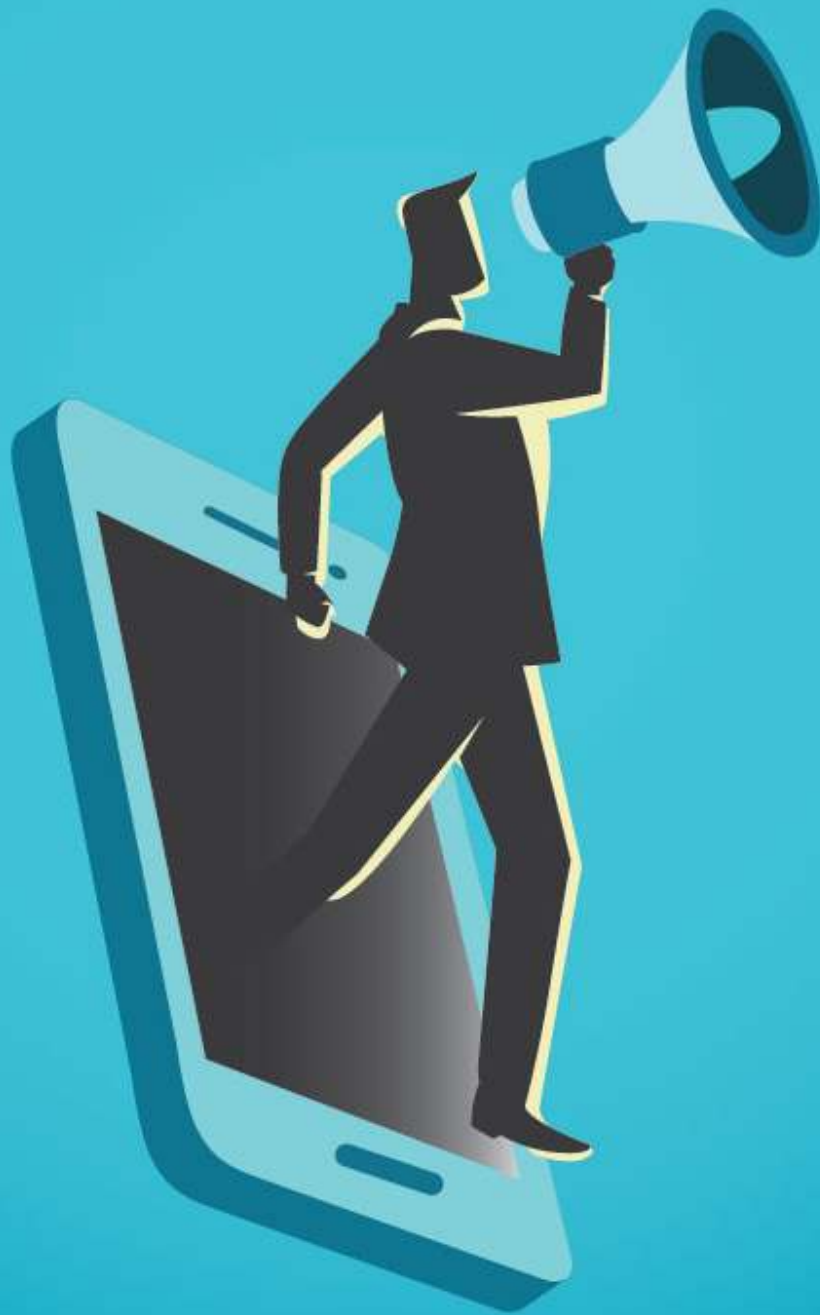


FINDING CUSTOMERS

Attracting, building trust, developing



EDWARD C BLANCHARD

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Seven Simple Steps to More Clients

In my work as a business coach I meet with people every day who have dreams of creating success in their business. Sadly, most of them are saying the same thing, I hate marketing, I just want to do what Im good at without having to market myself. The truth about getting more clients is that its not that difficult, it just requires following some simple steps.

FOCUS:

How do you get to where you want to be unless you know where you are going? I always teach my clients a visualization in which they imagine where they want to be professionally in 1 year from today. How much money do you want to be earning? How many hours a week do you want to work? What kind of clients do you want to work with?

