



Regular Contact Builds and Reinforces Relationships

Every contact with a client or prospect moves you a little bit closer toward a sale or further developing the relationship. ***Follow up separates the amateurs from the professionals.*** So often a sales representative makes a wonderful first call or contact. Often they follow up with a second. Seldom does the third or fourth contact occur. We need to earn the business by staying in touch with our prospects on a regular basis. The national average is six contacts before a sale is made and so often we stop at one or two.

Coming up with unique and genuine ways to keep in touch with your prospects and existing clients is very important. Your approach should be based on building the relationship and adding value, not just for your own benefit of making the sale. Think of ways to stay in touch. Be creative. Send your clients magazine or newspaper articles of interest, acknowledge holidays, and provide new information about the services you offer. I have boxes of note cards just for this purpose. The more you build the relationship...the easier the sale.

Have genuine interest in the person, the business, and the relationship and the rest will follow. When you make contact just to build the relationship, your actions demonstrate that you care for them as a person, not just to make the sale.

If you're genuinely committed to helping the person or business, they will most likely welcome you. Instead of walking in tentatively, go in with confidence knowing that you are there to make a difference. Selling often takes time. In my business it's not at all unusual to gain a new client after staying in touch with them for five or more years. Staying positive and focused on helping the client gives me the "staying power" to follow up. When you believe in yourself, your company and your products, it's easier than you might think. . Your voice projects it and your body language carries it. If you can't make things better for the client or prospect, you don't deserve the business. If you can, then you earn the business!"



Lynn Giuliani · Progressions, Inc.
P.O. Box 28172 · Bellingham, WA 98228
www.progressionsinc.net · (360) 733-6557

The “Threading” Concept

All contacts make a connection that develops the relationship. I call this “threading” like a needle and thread, one stitch at a time. And it takes many stitches to make a strong seam.

Here’s an example of threading. During a call, you learn that a client wants to open a location in another city. A reason for a follow-up call may be to see how the plans are progressing and how you might assist them... To make the contact even more valuable to your client, bring by some industry statistics relevant to that geographic area.

When the relationship develops over time with multiple contacts, price usually isn’t the big factor. People like to do business with people they like. You build trust and confidence through your contacts and the client will choose YOU!

Contact Should Be Ongoing

You have to earn a position in your client or prospect’s thought pattern. If you don’t earn that position, someone else will. In my business of selling training and consulting services, my goal is to be the first person a company thinks of when they need training. My plan is to make contact with all my prospects and clients at least once a quarter. I just recently sent out an email describing a couple of new programs I have developed. That same day I received two phone calls from clients I have not done work for in over three years. Had this been my only contact in that time, I doubt I would have gotten the call. Through ongoing contact and my standards of service delivery they did not feel a need to look elsewhere or compare.

Generating Referrals

Staying in touch with both prospects and clients is the best way to generate new referrals. They may not have an immediate need themselves but will often know of a business that does. When a relationship has been developed with your client and they know you provide great service, the client wants to help you. It’s perfectly natural to ask for referrals and most often they offer.

My business has been built on referrals-one satisfied customer at a time...



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