

Bylaws of Middle Tennessee Business Network Coffee County Chapter

Article I – Purpose

Middle Tennessee Business Network (MTBN) is a business networking relationship where business people come together to:

- Meet once each week
- Share business practices and products with one another
- Network and act as a referral system to help grow each member's business
- Build long lasting business and personal relationships with one another

Article II – Membership

Membership in Middle Tennessee Business Network ("MTBN") is not category exclusive (i.e., there are no "protected business categories"; multiple members of the same business type are welcome). Membership is extended to **business entities**, not individual persons; i.e., a business may be represented at meetings by any designated representative of a member company/organization. Membership is extended to entities in business pursuits (sole proprietors, corporations, partnerships, etc.) or to non-profit organizations, on a case-by-case basis. Businesses representing a multi-level marketing company will be considered for membership on a case-by-case basis. Membership that is terminated, either by voluntary or involuntary means, may not be passed automatically to another company. Each member, and each representative of a new or existing member, will be of good character, good business and professional reputation, and adhere to the MTBN Code of Ethics.

MTBN Networking Code of Ethics

(Adapted from Business Networking International Code of Ethics)

"Upon acceptance to MTBN, I agree to abide by the following Code of Ethics during the tenure of my participation in the organization:

- I will provide the quality of services at the prices that I have quoted.
- I will be truthful with the members and their referrals.
- I will build goodwill and trust among members and their referrals.
- I will take responsibility for following up on the referrals I receive.
- I will display a positive and supportive attitude with MTBN members.
- I will live up to the ethical standards of my profession."

Note: Professional standards outlined in an industry-specific formal code of ethics are in addition to the above standards.

MTBN members are encouraged to:

- Participate actively in MTBN by regularly attending the weekly networking meetings.
- Consider doing business with MTBN members and giving referrals to them.
- Maintain, encourage, and enhance communication in an effort to facilitate business relationships.
- Seek new qualified members for MTBN.

Members are leading, qualified providers in his/her field.

Accordingly, each member must:

- Be a full-time provider of the business's products or services (for individuals, full-time in his or her primary occupation).
- Maintain the highest ethical standards in his or her field.
- Produce a quality product or service and stand behind his/her work.
- Seek to resolve differences with members before informing other members of problems.
- Instruct guests to adhere to this same code of conduct.
- Seek to enhance the professional credibility of the organization and its members.
- Pay dues on time.

- Maintain proper dress, manners and etiquette, and show respect for each other, guests, and speakers.
- "Always deliver what you promise and only promise what you can deliver."

Attendance

Regular meeting attendance is critical to the members' success. Regular meeting attendance is missing no more than three meetings per quarter, and attending for the entire meeting. Weekly attendance may be tracked, and members who are absent for several weeks will be contacted to see if all is well with the member. If not, MTBN will offer what moral support it can. If all is well, the member will be reminded that the networking success of members depends on their active participation and their scheduled business presentation privileges may be jeopardized. Visitor's attendance will be tracked, as well, and attendance of members and visitors made available to all MTBN officers. Visitors may attend two weekly meetings before committing as a member to MTBN.

A member may have another person attend a meeting as an alternate in his/her place, so long as the alternate is an employee, business partner, or designated agent of the member business. Member attendance is thus satisfied by the attendance of any representative of the member business / organization.

Membership Application

A prospective member must attend two out of three consecutive meetings as a visitor, complete an application for membership, and return the application to the Membership Director, along with the first year's dues prior to being eligible for membership. For ease of bookkeeping, if a member joins between January through June, initial dues are \$50; if joining July through December, initial dues are \$25.

Upon receipt of a prospective member's application, the officer receiving the application will forward the application to the Membership Director. The Membership Director will provide to the Leadership Team a copy of the application, and request any feedback on the applicant. The Leadership Team will have four (4) business days to respond to the Membership Director with any objections or concerns regarding the prospective member, and to a practical degree, confirm his/her business and personal integrity and compatibility with the goals of MTBN.

Membership Dues

The amount of dues, fees, and assessments will be determined by the Leadership Team, and from time to time the dues and special assessments (i.e. social functions) may be adjusted by the Leadership Team. If a member terminates, dues will not be refunded. The returned check fee will be \$25.00.

