prospective member may join. An applicant shall be eligible to join no sooner than 2 weeks from the date of their application.

J. Membership Deactivation. Members may be deactivated from BEST for the following reasons. A Board member will notify members regarding deactivation.

1. Attendance: Upon recommendation of the Board, when a member fails to attend at least 1 of 2 monthly meetings without a valid explanation or reason, a deactivation notice may be sent to that member.
2. Bylaw violations: the Board may deactivate a member for a serious bylaw violation.
3. Complaints: if an Association member renders a poor quality of product or service, resulting in one direct customer complaint to BEST, that member may be deactivated from the Association after review and majority approval for deactivation by the Board.
4. Dues: failure to pay dues by the end of the current quarter may result in deactivation of membership.
5. Leads: failure to turn in a minimum of 4 leads per quarter may result in a Board review for deactivation.

ARTICLE IV
Board of Directors

- A. The BEST Board is an instrumentality of the Association's members. It has only such power as is delegated to it by vote of the Association's members referring matters to them.
- B. Board membership shall consist of all BEST officers and other persons deemed suitable by general consensus of the sitting Board members.
- C. Board meetings will be held prior to regular meetings and at special times as deemed necessary by the general membership or the Board members.
- D. Appoint 2 Board members to conduct an audit of BEST funds in October and April. Results will be reported to the Board who will then report to the membership.

ARTICLE V Officers

- A. BEST's business year starts April 1st and ends March 31st. Terms of office for all officers shall be for a period of one year, coinciding with BEST's business year.
- B. Elections shall be held each March. Names of officer candidates will be made available to the membership at the 1st meeting in March for vote. At that time nominations will be accepted from the floor. Results of the election will be announced at the end of this meeting. Elected officers will be installed at the 1st meeting in April. The presence of each BEST member during election week is very important.
- C. A list of officers and responsibilities of each position:

1. President:

Responsibilities include:

- a. Stimulate and encourage member participation in BEST activities to maintain the stability, continuity and success of all members.
- b. Conduct all membership meetings.
- c. Direct and organize all Board meetings as well as address all items brought before the Board by presenting them to all BEST members at a regular business meeting for a majority vote.
- d. Keep informed about all membership lists, reports and press reports.
- e. If the President cannot preside at a Board or membership meeting, the following order will be observed to preside at the meeting in question: VP Membership, VP Programs, Secretary/Treasurer.
- f. Issue Meeting Notes, Meeting Agenda and Updated Roster, no later than 1 week prior to each meeting.
- g. Official spokesperson of BEST to the public and media. Liaison to Chamber of Commerce functions pertaining to BEST.

2. Vice-President Membership:

Responsibilities include:

- a. Screening of guests and prospective members to avoid conflicts of business interest with other current members.
- b. Responsible for all information material to be made available to membership at each meeting.
- c. Present a Membership Report to general membership at every meeting.
- d. Record and present any membership-related awards at each meeting.
- e. Inform the Board about all changes in membership.

ARTICLE V1
By-Laws

BEST By-Laws can be amended when a member recommends a change at one meeting and that change is accepted by majority vote by attending members at the following meeting.