

Grading Your Leads, Clients & Referral Sources

As a sales/marketing professional, you know spending time with your clients is imperative to your success and continued business with these clients. Therefore, your personal time becomes your most valuable asset. But with so many clients vying for this time, more than one sales executive has found himself burning the candle at both ends to achieve sales goals and to produce effective client support (non-intrusive, but consistent). Clearly, there must be a better solution to optimize your time and productivity to receive the highest return for your efforts. And there is: Grade your leads and clients.

This simply means evaluating each of your clients based on several factors that allow you to determine how often you need to maintain contact and what kind of marketing approach each client requires. Some of these factors include the volume of business they produce, the frequency with which they produce that business, their physical location, and their accessibility. Then you categorize clients according to grade – A, B, or C – and prioritize your client-focused time based on their sales volume and support need. You are working smarter, not harder, better using the time you have.

“A” Clients

For example, an “A” client is one with whom you must make frequent personal contact, perhaps once or twice a week. Their volume of business and servicing needs demands it. You cannot afford *not* to be continually in front of your “A” clients, usually reinforced by telephone and e-mail. Your “A” clients will take the largest block of your time, and they justify it with the higher volume of business.

“B” Clients

Your “B” clients need attention, but the sort that can be maintained through the normal course of business. They do not produce as much volume as your “A” client, so a different kind and frequency of contact is required. A monthly face-to-face visit or a phone call followed by e-mail is sufficient to maintain a productive relationship. You create a presence that assures them you are near and ready to serve their needs. This can be achieved with a blend of communication methods. For example, hard copy marketing pieces that will linger between your personal contacts.

“C” Clients

While “C” clients require less frequent attention due to lower volume or greater geographic distance, your support and time with them is still essential. This necessitates a consistent presence, such as regular e-mail contact supplemented by scheduled phone calls, reminding them your services are always available to them whenever needed.

Clearly, the concept of spending adequate time with each client is not new, but perhaps one that needed defining in terms of most efficient use of time. The system of grading your clients simply prioritizes high-maintenance versus low-maintenance with volume of results and allows you to allocate your time and other resources accordingly. Ideally, this leaves each client feeling appropriately cared for and results in higher sales with less burnout for you.

An easy way to get started in this process is to complete the attached worksheet and begin grading your prospects and clients. Then you can begin to build an integrated marketing approach that delivers the best results.

Focus Publications provides marketing approaches and tools will integrate your efforts in the field, on the Internet and via email. To learn more visit <http://www.focuspub.com> or call us at 1-888-276-9875.