

# Sales & Pricing

## Introduction

Without sales, even the greatest idea is destined for failure. The following information is provided as a starting point in the development of a successful sales campaign. Each region and franchise will require a custom-tailored campaign to achieve the most effective results. A significant part of your time and effort will be spent developing, implementing, and refining the sales process.

## Phone Selling

Mastering phone selling will help grow your business into a profitable entity as well as convey professionalism to potential clients. When discussing the services that Caring for People Services provides it is essential to direct the conversation towards quick sales and to provide the client with enough information to land the job. People who call inevitably have more questions than should ever be answered over the phone so it is important to recognize what information needs to be given over the phone and what information can wait until a sales representative arrives at the job.

Regardless of the type of client you are dealing with, you should always ask a few key questions that will guide you in providing pricing to your client.

## Phone Scripts

Below is a sample phone script demonstrating a Caring for People Services employee receiving a call from a potential client. The client is indicated by “C” and the Caring for People Services employee by “E.” Also note the key phrases listed throughout the script. These are statements that a customer might mention during the course of a conversation that will warrant suggesting a particular service.

## Sample Script

E: Thank you for calling Caring for People Services how can I help you?

Or if the call has been transferred from an office manager:

E: Thanks for holding, this is Al.

## Scenario 1: Pricing Request

C: “I’d like to know how much you charge for your services.

E: Let me first start by taking down some basic information and then I can give you an idea of a) what kind of services we can offer you and b) how much those services will cost.

C: Okay.

## **Customer Information**

E: What's your name?

E: And your phone number in case we get disconnected?

E: And how did you hear about us?

## **Collecting Customer Information**

During your initial contact with the customer, it is helpful to collect as much information as possible. This can be used for marketing research. The Customer Phone Form is located in the Appendix/Forms section and can also be downloaded from the Caring for People Services website:

## **Focus on Customer Needs, Not Yours**

Don't try to sell the customer something you wouldn't buy if you were in their shoes. It is totally irrelevant whether or not this purchase suits your needs; what is relevant is whether it suits the customer's. That perspective empowers you to up-sell effectively and with integrity.

## **Referrals**

Clients obtained by referral are the most dependable and easiest to deal with of any client. It is important to capitalize on the goodwill generated by properly servicing your clients. A happy customer is more powerful than the well-engineered marketing campaign.

There is nothing wrong with asking your clients for referrals. In fact, at Caring for People Services we train our employees to ask for referrals once they are certain we are doing a great job.

## **Trust is Key**

The reason referrals (and their cousins, testimonials) are so effective is because they carry immediate credibility. If your dentist recommends an orthodontist for your kid's braces, you're much more likely to act on that referral than if you hear an orthodontist's ad on the radio or get a flyer in the mail.

The price tag for the referral might have been a lunch, a phone call, or the cost of attending a conference. But buying advertising airtime or producing direct mailers racks up significant dollars – and typically results in a much lower response rate.

If you want to develop referrals and testimonials, which are more public and generic forms of referrals, try using these tactics:

## **Don't Forget to Ask**

Many people believe that doing a good job is all that's necessary to generate referrals. Even when your Caring for People Services customers are terrifically satisfied, they forget to refer business mostly

because your needs are not on their minds. Caring for People Services franchisees should be in the habit of asking every satisfied client if he or she knows somebody who would also appreciate their services.

### **Wait until Clients are Happy**

Going the extra mile can pay off big time. If you operate your Caring for People Services franchise, strictly adhering to our mission and principles, most of your customers will inevitably end up completely satisfied. A recent study conducted by NRS Consulting, a Madison, Wisconsin research firm which specializes in home building, found that service providers that rated 91% or better in customer satisfaction garnered six or more referrals from previous buyers, while service providers with ratings of 67% or less got nary a one.

Every time you get positive feedback, you have an opportunity to ask for a referral.

### **Don't Worry About Rejection**

There's nothing wrong with asking for a referral. Not everyone is going to need what you are selling, but a quality product has a market. Ask. Ask. Ask.

### **Flatter Egos**

Make a big deal about a referral or testimonial, so customers know how important it is for your business. Vickie Sullivan, a Caring for People Services franchisee in Tempe, Arizona, turns client testimonials into multimedia presentations that she posts on her Caring for People Services web site. These stories have been instrumental in converting 'mildly interested' prospects into clients.

### **Invest in Customer Relationships**

Keeping your best buyers up to date is a sure route to getting referrals. You can, for instance, use Microsoft Office Small Business Edition 2003 to integrate customer contact and sales information. Within Microsoft Office, Outlook 2003 with Business Contact Manager can help you follow up on leads and opportunities. Also within Office, both Publisher and Word allow you to create cost-effective cards and mailers, which can be saved as templates.

Office applications enable you to conveniently build a customer database to send out a variety of timed and appropriate customer communications, whether surface or e-mail, including:

- Holiday greetings or event invitations with discount or premium offers that have a sweetener if the buyer refers a new customer.
- Press releases about company growth or changes, so clients feel valued and in-the-loop when you later call to ask for a referral.
- Monthly or quarterly newsletters or e-news about your industry, which include a feature about the reciprocal benefits of referrals or a coupon that rewards recommendations.
- Thank-you notes when a customer buys your product or, if it's a big-ticket item, on the anniversary of a contract. Then call a week later to check their interest in more work and also to ask for a referral. Do not ask for referrals in the thank-you note; it will drain all the gratitude from your message.

## **Join a Networking Group**

Trade associations and professional organizations are good places to generate referrals. Don't forget community service or religious groups, chambers of commerce and charitable organizations. There are also groups specifically set up for referrals, such as Business Networking International, which has local chapters around the country.

## **Think Vertical**

The customers of your suppliers, vendors, and support services might also want your product. Create a reciprocal arrangement.

## **One Last Tip**

Try to set up a system that includes client referrals as a seamless part of your marketing plan. Mariette Edwards, an Atlanta area Caring for People Services franchisee, encourages referrals by offering a complimentary gift certificate for an hour of her services to any client who requests one. "Clients love being able to pass along my services to people they know, which are value-added for them and an effortless referral program for me."

## **Group Presentations**

Group presentations are very helpful in gaining recognition in the community. See the Chapter on Marketing and Sales Promotion for more details on presentations.

## **Pricing Policies and Fee Structures**

Researching your competition will provide valuable insight into determining how to price your services. Your company will not need to lowball competition to win customers. Caring for People Services has worked hard to create a cutting edge professional image that will allow for competitive pricing. The services you provide will often be a cut above the competition, given your education, training, and strict adherence to the principles of Caring for People Services.

Business services are provided as 'suggested' prices. The prices furnished below should be considered a 'maximum' retail price. There is no representation that the use of the following suggested prices will in fact optimize profits. The recommended suggested retail prices will be adjusted periodically and may be tailored for regional and/or national pricing structures.