



Getting Prospects

By Dan Goldberg, MBA, MHEM

When you have the ability to understand the attitudes, behaviors and communication styles of yourself and others you can begin to see how your interaction with clients and prospects can lead to them feeling good about you and what you're selling.

As you begin to build rapport with clients and prospects, opportunities begin to present themselves. You can get into a position to ask for (and get) referrals.

Referrals come when you have satisfactorily given your client or prospect what they wanted and more.

It is necessary to always keep in mind that people do things according to their own agenda. In other words everyone is tuned into the same radio station WII-FM (what's in it for me?).

You have to recognize and acknowledge your clients' and prospects' expectation level.

The more you do that the easier it will become to make a sale.

As you keep your clients' and prospects' happy you begin to build up a pool of credible personal and professional recommendation sources.

But in order to make people happy you have to get them first!

If you had to purchase a bandage for a bleeding wound, you might buy it from a jerk if your blood was spilling on the floor, but you'd feel so much better buying it from a compassionate person who took your pain to heart.

Now suppose your wound wasn't visible to the salesperson but they knew how to find out about it and enable you to realize that you should also do something about it. Wouldn't you be willing to buy something to get ride of it?

Well getting prospects and clients to buy is all about making them aware of their distress and in some cases their potential pleasures.

Once you understand a person's distress you begin to take control of the selling process.

How does someone find those distresses?

By asking questions and listening to the answers.

Everything you need to know will be told to you if you just ask the right questions and listen to the responses.

The salesperson should only talk thirty percent of the time, at most. That leaves seventy percent for your prospect or client to tell you everything you need to know.

If you learn how to listen the sales gates will open.

There are certain questions that help you get the answers you need.

Those answers will even tell you whether or not you have a "prospect" or a "suspect" on your hands, which will enable you to continue or go on to the next person.

You're better off knowing that someone is a "suspect" at the beginning of the process than wasting time and finding it out later.

People don't like to be sold but they do like to buy.

And everyone has his or her own agenda. They are NOT going to buy just because you want them to. The more you force, the more you will push them away.

For many salespeople getting prospects means many things.

It may be getting referrals from friends and/or satisfied clients, cold calling, joining networking groups and organizations, advertising or all of these methods.

No matter what it is, every salesperson needs to be able to easily and simply explain what he or she does without seeming like they're selling

All you have to do is pretend that you are advertising on TV or radio and have a limited time to tell people how you are. Write a short and simple explanation of what you do without sounding like a salesperson and you're on your way.

Something like, "We help companies increase their efficiencies and profits by enabling their salespeople to have more effective sales skills and techniques so that they close more often and in less time, while building solid relationships with their clients and prospects...would you know anyone who needs to enhance those skills?"

No heavy selling, but a strong message none-the-less.

You can even use that self-description in your cold calling.

There are plenty of salespeople who make their living as a result of cold calls. For these people every call is a means to an end. As an old friend once told me years ago “The average sale I close is worth \$2,000.00, I’ll make 100 calls a day for 15 contacts for 2 appointments that may result in one close, I’ll take those odds everyday of my life!”

And he does extremely well for himself.

Of course by now he doesn’t have to make cold calls because all those old cold call clients have become very good referral sources for him.

But like he says “It works!”

So, looking at it from the angle of one thousand calls a month could put the cold caller on the road to doing quite well.

By organizing time spent on prospecting (cold calls, networking, speaking, etc.), using open-ended questions, listening intently, addressing business distress, and asking for referrals, you can build a book of clients that will create income for years to come.

Dan Goldberg is a keynote speaker and the President of Dan Goldberg Consulting, L.L.C., a training, coaching and business development firm located in the Philadelphia, PA area. He is the author of the book “Stand Back a Second, Just don’t fall off the edge,” and “The Six Steps to Solid Sales Success” and “The Seven Elements of Successful Management” programs and audio tape. You can contact him at dg@dangoldberg.com, visit his website at www.dangoldberg.com or reach him at (215) 233-5352.