

## **5 Sales Prospecting Ideas That Really Work**

Ask any salesperson what the most valuable thing they can have is and they'll tell you: a prospect. A good sales lead is the bread and butter of sales. Without leads, a salesperson is likely just floundering through cold calls hoping to score and find one of those less than one percent who are likely to become prospects.

Here are five ways that you can use right away to generate not only prospects now, but continually "farm" them into the future.

### **#1 - Give Away Your Prospects**

This might sound counter intuitive, but it works. You probably have friends who are in the business of sales. Most of them are probably in a business or market similar to yours. If you have clients or prospects who are likely interested in or could use something one of your friends sells, make the match. Giving these types of referrals is actually good for business as it shows the client (or prospective client) that you are thinking about their needs and it sends potential business to your friends and colleagues, who will appreciate the back scratching and will likely return the favor.

This can even be used in-house. If you have a prospect or are presented with one that has a particular interest or tie-in that is similar to one that one of your colleagues in the sales room has, why not pass the prospect along to them, since they'll have the better chance of making a deal? If your colleagues in the office see you doing this, they'll see the team effort and return the favor when presented with the chance.

On both counts, you've just planted seeds that will eventually grow into sales prospects that are literally just handed to you in the future as these favors get repaid.

### **#2 - Go Through Your Sales Lists and Do an Ad-Hoc Survey**

Contact customers you've sold to in the past or even current clients you haven't spoken with too recently and do a quick "customer satisfaction" survey. Ask them what they like about your product, service, etc. and make sure to ask them what they don't like. Work to improve on their dislikes and, more to the point, see if there are services or products that you offer that they may be able to use and not be aware of.

Whether or not you make a sale directly from these surveys, you will be building customer confidence and appreciation, which leads to positive word of mouth. That means sales later. Again, you've just planted more seeds.

### #3 - Work Your Warm Lists

Those Warm Leads you've cultivated over time are gold mines if you actively work them regularly. These are the people you've lost contact with over time or weren't sure were good prospects and sidelined in favor of better opportunities. If you regularly go through these lists for a little prospecting, you'll be rewarded with the occasional nugget.

### #4 - Suspicious Prospects Are Cold

A potential sell who is suspicious about sharing any information with you is someone who will likely never trust you enough to actually broker a deal. Send them to your cold list for your low touch system and move on. Spending time trying to warm them up will almost assuredly be wasted.

### #5 - Cold Doesn't Mean Dead

The above-mentioned low-touch system can take those cold leads and turn them warm or even hot. A continued marketing plan that targets these cold lists with hands-off reminders of who you are can eventually change their view of you. Making the occasional personal contact with them can suddenly move them from your cold list to a hot prospect. So never give up.

