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Introduction

The process of locating and securing clients is usually long and tiresome. Many times it can feel like a futile effort, however, diligence can result in substantial rewards. Every successful trainer started out with only their knowledge about fitness, and their drive to succeed. In order to expedite your success, it is helpful to determine what resources you have available to help you secure customers, and the best process for getting your customers attention. It is then a matter of selling your services and convincing the client that they need your help.

The Prospecting Process

Prospecting for customers encompasses a broad spectrum of marketing processes. Prospecting can be anything from direct marketing, and face to face sales to radio and TV advertising. For many trainers, mass marketing is prohibitively expensive. For this reason, we will focus on the most cost efficient methods for obtaining customers. These are face to face sales, referral sales, and telemarketing.

Face To Face

By far, the most cost-effective way to secure clients is by talking directly with your potential clients. As you well know, everyone needs to exercise, and a large percentage of the population is currently dieting, or has the desire to lose weight. Use this knowledge to your advantage, and make it a point to talk to people. Always carry you business cards with you, and never pass up the opportunity to speak to a person that you feel may need your help. For most people, it is extremely difficult to start a conversation with a total stranger, but you will find that the bulk of the people you speak to are quite pleasant.

When prospecting in public places, never approach the person by directly soliciting your services. Merely start the conversation by commenting on something that both of you may have in common; the weather seems to be the most common icebreaker. After you have established a rapport with your prospect, ask what the person does for a living, and find out if he/she is into fitness or wants to change his/her body. Ask questions and let your prospect do much of the talking. People usually enjoy talking about themselves, and feel more at ease when given the opportunity to share their interests. EXCHANGE BUSINESS CARDS and ask if the person would be interested in a fitness consultation. If he or she responds positively, schedule a time when you can sit down with the person and go over their fitness goals. It is imperative that you exchange business cards. Your business card is probably the most effective marketing tool that you have. It is the one marketing resource that your prospect can take with him/her and be reminded of your services. Most of the time, your potential client won't be immediately interested in your services. However, he/she may have second thoughts and want your services in the future. It is then that your business card becomes invaluable.

By obtaining your prospects business card, you have created a sales lead that you can exploit in the future. Take some notes about your meeting and the date on the back of the card, and put it in a card file with the rest of your sales leads. Within a couple of days, call the prospect, remind him/her of your previous meeting, and once again solicit your services.

With regard to the business cards, it is most effective to file them by date, and make follow up phone calls to your prospects on a monthly basis. The goals and desires of people change, and many times, what you think is a dead lead will turn into a sale.

Referrals

Possibly the most effective way to obtain sales leads and secure clients is from referrals from your existing client base. Make it a point during every consultation to ask your client if they know of anyone who would be interested in your services. An easy way to obtain customer referrals is provide your client with a form that he/she can fill out. This way, it does not appear that you are trying to push yourself onto their friends and acquaintances. The Trainers' Marketing Association sales pre-formatted referral forms with sections that allow you to create incentives for your customers to complete the form and return it to you. Once again, everyone knows somebody who wants to lose weight, or get into shape. Make it easy for your client to tell you who he thinks would benefit from your services.

Telemarketing

Most of the time, the people that you meet and prospect through the face to face process will not be initially receptive to your services. However, many will consider your services at a later time, and could potentially become customers with the proper encouragement. This is the reason that Telemarketing is so important, and so effective. Every time you meet a prospect, make sure that you get some form of contact information from them so that you can call them at a later date.

As you build your contact list, begin filing your prospects information by contact date. Obtain a card file that you can section off by months or weeks, and file your prospects information on cards by the last date contacted. Set aside some time every week to prospect by telephone, and begin calling your sales leads. After you contact a lead, take notes about the conversation on the card in the file, and move it into the current date section. One of the most important parts of this process, and one of the most easily overlooked, is to never throw a sales lead away. Keep it in the card file, and contact the lead every six months, just to make sure nothing has changed. You spent a lot of energy trying to get the lead in the first place, don't just give up on it because the prospect said no once.

The Telemarketing Process

It sounds easy, but telemarketing is the most difficult sales process there is. In order to make it more pleasant and effective, you must make some preparations before you pick up the phone. Arguably, the most important part of the telemarketing process is the script. You may feel that you can sell your services better by being spontaneous, but always have a script that you can rely on to start or lead the conversation and create a sale. The script should include a brief introduction followed by the reason for your call. If you met the person before, or were referred by an acquaintance, it may be appropriate to mention this while introducing yourself.

The script should be simple, and contain an introduction, the reason for your call, and a number of questions that you can ask the prospect. The questions should be primarily open

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