
The Four Abilities to Yes

The final ability that can help increase your sales percentage

By Terry Begue

Editor's Note: To see the full series The Four Abilities to Yes, go to www.paintmag.com/FourAbilities.shtml.

WOW-ABILITY

Wow-ability is the art of impressing your customers. Notice I said customers, not prospects. The other three abilities are focused on selling to prospective customers. Wowing your prospects helps you close more sales. But the best benefit of wow-ability comes after the job is complete. I like to think of this as referrals on steroids!

Nothing is more powerful to growing your business than a customer endorsement. Asking for a referral isn't enough; the referral must be earned. In other words, you need to impress your customers with your services. Here are three things that will not only get you remembered but also will probably win you a priceless referral as well.

OVERDELIVER – DELIVER MORE THAN YOU PROMISE

Earlier I said that I make a lot of promises, and I keep every one of them. If you want to beat the competition, you must do more than what's expected with no expectation of receiving more money. After all, how hard is it to do little things for your customer? Clean out the gutters, cut branches scraping the siding or paint the mailbox to match the house. If you're inside, clean the dust off the ceiling fans, change hard-to-reach light bulbs or vacuum behind the couch while it's away from the wall.

In my business, we don't ask. We just do little extras, but at the end when I'm reviewing the job, I tell my clients everything we did. Many offer to pay extra money, but instead I tell them, "Just

send me a job." That's an example of earning a referral, and it's like money in the bank.

TESTIMONIALS

The most powerful selling and marketing tool is technically not even yours! It's the borrowed words of your customers; it's a summary of their experience working with you.

Few business owners use recommendations to promote their businesses. It amazes me that testimonials are underused because they're free! They cost nothing more than the time it takes to collect them.

What someone says about you or your company is a hundred times more influential than anything you say. Remember, most buyers hire a company they're comfortable with. It really helps customers to know that their friends and others had a positive experience. And what's the best way to get testimonials? Simply ask. If you treat your customers well, they'll be happy to endorse you.

Use testimonials in all your marketing. Leave a list of references with your prospects when you're on a sales call and add them to your website. Even more powerful are videos of your customers saying good things about you. Go to beguepainting.com and click on Testimonials to see both video and written comments by my customers. You just can't have too many endorsements! Most won't take the time to read or view every one of them, but they make a strong statement.

RISK REVERSAL

Even if prospects like and trust you, they still want the relationship to be hassle-free. Remove any remaining risk by taking all responsibility. Make sure your prospects know that until they're

completely satisfied, they won't receive a bill.

As legitimate business owners, we all stand behind our work, but few business owners use responsibility as a selling point. Reap the benefits of assuming responsibility by assuring customers that you won't charge them until they're satisfied. I call that giving your customers permission to nitpick.

If customers aren't happy with your work, they will do one of two things. They'll say something and hope you'll make it right. Or if they're nonconfrontational, they'll say nothing and just go away, never to use you – or refer you – again. Be sure they understand that you want to know if they're happy.

I found that assuming the responsibility forces you to stay in close contact with your customers. This also pushes you and your crew to provide quality. I tell my crew, "If I don't get paid, I can't pay you either." So the job must be perfect. And you know what? I've always been paid! This dialogue with my customers and crew creates a win-win-win situation for all of us.

Some of these ideas may seem a little shocking, but if you want more business, you'll need to step out of your comfort zone. Most competitors won't even think of these things! Your customers' concerns provide you with an opportunity to stand out. Remember, successful people do the things unsuccessful people are unwilling to do! APC

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