



Seeking Success? Try Your Client's View

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Question:

How can I accelerate my sales and acquire more clients and repeat business?

Answer:

To give yourself a fighting chance against your competition, you have to out-perform and “out-professional” them. Here are some tips that brokers should know about their clients’ perspective and how to make a positive, long-lasting first impression.

- **Identify the product you are selling.** Be specific. Do your homework. Label yourself as “The Specialist” in your area for your specific product.
- **Refer all work that is out of your specialty.** Make sure that your referral also is a qualified specialist. You’ll earn your clients’ respect and repeat business. After all, you have just saved them legwork and time. That translates to money. They like that in a vendor.
- **Improve your chances of getting in the door.** When you first seek the attention of a potential client, the only thing that matters is the cost of your money or the return. This will open the door, and your knowledge and preparedness will get you a seat at the table. Your professionalism, honesty and accurate information will get you another invite.

The more you know about your prospects and their types of loans or investments, the more effective your service will be. Whether the door opens

again or slams shut is up to you.

If you follow these simple rules, prospects can become clients for life. They will trust your judgment based on the professional performance you provide for them.

Q: I rarely get callbacks from my mail-out advertisements. What can I do to increase that percentage?

A: There is an art to getting your mail-out noticed. Here are some tips on preparing mail-outs that sell.

Consider the purpose of your mail-out. It is your first contact with a prospective client, so do not rush into creating such an important impression.

Most companies receive endless mailers, most of which hit the trash. The general rule is that if it looks like a mass mail-out, it is. The result is a full Dumpster. Your potential clients just do not have the time to read impersonal junk that everyone in their businesses receives.

A mailer that makes it past the first cut and to the desk of your target still is not immune. If your mailer is not professional or keen to your target’s personality, it goes *plunk*; Dumpster, here it comes.

To avoid the junk pile, start by spelling your target’s name correctly. A no-name or misspelled mailer is trashed quickly. Make sure you know the target’s gender, too. A male partner of mine, Kim, receives a number of Ms., Mrs. and Miss titles on his mail. Guess what happens to them? *Plunk*.

Another way to garner attention is by designing a one-page mailer. If you have a referral, mention it immediately in the opening paragraph. “So-and-so

referred me” is a simple and great way to grab your reader’s attention.

Your next paragraph should be your “catch.” Explain what you are selling and why yours is better than the competition’s. I call it your competitive advantage.

In your third paragraph, support this with statistics. Tell your target some great things you and your company have done for other clients to make their businesses more profitable. Real-life examples are terrific.

Next, describe your “story” in a short paragraph. Make it interesting. Show your personality, professionalism and more. A good example is an unusually positive circumstance that you and a current client have shared. Your goal is to get your target to want to do business with you.

Finish with one or two lines. “Thank you for your time and consideration. I’m available to meet as your calendar permits” is always nice. End with “sincerely.”

Above all, keep the correspondence professional and business-like. You are not a comedian. You are a mortgage professional. Comedy can be dangerous. By taking careful aim and preparation, your mail-outs may be fewer in number but far more effective in results.

Al Auger is a 22-year veteran of the commercial real estate industry. He has appeared on numerous radio shows. In addition to writing Pure Profits: Pinpoint Winning Properties, Think Like an Investor and Succeed in Commercial Real Estate, he is a developer and real estate financier who has worked with many national clients. Visit his Web site, www.alauger.com. ♦