STRATEGIES:

Once youre clear about where you want to be, you need to create strategies to get there. I tell people, if you already knew what strategies to use, youd probably already be there. Strategies help you to chunk big visions into tangible, bite size action steps

ACCOUNTABILITY:

How accountable are you to yourself? Most people I meet in business for themselves, find it far too easy to slide in keeping their agreements with themselves. The magical thing about coaching is that when you have a witness to your accountability, you are much more likely to do what you said you do. Just knowing that someone cares and will ask you every week, How did that action step go?, is huge incentive to staying on track.

DISCOVERY:

As a former psychologist, one of my passions is helping people discover how they block themselves and get in their own way of success. What I find is that everyone needs to reprogram some self-limiting beliefs, like I don't have what it takes to succeed or I don't deserve to have a lot of money. Another block is that most people suffer from subconscious sabotaging strategies, like procrastination. These need to be reversed. Finally, everyone I've ever met has a monstrous, overly developed inner critic, which I call the Gremlin. In discovery you learn to identify the voice of your Gremlin and learn to tame it way down.

PERSPECTIVE:

We all spin our wheels and get caught up in our narrow perspective. The best investment we can make in getting more clients is to have people around us that give us the option of another perspective

SUPPORT:

If you are in business for yourself, you need all the support you can get. As you put yourself out there to get more clients, you are assuming the responsibility of helping these clients. Who helps you? Who do you lean on? It is invaluable to have a support team or a committed ally in your corner.

CELEBRATION:

How often do you celebrate yourself? As a coach who teaches people how to get more clients I find that learning to celebrate not only your successes but also your efforts is the way to a long a healthy career. By learning to stop, pause and validate yourself for what youve done keeps this process light, fun and exciting. Also, think of how impossible it is for your gremlin to beat you up, if you are busy celebrating yourself! It is one of of the joys of my work that I get to help people truly celebrate themselves.

How Can You Attract Customers And Clients?

Are you starting a new business? Ever wonder how you can attract customers to your new business? First of all if you are going to be in businesses for yourself do something you really, really enjoy. Be passionate about whatever business or work you are in. Keep yourself rested and try to have some fun every day of your life. Other people which include customers to your business are not attracted to people who stressed out, worried all the time, tired all the time or does not seem to be having too much fun at what they are working at.

When it comes to doing things you enjoy, it really shows to others. If you love what you are doing you will become very good at it. You will learn more about it quicker than a subject you are not the least bit interested in but just have to do in order to earn a paycheck. You will talk about what you love and are passionate about. You will connect with other people and they will catch that same joy you experience and communicate. Things will happen.

Be bold, choose your own path and proceed with that path unstoppable. Even in business, people are attracted to individuals who choose their own path and pursue it with a vibrant passion.

Be meticulous about details. Pay attention to your presentations, the packaging and the delivery of your services or goods.

Arrange your business and your life so you can take advantage of creativity at the moment it happens. This might be a hard one for people who have to be on a particular schedule. I personally despise schedules. They tear me up. I cannot function on a set schedule. When I do I feel like someone else's robot. The most wonderful thing about my lifestyle now is this freedom to sleep, eat and work when my mind and body says to do those things.

Take care of yourself extremely well. Become extremely and incredibly selfish; manage your time, your space and your life well. You will end up having more to give and more to share. After all if you dont take care of yourself first and extremely well how can you expect to serve the needs of others?

Respond immediately to phone calls and e-mails. Answer all questions to the fullest of your ability. Go the extra mile. This really does work more often than not.

Do more than you are asked to do, provide more, go further with people than you are paid for. I was this type of person even when I worked for someone else.

I once worked as a clerk-typist and was called upon to do the work of the account clerk while she was out on maternity leave. Before she left she was to give me training. Well, training was not enough for me. I took extensive notes and ended up writing an entire procedure manual for her particular position, which helped me tremendously while she was out on her maternity leave. My supervisor at the time was quite impressed. He ended up utilizing that job procedure manual for other staff members.

I, of course, was like the working 9 to 5 girl who did all the work and received none of the credit. It was truly all taking and no giving. Oh I got a Thank-you and an extra pat on the back from my supervisor. My peers were not so happy with me, however. I stayed there only about a year needless to say. I had a lot of fun in that job! And, I did go the extra mile just for the internal joy of it. All I needed to do was a few simple chores for this girl while she was out on maternity leave, but that streak of creativity hit me and I ended up writing an entire procedure job manual for that particular job! I enjoyed writing the manual more than the boring chores of the actual job. So..add value just for the joy of it! I did not get extra money in my paycheck for all that extra work.