There are no "Guest" or "Visitor" fees associated with MTBN. When a member's dues are delinquent for a period exceeding forty-five days from the due date, defined as the first day of each calendar year, a late fee of \$10 will be applied. After sixty days from the original due date, the membership will be terminated. Dues notices will be provided by the Treasurer in December. Monthly notices to the member from the Treasurer are required during the period of delinquency, and other Leadership Team members will make due efforts to contact the delinquent member.

The MTBN Leadership Team reserves the right to terminate a membership for "just cause" as defined in the following paragraph.

Termination of Membership

Membership will be subject to termination upon review by the Leadership Team if a member fails to abide by the Networking Code of Ethics, or does not pay annual dues. If the Leadership Team has terminated a member's membership, he/she must resubmit an application for membership, with applicable initial dues, and must comply with the requirements Article II the Networking Code of Ethics, and subject to the approval of the Leadership Team.

Article III – Meetings and Presentation

MTBN will hold approximately fifty regularly scheduled weekly meetings open to all members, to provide the membership the opportunity to present brief "elevator speeches" describing their businesses, and to hear Professional Development and Business Presentations. Members are welcome, before or after a meeting, to network and spend time together, subject to meeting room availability.

The "elevator speech" is a short description of the nature of the business, products and services offered, location, contact information, what constitutes a good referral, and time permitting, anything of interest going on in members' industries. The duration is set by the Leadership Team, and to ensure the efficient progress of the meeting, will be enforced by the timekeeper.

5-Minute Professional Development - "Golden Nuggets of Business Wisdom", something learned at a business seminar, trade show, book, from experience, or Internet. This is not an opportunity for the business to describe products or services, rather to provide practical information about business practices, marketing, networking, etc.

15-minute Business Presentation - This is an opportunity for the business to provide more detailed information about its products and services to the members present at the meeting. It is essentially an expanded "elevator speech."

Presentation Schedule - available at <http://www.mtbn.org/> a presentation schedule sign-up sheet will be provided to the membership at weekly meetings to allow members who are present to register for particular presentation dates. If members are unable to present in their preselected timeslot, they should notify an officer at the earliest opportunity, preferably a few days' notice. If a member fails to present without notifying an officer, they lose presentation privileges for six months. Presenters should be prepared for the following:

- Bring your own power cables and adapters
- There may be no Internet connectivity
- There may be no audio playback available
- Plan for low resolution 1024*768 slides

Members will be personally and actively engaged full-time in his/her particular line of business/profession, and will generally be a member for a period of at least three months prior to obtaining presentation privileges, subject to Leadership Team approval.

Quarterly Special Sessions may be held to provide time for guest speakers. This is not a regular business presentation from a member, but rather more of an extended 'Professional Development' session from an outside speaker, providing general information useful to the membership.

Article IV – Organization and Elections

Fiscal Year: The fiscal year will be the calendar year ending December 31.

Leadership Team / Officers

The governing body of MTBN will be the Leadership Team, consisting of five officers:

1. President,
2. Vice-President,
3. Membership Director,
4. Treasurer, and
5. Secretary.

The Leadership Team will meet at least once per month to conduct business. A majority of the Leadership Team will constitute a quorum, and each officer carries one vote. A vacancy in an office of the Leadership Team will be filled by a majority vote of the Leadership Team, selecting a candidate from the chapter membership. If a member is unable to attend a meeting in which a vote is to be taken, that Member may vote absentee by emailing their vote to all the other officers in the Leadership Team at least 24 hours prior to the vote.

Membership dues will be governed by the Leadership Team. This team will discuss and vote on necessary expenses (monies less than \$499) for the promotion and daily operations of the MTBN group. Expenditures over \$500 will be brought before the entire group for approval before proceeding.

Leadership Team Officer Duties

President...Term: One Year; September through August

Duties:

1. Run MTBN meetings – pass business card holder, manage timer, announce new members, keep group on track, etc.
2. Schedule guest speakers – with input and help from leadership team.
3. Gather business cards from new prospects and members. Organize and cleanup business card Folder weekly.
4. Check on and follow up with current membership – absences, concerns, ideas, suggestions, disruptions, etc.
5. Present MTBN to interested businesses and groups.
6. Liaison (primary) with the local Chamber of Commerce.
7. Works closely with all MTBN Leadership members:
 - VP – update him/her on key changes or events for MTBN.
 - Secretary – Review of website and gather reports regarding referrals.
 - Treasure – Make sure all dues are collected and MTBN bills paid.
 - Membership Director – Gather updated membership list and address concerns or suggestions from members.

