



THE SPARK FRAMEWORK

THE MARTIAL ARTS SCHOOL MARKETING MANUAL

BY MASTER RON SELL

**WAYS TO FILL THE APPOINTMENT BOOK
& INCREASE ENROLLMENT TODAY.**

SPARK

GROWTH PLAYBOOK/www.sparkmembership.com

WITH GRATITUDE

A LIFETIME OF TEACHING. SHARED.

The content and best practices in this guide were developed by **Master Ron Sell** over a lifetime of teaching **tens of thousands of students** and mentoring **hundreds of martial arts studio owners**.

Ron opened his first school in 1991 at age 19, grew it into a four-school operation, and turned the systems behind that growth into the software now used by thousands of studio owners worldwide. As Co-Founder & CEO of **Spark Membership**, he continues to bring that fire, and that burning desire to help small business owners, to the entire community.

It is with Ron's permission and generosity that these learnings and best practices are being provided to the community, to help studios, instructors, and leaders **grow and succeed**.



MASTER RON SELL

FOUNDER • SPARK MEMBERSHIP

7th Degree Black Belt

"Spark is about bringing the fire and burning desire to help small business owners."

MASTER RON SELL

READ THIS FIRST

None of these ideas **work.**

This manual will stimulate your mind to market the school. But none of the ideas inside work, unless you put **action** behind them. More important than any tactic on these pages is the discipline to execute one of them today.

MASSIVE ACTION PRODUCES MASSIVE RESULTS.

01**QUICK IDEAS**

Tactical plays you can run today.

02**MONTH BY MONTH**

Seasonal moves across the calendar.

03**DEEP PLANNING**

Programs that compound over time.

04**PAID EVENTS**

Investments that bring big returns.

GET BUSY. TAKE ACTION NOW. DON'T WAIT.

**PLANNING TEMPLATE**

Monthly Action Plan

Pick 8 activities to bring at least 40 new prospects in this month.

MONTH / YEAR

SCHOOL

VIP LOCATIONS

Where will you VIP this month?

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____
- 04 _____
- 05 _____
- 06 _____
- 07 _____
- 08 _____
- 09 _____
- 10 _____

ACTIVITIES

8 activities → 40 prospects

- 01 _____
- 02 _____
- 03 _____
- 04 _____
- 05 _____
- 06 _____
- 07 _____
- 08 _____

SPECIAL EVENT

(Skip if Belt Promotion month, note BP info instead.)

FREE BBT / LEADERSHIP EVENT

What free event happens this month?



PART ONE

QUICK IDEAS.

64 PLAYS • RUN ANY TODAY



QUICK IDEAS Tactical plays you can run today.

01 VIP everywhere, anyone within 5 feet, restaurants, lead boxes, parking lots.

02 Find a large crowd. Go VIP there.

03 Scour local newspapers for events to VIP or demo at.

04 Set two progress checks / upgrade conferences today.

05 Ask for referrals during every progress check.

06 A-frame sign with an attention-getter.

07 Billboard.

08 Community newsletter ad (\$65–\$100).

09 Pizza-box marketing, trade flyers with a delivery shop.

10 Direct mail (postcards, letters, invites), infoUSA.com for leads.

11 Grand Opening (send invitations).

12 Aggressively get referrals from info calls, intros, and VIPs.

13 Offer current students of other schools 30 days free.

14 Show & Tell at schools.

15 Booth at a mall or business event.

16 Demonstrations: theaters, schools, malls, churches, scouts, daycare.

17 VIP at belt graduations.

18 Hang banners outside: Back-to-School / Summer / New Year classes forming.



QUICK IDEAS Tactical plays you can run today.

