

Treat Your Prospects Like Clients

By Donna Rawady

If you provide a product, a service, or propose an idea you undoubtedly find yourself in "sales," whether you serve as a resource within or outside of an organization.

For most of us, our passion is centered on delivering our product or service.

Fewer of us might enjoy the sales process and/or relish prospect communications and the sales cycle. Yet, the sales cycle and our working relationships with our prospects are crucial components to our overall success.

One way to increase your enthusiasm about the sales cycle and working with prospects is to treat them with the same care and service you offer your clients

Take the time to generate engaging communications. Seek to understand their needs and respond and serve them accordingly. Establish objectives and deliver on agreed-upon target dates.

Respect confidentiality and maintain integrity at all times.

Your intentional value-added service to your prospects is an investment that may produce immediate business results, nurture future business opportunities or offer an opportunity to enhance your reputation and demonstrate your professionalism and capabilities.

If you are the prospect, remember that service providers, salespeople and/or your employees put a great deal of time and service into proposal writing with the understanding that the desired results may, or may not, come to fruition.

A simple acknowledgement that the proposal has been received — especially when you've invited it — is always appreciated. And if and when you know that you are not going to retain that person as a resource, or approve their proposal, it's a great professional courtesy to offer them an honest update and/or guidance as to when you might appreciate reconnecting for further discussion.

Regardless of the nature of our business relationships, we get the best results when we genuinely value and serve each other.

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