Vice-President

Term: One Year; December through November

Duties:

1. Backup to President (Pres) – Running meetings in Pres absence.
2. Final authority for new members – allows or disallow.
3. Maintain website – updates, changes, enhancements, upload documents, links to files or worksheets, etc.
4. Sends out thank you letters to guest speakers and creates/presents certificate of appreciation.
5. Sends out new member welcome letters and formally introduces members at MTBN meeting.
6. Prospect (Individually or with another MTBN Leader) for new businesses to join MTBN.
7. Works closely with all MTBN Leadership Team:
 - President – Help disburse information related to MTBN changes or events as well as address concerns relating to MTBN members.
 - Secretary – Make sure website information is accurate and updated in a timely fashion.
 - Treasure – Gather checks from new prospective members and gives to Treasurer, when necessary
 - Membership Director - To make sure accuracy of membership information for website or leadership use. Determine if new member prospects should be allowed into group when necessary.

Membership Director

Term: One Year; July through June

Duties:

1. Meet and greet any new prospect that visits MTBN.
2. Keep track of MTBN member attendance, including adjusting the schedule for businesses missing in action (MIA).
3. Distribute applications and visitor information to prospects.
4. Send thank you letters to new prospects that have visited a meeting.
5. Send membership dues invoices to all renewing members by November 1. Send via email and distribute hardcopies in person at meeting or deliver to their place of business. Work with Treasurer to get these completed then send updated Excel spreadsheet to VP for inclusion on website.
6. Works closely with all MTBN Leadership Team:
 - President – Recommend updates for applications or visitor forms.
 - VP – Help the leadership team determine to allow or disallow a new member.
 - Secretary – Ensure accuracy of membership list.
 - Treasure – Make sure members have paid dues.

Note: The Leadership Team as a whole has the responsibility for the growth and integrity of the membership by due verification of applications and identification of potential conflicts of interest.

Treasurer

Term: One Year; May through April

Duties:

1. Keep account of all MTBN funds.
2. Give financial status to MTBN Leadership team.
3. Deposit MTBN membership dues into MTBN account. Work with membership director to get invoices delivered and sent to renewing members by November 1.
4. Pay and/or reimburse approved MTBN expenses.
5. Make sure hosting fees of website are paid, if necessary.
6. Works closely with all MTBN Leadership Team:
President – Give clear picture of financial status of MTBN.
VP – Receive checks collected and get clarification of what business.
Secretary – Pay website hosting bills, if necessary. Also make sure membership fees are reported accurately on website.
Membership Director – Make sure new membership information is received and that new members have paid dues.

For any expenditure, other than MTBN's normal recurring operating expenses, there must be an affirmative vote of a simple majority of the Leadership Team members present at a Leadership Team meeting.

Secretary

Term: One Year; March through February

Duties:

1. Keep track of number of referrals passed at each meeting and total for year.
2. Develop and send out weekly agendas via email.
3. Print agendas for distribution and use at weekly meeting.
4. Develop MTBN presentation schedule – manages changes as necessary.
5. Record/distribute/email MTBN Leadership Team minutes within one week following meeting.
6. Works closely with all MTBN Leadership Team:
President – Gather any changes to presentation schedule in order to update website.
VP – Make changes to any reported errors or problems with website.
Treasurer – Display MTBN membership fees accurately on website.
Membership Director – Make sure accuracy of membership information for website.

Article V – Meetings

The MTBN Leadership Team will establish a weekly meeting time and place, hold monthly Leadership Team meetings, and special meetings as needed.

There are two forms of MTBN meetings. The first meeting form will normally begin at 8:00AM, and end at 9:00AM. The second meeting form is for special sessions that will normally begin at 8:00AM and end at 9:30AM.

No notice of regular meetings is required, but the meeting schedule and designated speakers for each meeting, including Special Sessions and Guest Speakers, will be posted at <http://www.mtbn.org/>

Article VI – Committees

The Leadership Team may form any committee as necessary to accomplish a function of the organization and may appoint any member as chairman of such committee.

Article VII – Amendment of Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended by an affirmative vote of the simple majority of the attending Leadership Team at any regularly scheduled meeting, or a special meeting as needed, of MTBN, provided that notice of intention to amend the bylaws has been announced to the general membership by regular mail or email to all members at their address listed on the most current member roster at least two weeks prior to said meeting.