19 Ad cards (double business cards) at local businesses.

20 Wrap a city bus.

21 Hand VIP passes to students leaving class, educate them on growth.

22 Offer corporate rates to local businesses.

23 Halloween VIP guest passes.

24 Buddy week, aggressively pursue appointments.

25 Parents' Night Out: movie / video-game night.

26 Lead boxes / registration boxes.

27 Service registration boxes more often.

28 Open House: half-hour demo, raffle, refreshments, free trial class.

29 Flyer flush / door hangers.

30 Election signs.

31 Apartment-manager partnership: ad in newsletter + door hangers.

32 Partner with like businesses (dance, gymnastics, Sylvan).

33 Child Safety Day.

34 Women's Self-Defense course.

35 Bring-a-friend ask at appointment-set.

36 Birthday parties.



QUICK IDEAS Tactical plays you can run today.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 37 Enrollment contest / referral drive, free test, free gear upgrade. | 38 Flyers on community bulletin boards. |
| 39 "Refer a Friend, Get Free Belt Test" lobby sign. | 40 "Refer a Friend, Get Free T-shirt" lobby sign. |
| 41 Welcome letters to new residents / new businesses. | 42 Set up a sign-up table in front of the school. |
| 43 Open House (again, schedule them quarterly). | 44 Introduce yourself to every business in your center, bring donuts. |
| 45 Pizza delivery partnership, flyers with every order. | 46 Sponsor little league, go to the games and VIP. |
| 47 Sponsor local high-school teams or band. | 48 Buy a box car and paint a billboard on it. |
| 49 Magnetic car signs. | 50 Contact all white belts and ask for referrals. |
| 51 Call every no-show and B-back. Re-ignite interest. Send a letter. | 52 Fun Day in the parking lot, bounce toys, hot dogs, demos. |
| 53 Stay alert for community events, papers, signs, bulletin boards. | 54 Place / service lead boxes more frequently. |

**QUICK IDEAS** Tactical plays you can run today.

55 Write articles for local papers: concentration, bullying, self-defense.

56 Community Outreach Program (a.k.a. VIP Program).

57 Two progress checks a day → present upgrades. Call: "It's time for spring progress."

58 Read "Outrageous Marketing." Keep the question on your person.

59 Movie-screen advertising.

60 Bring-a-Friend Break-a-Board: re-breakable, then real on enrollment.

61 Collect testimonials.

62 Press releases.

63 Educate basic students on the Pass-A-Friend program.

64 Past student reactivation.



PART TWO

MONTH BY MONTH.

13 SEASONAL CARDS

**MONTH BY MONTH**

Seasonal moves across the calendar.

JAN

RECHARGE

JANUARY

- “Get back in shape doing martial arts” ad.
- Blow up the ad, put it in your window.
- Run an enrollment contest.

FEB

VALENTINE'S

FEBRUARY

- Give a flower to every mom on Valentine's Day.

MAR

MOTHERS

March

- Mother's Day: hand a flower to every mom, no marketing on it.
- Memorial Day Parade, hand out frisbees, host a Free Kids Smart event.
- Mother's Month, all moms train free.

APR

EASTER

APRIL

- Easter EggHunt at the school or a local park.
- Good Friday all-day tournament or seminar.

**MONTH BY MONTH**

Seasonal moves across the calendar.

MAY

SUMMER LAUNCH

MAY

- Summer Program \$99 ad.
- SUMMER BASH, invite every MIA student back.

JUN

FATHERS

JUNE

- Father's Day. Dads train with kids.
- Dad as the class coach.
- Dad's Month, all dads train free.

SUM

OUTREACH

SUMMER

- Setday-care, summer camp, scout pack-meeting demos.
- Big-prize summer enrollment contest.
- Summer Buddy Bash, free event.
- Send 4,000 direct-mail postcards.
- Teens place door hangers 3x / 2-mile radius.

JUL

PREP

JULY

- Prepare for Back to School, see Deep Planning section.

**MONTH BY MONTH**

Seasonal moves across the calendar.

AUG

BIG ENROLLMENT

SEPTEMBER

- This is usually a huge month, be ready to enroll.

SEP

BACK TO SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER

- Back-to-School party.
- Call summer-quitters, invite them to a Fast Back program.

OCT

HALLOWEEN

OCTOBER

- Halloween VIP cards, students give to every trick-or-treater.
- Halloween Bring-a-Friend party:
costume contest, limbo, hula hoops, bobbing for apples, musical tombstone, piñata.
- Start marketing Christmas merchandise.

