

The 4 types of customers you need to follow-up

You would think follow-up is an easy and straight forward task but it may surprise you that the follow-up is generally done poorly. The missed opportunities and the damage to the company and personal credibility can only be imagined.

Where to start?

The follow-up or next step action needs to be set up and agreed to with the customer before leaving the sales call. This can be for another appointment, phone call or to email additional information. The follow-up then becomes much easier and prepares you for a smooth transition.

Follow-up can provide an opportunity for you to differentiate yourself from competitors, generate referral business, create high retention of customers and grow repeat business.

Developing an organized and systematic approach to follow-up, one that becomes part of your daily selling activities, will help you to build strong customer relationships.

All customers or potential customers fall into the subsequent follow-up categories:

1. The referral

Contacting a referred lead does not guarantee a sale but it is definitely easier than starting from scratch. Studies show that experienced salespeople spend only half as much time selling to a referred lead compared to a non-referred lead. Closing ratios with referred leads are also considerably higher.

2. The new customer

Following-up on a new customer can be an enjoyable experience. It provides opportunities to ask for their feedback, uncover other issues you can help them with, build on your professional image and that of your company's. This often leads to more repeat business.

3. The angry customer

Following-up on an irate customer can be an uncomfortable experience, nevertheless it is sensible to do so. The customer in some cases may be surprised to hear from you and will appreciate your follow-up. Identify their level of dissatisfaction by asking for specific information so you can come up with the right answer and correct the problem. Aim to finish the call on a positive note and always thank them.

4. The loyal customer

Unfortunately loyal customers are often taken for granted and when this happens the competitor ends up with the business. If you have a loyal customer who has given you a lot of business, let them know how much you value them. In so doing you will develop a closer working relationship and in many instances will automatically lock out competitors.

It doesn't matter what type of client you are dealing with, always follow-up. It is part of being a sales professional and the potential relationship and future sales make it very rewarding.

If you would like more information about this or any other sales or sales management subject then contact Kurt Newman direct on +61 0412 252 236 or email kurt@salesconsultants.com.au.

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Kurt's expertise is in sales strategy, sales management development; group structured sales training and infield sales coaching. As a sales person he has successfully sold products and services in 4 major market/product segments: new product sales, consultative sales, relationship sales and retail. During his selling career he created sales records for three companies in two industries and won many sales awards for outstanding performance.