



The Builder of **SALES CHAMPIONS!**

July 2008 Newsletter **Two Strategies for Finding New Business** by Tom Hopkins

It's getting close to our annual 3-day Boot Camp Sales Mastery program and in reviewing the content we teach there, I felt moved to give you a taste of it whether you are able to attend or not.

Since the question of where to find new clients must be answered before you can use any of the other training, we cover seven such strategies during our three days together. Some involve meeting new people. Others center around working with existing clients. The key is to never look at another person without thinking, "He or she is either a potential client or knows someone who is." Make it your goal to find out which is true. You will be delighted to learn in some cases that the answer is two-fold. They can use your product or service AND they know others who can as well.

1. Networking in Social Situations

Before you leave home for any social situation, assume you will meet someone there who has a need for your product, your service or at the very least for your card. NEVER BE CAUGHT WITHOUT BUSINESS CARDS! This goes back to the old standard of always being prepared. The more prepared you are, the more professional and competent you appear. And, competence breeds confidence--yours and theirs in you.

At the social event, be relaxed and casual. This is not a formal networking opportunity where people are there just to find new clients. You are there first to have fun socializing, but wise to keep your eyes and ears open for potential business opportunities.

If you don't know many of the other people at the gathering, introduce yourself to someone and ask them some non-threatening questions to get a conversation started. Here are a few sample questions:

How do you know the hosts?

Do you live around here?

What type of work are you involved in?

You would use our "piggybacking" questioning strategy to keep the conversation going. It involves making a comment on the other person's answers, then asking your next question based on what they just told you. It's Conversation 101. We practice and drill it at the seminar and it's quite fun...and enlightening for most. We do our best to make Boot Camp attendees so comfortable with all of the training that they turn right around and use it the rest of our time together. It becomes natural to them by the time they reach new potential clients.

After you learn what type of work your new acquaintance is in and have talked a bit about it, you have the right to mention your line of work and ask if they've ever thought about your product or service. This is where you will begin a soft qualification process. If it appears they may be a good candidate for you, ask if you can talk with them about it some time after the event. You might say, "We're here to have fun, aren't we? Why don't we exchange business cards and arrange to talk more another time?" If they don't have cards, ask them what the best way is for you to reach them. Write it down. Thank them and get back to socializing.



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Ask everyone you meet who else they know at the event. If they know someone you haven't met yet, ask to be introduced and continue your search for new potential clients, while having fun.

2. The Itch Cycle

Whether it's office equipment, consumer products or services, everything has a life cycle. When old things begin to look and act like they're old, we often get the itch to get a new one, don't we? With this in mind, it's your job to determine the itch cycle (life span) for your product. Check with a few of your repeat clients to determine your product's average itch cycle.

Once you determine the typical frequency of repeat buying, look at your existing client list and find out who's past due, who's prime for upgrading or replacing and who may begin itching within the next 30 days. Develop a schedule for reaching out to all of them.

Here's what you might say:

Good morning, John. I hope you're doing well and still enjoying boating as a hobby. I just wanted to contact you with some exciting news. The company has come up with some great new features on our latest models. Since you're such a boating enthusiast, we would like to ask your opinion of these new features. Then, if you're interested in upgrading, we'll be happy to do something for you as one of our valued clients.

Of course the wording and any offers would have to be fine-tuned to your specific situation and with your company's approval, but you get the idea. You're creating the itch and you're ready to scratch it.

After you've begun this process, keep it going. One of the most important benefits of staying in touch with your clients on a regular basis is that you'll know almost immediately when they start to itch for something new. You won't be likely to lose them to a competitor who just happens to contact them when the itch is at its peak.

TIMELY TIP

Listening Cues

Learn to listen for specific clues as to how to best present information to new potential clients. By that I mean to listen for them to say, "I see what you mean," or, "We look for ____ in a supplier" which usually means they relate best in a visual manner. Gear up your visual aids or computer graphics presentation for this person. Use lots of color, charts, photos, graphs, and diagrams.

For those people who say, "I hear what you're saying," you'd better gear your presentation to be more of an oral report. Be sure to include plenty of descriptive word pictures.

When people ask about investment information before you cover all the benefits they're looking for, they're probably "bottom-line" kind of people and your dollars-and-cents information had better shine.

People who like to "get a feel for" something will need to have something to touch during your presentation.

Remember, it's the little things that make the biggest difference!



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CLOSE OF THE MONTH

The Increased Productivity Close

Oftentimes when marketing to clients of a corporation, they aren't aware of how much an increase in morale can add to the productivity of the entire company. The productivity close brings that point home, so you're not only educating your clients on the power of employee morale, but also giving them something to prove it with. This close pours on value for the benefits of your product.

Phraseology: "What I'm offering is not just a good health insurance program; it's a boost in employee morale. Have you ever noticed how anything new increases job interest and excitement? Excitement increases morale. Morale increases productivity, and what is increased productivity worth?"

Point it out to your clients that increased productivity can generate enough increased income to more that make up for the increased investment. On top of that, point out to the clients how investing in your product can also increase loyalty and reduce turnover, thus saving them even more money on advertising for new hires.