James White

> "SUCCESS is where preparation & opportunity meet
> *- Bobby Unser*

SIX-STEP GUIDE

On Following Up On New Leads And Prospects

In an age where the consumer holds the power, and everything is so immediate, you need to ensure that new leads are followed up promptly, otherwise the opportunity of securing business could pass you by.

Here are 6 key tips to use when you get a new lead

1. When You Get Sight Of A Lead, Respond Quickly And Professionally

It's a good idea to respond in a timely fashion. You won't always be the only person to be approached so ensure you respond within 12-24 hours. If you are out of the office, ensure you have a messaging service switched on, thanking the prospect for their message and when it will be dealt with.

Another good idea is to set up an automated marketing response which can send an email to the prospect saying you will be in contact which can then remind you that you have a task to do in following up on the new lead.

The speed of your response has a major impact on your chance of winning business. Leave it too long, and other prospects could be too far ahead.

2. When You Are Going To Arrange To Call, Send Your Prospect A Reminder

Sending a reminder to your prospect will give you the opportunity to outline a brief overview of what you will discuss, how long it will take and give them the opportunity to prepare.

Ideally, send a reminder two days before and then one hour before. It makes you look professional and someone who values their own time. This is another process that can be managed through an automated service which will save you time and will be one less thing to remember to do!

3. When You Engage With A Prospect, Look Professional, Listen And Take Notes To Impress

First impressions count, so it is vital to look professional when meeting with your prospect. Listen and seek to understand what the prospect wants before trying to offer your product or service and look professional in the way in which you respond.

Look good, smell good and have a nice notebook and pen ready to take notes. It gives the impression that you are ready to find out about your prospect.

At the end of the meeting, clarify with your prospect that you have covered all of the points that they wanted you to. Repeat the key points of the meeting and what has been agreed by the prospect. Finally, (presuming you wish to work with them) confirm a date and time for when the next conversation or meeting will take place... don't leave with them saying "I'll be in touch".

4. When You Have Finished Your Meeting With Your Prospect, Follow Up Quickly And Set Expectations

Follow up your meeting with an email to ask how they thought the meeting went and if there are any further questions. Do this within 24 hours of your meeting whilst you are still fresh in their mind... and them in yours!

5. When You Follow Up, Don't Focus On Price, Focus On Your Value And Your Ability To Solve Their Problems

If you listened carefully and took down comprehensive notes during your meeting, then you will have a good idea of your prospect's pain points. Focus on how you will be able to solve their problems, the value you provide and the benefits this will bring to their business. Help your prospect to see a better future by working with you.

6. When You Have Followed Up Initially, Follow Up Again And Again

Winning in sales is all about persistence. After your initial follow up email, don't just leave it there. Ensure you follow up again – maybe use different forms of medium such as social media or a phone call instead of another email.

If you're not hearing back from your prospect, think back to your first meeting. Did it really go that well? Check through your notes. What signs did they give you to suggest that there was a potential to work further?