



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**To build a vibrant and growing group of civic-minded professionals and business owners who will generate increasing amounts of business for each other through referrals, while giving back to the community.**



## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

VAN will grow through the following means:

1. Inviting guests to come to VAN's weekly meetings
  - a. Each member of VAN will invite guests to member meetings on a regular basis, welcome them and introduce them to other VAN members
  - b. Announce upcoming meetings through social media
  - c. Distribute VAN literature in the community
2. Developing and implementing publicity for the group
  - a. Write and distribute public service announcements and press releases for distribution to local media outlets throughout the year
  - b. Seek out interview opportunities
  - c. Explore advertising in local media



## **STRATEGIC PLAN (cont.)**

VAN members will generate increasing amounts of business for each other through:

1. Developing a good working knowledge of each other's business or profession
  - a. Communicate effectively through the Elevator Pitches and Featured Presentations
  - b. Active listening to each other during meetings
  - c. One-on-one meetings between individual members
2. Using community contacts to find opportunities for each other's businesses
  - a. Attend business events and mixers in the community
  - b. Have a supply of each other's business cards and share them with others outside the group
  - c. Active listening to the needs of friends, family and acquaintances



## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Vacaville Action Network's leadership group -- which includes the President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, and New Member Ambassador – is tasked first and foremost with acting in the best interests of VAN as a whole. The leadership group is open to input and feedback from individual VAN members at all times and will use it to inform leadership decision making.

**President:** To preside at meetings, develop and distribute agendas, facilitate discussion, settle disputes and act as spokesperson for the group with the media.

**Vice President:** To take on the president's responsibilities in the president's absence, to write press releases and public service announcements as necessary, to update social media, maintain card/referral slip box, to track and provide monthly and quarterly reports on closed business and referrals.

**Secretary-Treasurer:** To track and provide a quarterly report on organization financials, to collect dues/membership fees, maintain VAN bank account and write checks at the direction of the leadership team.

**New Member Ambassador:** Is responsible for scheduling and running the new member trainings and helping new members become acclimated to the group and its policies. This is a semi-permanent responsibility.

**General members:** To invite guests on a regular basis, to participate in discussion, to listen when others are speaking, to make every effort to attend all meetings and to send a substitute in the event of an absence, to pay dues in full and on-time, and to get regularly get to know other members through 1 on 1 meetings.



## SHORT-TERM ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**Featured Speaker:** Receives a 10-minute slot of time to speak during the meeting about their business. Using this time to educate the members on more details about their business. The featured speaker can bring a door prize(s) if they so choose. The featured speaker is also responsible for providing the business development topic for the following week.

**Greeter:** Is responsible for arriving early (6:50), setting up guest station, greeting guests, signing them in, collecting their business cards to put in the box, getting them a name tag, and introducing them to other members. Is also responsible for reading the mission statement each week. The Greeter each week is the person who will be speaking the following week.

**Charity Liaison:** Is responsible for communication between the quarterly charity and VAN leadership, organizing volunteers (if any), making sure the charity contact is at the starting and ending meetings, and collecting donations. In addition, they will be responsible for engaging with the charity. Charity liaison is the person who nominated the chosen charity for the current quarter.

**Educator:** During each meeting we will have 1-3 minutes to discuss a VAN education topic. The Educator of the week is the same as the greeter for the week.

**VAN Promotional Manager:** Is responsible for assisting the vice president with promotions including helping out with the Facebook page, creating website content, and creating unique advertising content and opportunities. This is a semi-permanent responsibility.



## **BY-LAWS – Membership**

VAN members are expected to be honest, direct and respectful in their dealings with each other and with those outside the group. They will maintain the highest standards of personal and professional integrity.

VAN members will have the opportunity to vote on all new member applications, and each current member will have veto power over the admittance of any new member. In general, only one member per "business category" will be allowed in the group. The vote will be performed via email by a member of the leadership. Members will have 48 hours to respond and every reasonable effort will be made to get their vote.

VAN members are encouraged to support the group's selected quarterly local charity through monetary donations and/or volunteer time.

Repeated violations of VAN rules or disregard to member expectations may prompt a review by the leadership team, and if necessary, counseling and action up to and including removal from the group.

Elections will be held for every leadership position in October (president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, new member ambassador) once per year.

VAN members pay an introductory fee of \$200 upon joining the group and \$60 per quarter, prorated as applicable. An additional \$60 is due to cover the cost of showcasing the new member on the website. Each additional quarter, the \$60 fee is due to the Secretary-Treasurer no later than the first meeting of the quarter. For each week after this, a late fee of \$5 will be added to the quarterly dues. The leadership team (president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, and new member ambassador) will have their quarterly fees waived.