Decide what your personal values are in life. Spend your days living in harmony with your values. You will become energized, at peace with yourself, focused and attractive to others. Work on becoming YOU as a unique, gifted, and unforgettable individual. I know I have been pretty unforgettable in some of my jobs, not always in positive ways however. I certainly try, and keep on trying, always never giving up those things in life that are most valuable to me.

These are just a few tips that may help you get started attracting others to your business.

Convert leads into clients and boost your sales

A major part of keeping profitable and growing your business is maintaining a focus on business development. Even when you've got the right mix of work, clients and employees you should be looking for new sales leads. Establish a process that ensures your existing customers don't get neglected while you manage new business opportunities in a cost- and time-effective manner.

1. Generate sales leads.

Identify the types of companies you want to work with and a realistic number of companies you want to target over a given period of time. For example: An accountant with experience in the marketing industry might decide to target five opportunities per month focussed on marketing consultancies.

Finding potential clients and identifying new opportunities can be done through networking events, tenders listed in newspapers and industry magazines and headlines in newspapers about new projects and industry seminars. Keep an eye on your industry and stay aware of new developments.

Track the companies you approach in a database (you could use Microsoft Office Excel or Access). Tracking should cover the obvious things company contact details as well as details of what was discussed, potential work, actions and more.

2. Qualify the leads.

Once you have companies identified, review it to ensure they are realistic opportunities. Some areas to think about include:

- > Do you have the right contacts to get started.
- > Do you have the right services to offer them?
- > How can their website help you understand them better?
- > Do you have any conflicts of interest in pursuing this company?
- > Does this client have growth potential or would it be a quick job?
- > Who makes the decisions? How can you reach them?

3. Raise your business profile.

By raising your company profile (no matter how small you are) you'll be able to generate new business with less effort. As a leader in the industry, new business will come to you. There are many ways to raise your profile; you could try sponsoring events, adverts and gaining media coverage. The size, location and target market of your business will dictate the medium to use and the areas to cover.

4. Show them what you're made of.

Start to reach your qualified opportunities by showcasing your company's products. Send them a brochure or a copy of any newsletters you produce and invite them to join; show off examples of your work; highlight relevant media articles. However, if you're using e-mail, avoid being overly intrusive or they may regard it as spam.

Develop standard template letters in Word to send to potential clients to accompany your credentials/brochures. Link to your database (Excel, Access or Outlook) when merging the letters and envelopes to ensure you don't have to re-enter details.

There is no specified time for this courting, so be patient. It could be six months before anything comes to fruition.

5. Set a meeting time.

So you're in the door. Now you need to sell yourself. Tailor the meeting to suit the way you operate as a business. It could be a formal PowerPoint presentation or a discussion over coffee. You may have no choice for the style of the meeting but make sure you are comfortable and well prepared. During the meeting be sure to demonstrate the knowledge you have developed in the previous stages.

6. Follow up.

You've presented your capabilities and ideas. Don't stop there. Follow up is essential. This is a major part of the process and should be taken as seriously as the other steps. You'll probably be able to build on ideas from the meeting, or you might find an interesting/relevant article or statistics you could send to re-open discussion. Even if you don't have anything to send, thank them for the opportunity.

How Easily You Can Make Clients And Prospects Remember Your Name

Why should you use promotional gifts to help promote your company? Isn't a business card just as good? On the contrary, promotional gifts play a strong psychological role in convincing people in your industry that they need you.

Take an example from Robert Cialdini's book, *The Psychology of Persuasion*, in which he explains that one secret to persuading people is the Rule of Reciprocity ingrained in us since birth by society. Because it is beneficial for humans to be able to exchange and share, with the expectation that we will be repaid in the future, people are more likely to give in to your requests if you give them something first.

Have you ever wondered why Hare Krishnas give you a flower before asking you to listen to them talk about the benefits of their religion?

Promotional gifts fall into the same general category but with the added benefit of having your name, phone number, website and logo printed on them.

