



Building Your Network

Use the 'Daily 5' to build your influence without wasting people's time. The easiest time to meet with anyone is during their normal routine.

The Skinny

- Breakfast, Coffee, Lunch, Coffee, Drinks
- The Magic Window is 3–6 weeks' out
- Your goal could be one new person a week.



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Drew is the founder of Banyan Tree Strategies, working with companies and individuals on strategy, tactics, execution, sales, team development, and leadership. His background in sports and youth development have made him a passionate board member and supporter of various charities. Drew thrives on writing and coaching for both parents and business owners and employees.

Meeting new people or getting to know interesting people that you have met in a larger setting is one of the things that some people just do naturally. They find a way to spend time with them, and then their world expands by deepening the relationships with those they are around. Some of us never connect deeply with others and end up staying on the surface with everyone.

Regardless of your personal bent, you may have a job where you need to keep the number of new people you are meeting up. Others of you may just want to know as many people as possible, so you can influence them for the causes you care about.

Building Your Natural Network

Use the Daily5 to meet the people that most interest you.
Bring them your insights and collaborate.

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Building Your Natural Network

Busy people love to have a Breakfast Meeting.
It's fast.
Ask for it and be early.
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We came up with the [Daily 5](#) when working in the commercial insurance industry, and needed to meet with business owners about where they were spending their insurance dollars in a non-invasive manner. The face-to-face meetings talking about insurance policies, and if they were being covered correctly, was not what we felt was the right first step.

We thought a more casual setting would open the owner up to talk about the company and see if they had any questions. When we called them asking them how things were going, they all said things were fine because they didn't want to talk to about the subject.

After a series of failed attempts and successes a pattern started to emerge. **That pattern showed us that we could get on almost anyone's schedule if we asked them to coffee three to six weeks in the future, at a location that was in line with their daily routine. The rationale is the other person is going to have coffee anyway. Instead of having it at their desk, we asked them to meet with us for 15 minutes in a public setting.** The number of people we met with went through the roof, and the accompanying business we wrote increased as well.

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Mid Morning Coffee's are super short and great starting points.
In and Out in 15 Minutes, be ready.
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Digging deeper into the Daily 5 is worth the effort, as not all meeting requests are the same. Dinner is by far the hardest social setting to get someone to say yes. Lunch is the second biggest commitment but is much easier, followed by meeting an early riser for breakfast. The mid-morning and afternoon coffee break are the easiest to set but can also have the smallest time to meet.

If you have met someone who you are not sure is a good prospect for your efforts, and you would like to explore confirming this or not, **a quick coffee will allow both of you the chance to compare notes on life and plans for work and family without having to meet in a formal business setting.**



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Lunch is the power hour of the day.
You dance with your guest and the server and
big things can happen.
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Do not lose sight of the difference between an office and a Starbucks. The social norms that apply in a conference room are far different and less friendly for your purposes than a public coffee shop. By inviting them out of their office you are allowing them to calm down, and not have to show any bravado that might accompany their office culture. Going to a public location and not knowing where you are going to sit, and who is going to be near you takes a lot of the pressure off the meeting. It is more casual, and this is exactly what you are looking to accomplish in your first meeting: a low-key chance to learn about each other and start exchanging ideas and building good will.

The offer and acceptance of breakfast is the quirkiest of the Daily 5 choices. For people who are up and out the door early, breakfast can be an awkward choice because you may be interrupting some prime time 'get things accomplished' time. For others, it is the perfect break in their morning if they are up early and look forward to taking a break at 8 am.

As you learn to look at people and their habits you will notice the type of people who like a breakfast meeting. This should be your go-to setting for interacting with them. Breakfast has a great rhythm to it; the coffee, the orange juice, the toast, and the eggs. The food comes out quickly, the meal should last no more than 45 minutes, and the setting of a restaurant is very cordial. We advise to have a series of open-ended questions to ask the other person in this setting and take plenty of sips of coffee to let them keep talking and expand on their thoughts.



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Afternoon Coffee is more casual.
Let the conversation linger and listen.
Whoever talks more loses.
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Lunch is the power social networking hour, and for some is where all their work really gets done. Who they are having lunch with, at what restaurant, and at what table are all a part of their strategy. We do not think you need to take it this far if you are building out a network of relationships. You are most likely looking for something easy for your guest. Offer them a series of choices in location and dates and times, and then be ready to adapt as their needs demand. The meal itself is outlined in more detail in "[The NextGen Almanac](#)" which is a guidebook for recent college graduates.

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Drinks are for exploring.
Let the conversation and rapport run rampant.
Build memories over content.
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People say yes to lunch only if they know meeting with you is safe. They don't want to be forced into a meeting where you are going to attempt to coerce them in any fashion. Once you have this level of trust established, you should be able to schedule a mid-week lunch and invite others to it. Watch as the opportunities for all parties escalates.

All your offers for a social setting meeting should be made in what we call the 'magic window'. After a series of misses with short offers, we learned that asking to get on a busy person's calendar was much easier if we went out three to six weeks.

Several factors are in your favor when this is a part of your offer. Most people do not have that much going on more than two weeks out on their calendar, so you are planting a seed in fresh ground. Another signal you are sending is that you are not in a rush to meet with them. This lets them know you are not attempting to jam something down their throat that is on your immediate to-do list. This second factor made all the difference in our efforts to get to know business owners. We found that busy people are more than available for any of the Daily 5 if you do not pressure them with an offer that is right in front of them.

The tyranny of the urgent runs many people's lives, and they have made a deal with the dollar that they can't get seem to shake. The money pays for their fun and family, yet the money comes with them being on top of a big machine that needs constant attention. This creates a frenetic pace with which you are competing for their time and attention.

Running the Daily 5 inside the magic window at a location that is easy for them will yield more meetings. Preparing for that meeting and having a series of acceptable outcomes will be a part of another post on our website!