NOV

TEACH IN

NOVEMBER

- Great American Teach-In.
- Short month, push hard the first 3 weeks.
- Goal: 20 enrollments.

**MONTH BY MONTH**

Seasonal moves across the calendar.

DEC**HOLIDAYS****DECEMBER**

- Christmas party.
- Push enrollments early, short month. Christmas Special: Uniform + 30 days for \$29.
- Pro-Shop: Sunday parents-only shopping day.



PART THREE

DEEP PLANNING.

PROGRAMS THAT COMPOUND

REFERRALS

Your best students come from **referrals.**

50-70%of health-club business is
referrals**\$3.40**cost-per-name in the bag
promo**\$4.32**post-email
cost-per-name**110**names in 7 days from
one email

When a referral walks through the door, they've already heard good things. They want a training partner. Rapport is easier. They cost less than every other channel, and they're more likely to enroll.

Body Express in Bondi Beach ran a referral promotion: "Refer five friends, get a gym bag and up to five months free." Newsletter, flyers, signage, lobby reminders, and even a telemarketer cost the club **\$907** and produced **100 names**. Then they sent **one email**: an extension and a polite reminder. Within 24 hours, 80 more names. Within a week, 110. The email cut acquisition cost in half: from \$9.07 per name to \$4.32.

Referrals work because the friend already trusts the friend. Email works because it removes every step between intent and action.

"The member reacts to the offer before they have time to overanalyze."

Nicky Wyborn, club manager



ENROLLMENT REFERRAL SYSTEM

Enroll 20 students. Get 60 referrals.

01

ENROLL

Take the new student through enrollment exactly as you always do.

02

OFFER

Right after the down-payment: *"Our best students come from referrals. Fill out three names and we'll add a free month to your program."*

03

ASK PERMISSION

Ask if it's OK to use their name when you call. (It almost always is.)

04

CALL THIS WEEK

Within 48 hours: pitch a free private session + free uniform. Offer two appointment times. Mention their friend by name.

REWARDS: FREE MONTH • SECOND UNIFORM • T-SHIRT • EQUIPMENT BAG

BACK TO SCHOOL

Your Christmas is in August.

Back-to-school is to a martial arts school what Christmas is to a department store. Don't miss it. Plan your offer in July, run it through September, and ride the momentum for the rest of the year.

- 01** Develop one back-to-school offer. Use it everywhere, consistency wins.
- 02** Run ads in newspapers, coupon mags, road signs, direct mail, pizza tops, school papers.
- 03** Pitch a guest article on safety, focus, or self-defense to local school papers.
- 04** Order swag now: pencils, book covers, stickers, frisbees, mugs.
- 05** Send pizza to a school staff lunch. Visit two days later. Ask to guest-teach.
- 06** Plan nine months of intro seminars: Bully Proof, Kid Safe, Karate for Concentration.
- 07** Schedule make-up classes for any student who missed summer training.
- 08** Throw a Back-to-School Bash, pool, DJ, prizes. End-of-September is gold.

REGISTRATION BOXES

Place the box. Work the **phone**.

PLACEMENT TIPS

- 01** Don't walk into a store carrying the box.
- 02** Ask to speak with the owner / manager.
- 03** Lead with the gift: a free membership (\$100/mo value) plus uniform, in exchange for displaying the box.
- 04** Service the box weekly. Replace forms. Empty it. Stay top of mind.
- 05** Re-issue the merchant pass every three months.

PHONE SCRIPT

"May I please speak with Mrs. Smith?" Hi, this is Ron Sell from Karate Advantage. I'm calling with great news. I picked up your request for the four-free-week course at our registration box at Subway. We have an opening this week. Your first session is private, your son will learn martial-arts basics for self-defense and you'll see how we use the arts to teach life skills like confidence, courtesy, and respect.

I have two openings this week: **today at 5pm** or **tomorrow at 6:30**. Which works best for you?"



**GET BUSY.
TAKE ACTION NOW.
DON'T WAIT.**

Massive action produces massive results.

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