The best kind of promotional products is the kind that provides some utility to the end-user. While pens and calendars were great to keep you top-of-mind for your audience in the past, today there are numerous hi-tech options such as thumb-drives, laser-pointers, digital picture frames, and even MP3 players with your information engraved on them. The more an object with your name on it gets used, the more likely someone will be to remember who you are and what you do.

Of course, once you provide the promotional gift to your client, prospect or influencer, don't forget to ask for your return favor. You can do it right up front, as when you receive the complimentary, pre-printed return address labels in the mail. Or later on, like when you receive government candidate pins or buttons in the hopes that you will cast your vote at the proper time.

Remember that each promotional object that you give out is an opportunity to start a conversation, and opening to ask for a favor in return.

Capture Clients with Words and Graphics

Do the marketing pieces you send out lack pizzazz and personality? Are they capturing the clients you want to work with?

As your company's in-house graphics person—perhaps more by default than by intention—you're pressed to be a jack/jill-of-all-trades. You want to do a great job of producing promotional pieces, but you have little time to learn advanced design and marketing skills.

Your ongoing challenge is learning to do a little more to get a lot better results—quickly and painlessly.

How can you improve them? What Techniques Can You Apply NOW?

Take these 5 design/marketing tips to heart. Using them consistently will save you time in the long run and attract more customers.

#1 Develop a brand identity and stick with it

Branding is an all-encompassing concept that brings together your business's product mix, pricing, ambience, promotions, identity, and much more. From a graphics point of view, it's your logo, stationery, business card, website, and flyers that create a graphic personality. Your descriptive tag line bonds these pieces with added pizzazz.

Think about familiar brands like Nike's. You know what it offers instantly when you see the logo (the Nike swoosh) and tag line (Just Do It!). You want that kind of instant recognition for your company.

The results? Your messages get noticed because you've built credibility and recognition into your brand through consistent use of graphic identity techniques.

#2 “Hook” customers with persuasive writing and a “call to action”

Make a habit of doing these two things: Use persuasive words that “hook” their interest, and include a well-defined call to action in every piece. When writing marketing pieces, what can you do to make them more effective? Apply these basics:

- Know who you are writing for and keep their preferences in mind as you write each word.
- Put your message in terms of “you” rather than “I” or “we.” People don't care about what “we” offer; they care about how your product or service can make their lives better.
- Make it clear what your readers should do, think, or believe as a result of reading the information you present.
- State your intention as a command—known as a “call to action.” It can be as simple as “Call Today” or “Order It Now.”

The results? The whole point is to encourage your prospects to take action! Whether it's to send an email or pick up the phone and call you, using precision wordsmithing persuades your prospects to take action...now!

#3 Use digital photography and illustrations to add “kick” to your marketing pieces

A ho-hum marketing piece generates few calls. What a waste! Learn the ins and outs of working with digital photography and illustrations — so much easier with Internet resources galore to choose from.

A few quick tips:

- Place your strongest image in the top half of the page where it will get the best visibility.
- Using one large picture makes a stronger impression than several smaller ones.
- Group several small pictures so they collectively form a single element.
- Juxtapose a small picture with a larger one for contrast.

The results? Photos and illustrations help you add the “eye” appeal that translates into “buy” appeal.

#4 Jazz up your layouts so your most important points stand out

Break up monotonous lines of text with attractive “pull quotes” or “call-outs,” which make critical information stand out on the page. To create a pull quote, just copy a provocative or challenging statement from your text and paste it into a different position on the page using large, contrasting type. Add decorative quotation marks, border it with lines, or place it inside a box to jazz it up.

The results? The points of interest you’ve added draw the reader’s eye to the exact point you want them to remember.

#5 Ensure professional results by using the right file formats

You've just created a flyer that will be printed and mailed to your clients. To finish it off, you import a needed graphic from a website and send your file to the printers. Ouch! The resulting graphics looks blotchy and amateur in print. What went wrong? Graphic file formats for the Internet (72 dpi, low-resolution JPG and GIF) and file formats for offset printing (300 dpi, high-resolution TIF and EPS) are totally different animals. In this case, you've used the wrong file format and resolution for your purpose.

The results? Choosing the right file formats gives you a professional-looking document with clear images and the quality you want.

Start using these five easy techniques to add pizzazz and personality to your marketing pieces now, and you will "hook" new clients immediately.

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