

## Service & Follow-up

It took you a lot to bring them in... now it's time to keep them and sell them more. Remember, prospects become customers and customers are prospects. ([click here](#) for a sales reminder)

For many salespeople (especially those that classify themselves as hunters), service and follow-up activities are often the most overlooked part of the sales cycle. Unfortunately, these activities are often the actions that can help salespeople minimize the need to do some of what most people consider the most unpleasant of all sales activities-- cold calling. While prospecting is something that should always be done, it doesn't mean it needs to be done cold in all cases-- implementing a deliberate and proactive service and follow-up schedule can help you get closer to that utopia where business comes to you by word-of-mouth and referral rather than through the 100 dials = 50 contacts = 10 appointments = 3 proposals = 1 sale formula.

Nothing fancy here... it's simply a matter of taking a look at what you feel should happen after a close is made, writing it down and making a checklist for each new customer so that you're sure you're maximizing the value of your existing base. Keep in mind, these activities also will not only help you get more "non-cold calling business" but will also help you **retain** your current customer base.

On your own or with your team (preferably outside the money hours), work through the guidelines and thought prompts below to create a service and follow-up schedule that pertains to your particular sales world. Start taking full advantage of a pool of prospects who are more likely to take your call... your customers. You'll be doing the right thing from a service standpoint, getting to know upcoming needs to make additional sales, locking out your potential competitors and getting business from their colleagues. After all, it's your paying customers who should get the majority of your sales love-- give it to them... shake and bake...

### The objective

- show gratitude
- affirm buyer's decision
- minimize buyer's remorse
- address potential challenges as they arise (before they grow into something worse)
- identify upcoming needs to develop more sales
- retain customers and lock out competitors
- obtain referrals & word-of-mouth prospects

### Method

work through the following using pen to paper or fingers to keyboard...

what is my **current** service and follow-up schedule? (what happens once a contract is signed or a sale is made?)... be sure to include the time intervals when each of the service and follow-up activities take place? (i.e., thank you email is sent upon verbal commitment, thank you note is mailed upon receipt of signed contract, etc.)

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what service & follow-up activities would I like if I were the buyer of my product/ service (activities not currently done)?

- thank you call
- thank you email
- thank you note
- thank you gift
- an initial feedback phone call following implementation
- a technical and or customer service inquiry by another department
- a feedback phone call or letter after some period of time of usage of product/ service
- an annual/ quarterly/ monthly feedback call or letter
- an annual/ quarterly/ monthly breakfast/ lunch/ dinner to address needs or for continued relationship development

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what service & follow up activities could I add to my schedule that would potentially drive **additional** sales from my customer?

- send a helpful third party book addressing another area where you have a solution
- send a customer newsletter with helpful ideas for their particular world (business or home)
- send relevant industry news stories or trade magazine articles
- give a plant or headquarters tour

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what service & follow up activities could I add to my schedule that would potentially drive **referrals** and word-of-mouth prospects?

- send a note asking for referrals
- call or arrange a meeting where you can ask for referrals
- send several pre-done postcards with stamps for your customer to send to friends/ colleagues who might benefit by talking with you about your product/ service
- send referrals to your customer

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once complete, bring your current service & follow up activities together with the items you developed from the final three questions and create your **formal** service & follow-up schedule... put it in a spreadsheet or create a binder with an individual checklist for each new customer... keep a small box of individual checklists on index cards... bottom line-- something simple so it gets done and you can drive more sales...