When a guest attends, they can apply after the first meeting. There will be no voting until after the second meeting. If someone in the same category attends on the second meeting, then the category closes, and we allow them their two meetings. Voting occurs after that second meeting. The vote should be yes or no on either, not either or. In the event of a tie, the executive board will make the final decision.



## **BY-LAWS – Meetings**

VAN meetings will take place every Thursday at 7:00am, except days where a holiday falls on a Thursday, the week of Christmas and New Year's OR during the following holiday weeks:

- January - Martin Luther King, Jr.
- February – President's Day
- May – Memorial Day
- September – Labor Day

During these holiday weeks VAN meetings will not be held the week BEFORE the holiday. This means if a holiday falls on a Monday, VAN will not meet the Thursday prior to that Monday. The purpose of this is to allow members the option of taking an extended weekend without incurring absences in VAN.

7:00 to 7:15 is for optional networking. The business portion of the meeting will begin at 7:15 and business will be conducted until adjournment at 8:30 am.

VAN meetings will be chaired by the president, or the vice president in the president's absence. On the rare occurrence that the president and vice president are absent, the Secretary-Treasurer will chair the meeting.

VAN members may miss up to three meetings per quarter without a substitute. Medical and Extended absences will be reviewed by leadership to determine eligibility. Members are encouraged to find a substitute to come in their place when they are absent, doing so will excuse the absence (up to three per three months).

The VAN Tardy policy allows for two tardies in a three-month period. Each tardy after that is considered an absence. Being Tardy is defined as arriving at the meeting after 7:15am or leaving before 8:30am (or adjournment, whichever is earlier).

Any VAN member can ask to have an action item or discussion topic agendized for a future meeting.



## **BY-LAWS – Meetings (cont.)**

The first meeting of each quarter will be for "housekeeping" and guests will not be invited. At this meeting, the quarterly financial report will be shared and discussed, quarterly recognitions made, a non-profit/charitable cause for VAN to support will be chosen and other internal items will be discussed and acted upon.

At the end of the first meeting in a calendar month, the leadership will gather for a Leadership Meeting. This meeting will be for the President, Vice-President, and Secretary/Treasurer, but they may ask other members with roles to attend as necessary.

New Members are required to meet with the new member ambassador or other leadership member for new member training as soon as possible after their application being approved. To be added to the Featured Speaker rotation, you need to have finished your new member training as described below.





## HELPFUL INFORMATION

**Online Tracking:** VAN Members are responsible for tracking their own information on our online system. The website is <http://refma.org> and your login is your email. Please track your own closed business using this method.

**Reporting:** To ensure consistent reporting, please report the gross proceeds of the product or service that you sell.

**For example:**

Insurance agents will report the policy premium amounts  
Investment advisors will report the total investment fees charged  
Real estate agents will report gross commissions generated  
Service providers (Attorneys, CPAs, etc.) will report gross fees charged.  
A basket company will report gross sales of baskets.

Additionally, be sure to include closed business in the following situations:

- From previous members of VAN
- From VAN guests
- Between members whom you had a working relationship with prior to both being VAN members. Only include business that occurs after both businesses are members.

**1 on 1 Meetings:** Members are expected to meet with each other member for a 1 on 1 meeting once every six months. This will give you a deeper insight into them and their business and will allow you to refer them easier.

**Meeting Info:** We are responsible as an organization for purchasing a minimum of \$100 worth of food in exchange for our weekly private meeting room, please order breakfast.

**Slips, Testimonials, or Commitment:** During the Passing Paper portion of our meeting, never say that you have nothing to put in the bowl. If you have no referrals or closed business to report, give someone a testimonial or make a commitment to the group. Commitment ideas include; Bringing 1 guest to next meeting, giving 4 referrals next month, or volunteering 2 hours to our charity next week.



## HELPFUL INFORMATION (cont)

**Elevator Pitch:** You get a full 60 seconds to pitch your business, don't waste them! Ask any radio or television advertiser, 60 seconds is a long time. If you are the presenting speaker, don't skip your 60 seconds use them to enhance your presentation. Ask a question during your elevator pitch and answer it during the presentation. Get them thinking!

Also don't wait until the day of the meeting to come up with your pitch, think about it and prepare something. It is an important part of the meeting. In addition, be specific with your pitch. Your goal is to get the other members thinking about a single person that they could refer to you, or to get them stuck with a hook in their mind that is specific. A plumber can help anyone with water in their home, but if he asked for a woman who lives alone over the age of 60 who complains of drippy faucets, that will put a particular person in the mind of the other members.