



How to Keep the Business You Have by Tom Hopkins February 2010 Newsletter

Building loyalty in your client base is critical for ongoing success. One of the greatest benefits of having loyal clients is that you earn a sort of residual income. You need to stay in touch but not work as hard to keep selling them as you did to first sell them.

The foundation for loyalty includes the right products for each client, excellent service and consistent follow up. A variety of strategies for keeping in touch with clients and getting repeat business from them will be covered in this chapter.

“You’ve got to give loyalty down, if you want loyalty up.” Donald T. Regan

This quote was originally intended for leaders in business and politics, but I think it applies nicely to sales. Rather than “down” and “up,” in sales, loyalty is received when it, and excellent service, are given. During challenging times, this involves giving clients the same level of service we always have, even if their dollar volume of business has dropped. It means reaching out to them when you see a change in their level of business to search for ways to help them increase their business. It includes taking their calls—always—even when you’re certain they’re calling with a challenge or to cancel their accounts because they’re facing tough times and have to make cutbacks.

If you have provided an exceptional level of service to your clients, there’s a wonderful side benefit. During tough times you will likely be lower on their list of services to reduce or eliminate than another company that hasn’t provided your level of extraordinary service. They’ll have a harder time making a cut for something they truly enjoy and value.

Your goal with your clients is not only to retain their business long term, but to create scenarios where they purchase add-on products. Keeping a client relationship healthy is akin to earning residual income. You don’t have to work as hard with them as you might to gain a new client. That doesn’t mean you can ignore them, resting assured they won’t go anywhere else. Nothing is that certain in the world.

The key to healthy relationships both personally and in business is to give them the attention they need and deserve. If you have any children in your life, hopefully, you’ve learned that kids typically spell the word love this way: T.I.M.E. They may hear you say, “I love you” all day long, but they truly know you love them when you spend time with them. They feel the love when they see you in the audience at their school plays, when you’re in the stands at their sporting events, and when you take them shopping or out to lunch rather than giving them some cash and sending them on their way.

Kids don’t care how much money you earn or what type of car you drive (until they’re teenagers and want to borrow it). Time spent together provides a sense of security about the relationship. It’s a matter of knowing that if everyone else in the world betrays you, there’s always someone to turn to—someone who is always in your corner.

If it’s truly impossible for you to be physically present, the next best thing is to call. Your care and concern are easily heard in the tone of your voice. At the very least, receiving emails (especially those with pictures) and cards “just because” are fun ways to keep in touch.



Take the paragraphs above and change the image from children to your clients. And maybe change "love" to "care about." The functions you attend might be local sporting events, a Chamber of Commerce luncheon or a client-company open house. The point is that your clients see that you cared enough to be where they are.

Of course, you need not take this to the point where it might be considered stalking, but running in similar circles as your clients puts you on their level which builds trust and loyalty. They know you "get it"—that you understand or at least invest a lot of time trying to understand their world.

[Excerpted from my new book, "Selling in Tough Times" available pre-publication at a special investment. Learn more>>](#)

TIMELY TIP

The Shortest Month Should Be Your Favorite!

Just because February is the shortest month of the year, it doesn't mean it should be your least productive month. We find that people who work on monthly schedules (such as those who make purchasing decisions) are well aware of the impact of fewer days in the month in which to get work done. They tend to get the "week before vacation" syndrome to a small extent. You know how that is — people tend to be more focused the week before vacation than any other week of the year because they want to go on vacation with peace of mind. No one wants to end February with a couple of day's work to complete. Many people simply can't move some of their work into the next month for budgetary reasons.

Take advantage of this February flurry of activity to get with those people you know need to make decisions now. They should be more focused than in the two previous months and more ready to make good decisions.

CLOSE OF THE MONTH

The Big Bargain Close

When your potential buyer suffers from fear (which causes them to default to procrastination), you need a close or story to help move them 'off the fence.' Most people will take action when they believe it's better for them to do it now rather than wait. In those instances, use these words:

"John, when prices are rising, as they seem to be just now, everything is a bargain. Do you know why? (Chances are they'll look at you with a bit of confusion here.) During inflationary times, knowledgeable people exchange money for things because as prices rise, the money is worth more. During a deflation, it's just the opposite. Considering today's rising prices, whatever you acquire today will be more expensive tomorrow, won't it? Investing in your new (product or service) is a bargain today because inflation is bound to hit pricing soon and you do want a bargain, don't you?"



Note: This close doesn't always work well with technical equipment that is quickly outdated. With high-tech products, you need to sell the strong value of having immediate benefits and stress that those benefits will save them money in the long run.

[To increase your closing ratio, own "Sales Closing for Dummies" the most comprehensive compilation of Tom's closing strategies.](#)