

Hanging with the Right People

The benefits of high-level interaction.

Last week I posed the question - Can you really fill your sales funnel with better clients and faster closings by making the most of your relationships? My answer remains the same, yes, if you are selective about the people with whom you participate and collaborate.

Knowing you must be the priority. If those with whom you interact do not agree with this priority, they will seldom bring you better clients and faster closes.

This is very important. Do not miss this. The greatest referral sources with whom I have interacted have been those most willing to be educated about me, my business, and my clients. These people want to know what I do as a business consultant. They want to know why I am a business consultant. They want to know how my consulting services differ from my coaching services. Once they are comfortable about these matters, they want to know how to introduce me, who I want to be introduced to and the best way to contact me.

If a potential referral source does not have the time or the attention span to learn about you and your business, they are not a source in which you can afford to invest. If they do not have time for you, they will not take time to refer you.

For us to expect that another busy business owner will refer us without enough knowledge about us, is at best, a long shot. We must equip them with our personal story, our foundation business story, our target audience, our systems, and our services if we want them to bring us our ideal clients. They will need to know the types of clients that are both profitable to our businesses and pleasurable to serve. We must adequately educate our referral sources about our ideal clients, where to find them and how to introduce us to them.

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Since 2009, I have built two successful businesses that have produced sufficient incomes for me and my employees through this very method of marketing. What I have learned is that people tell people what they know about people they know, and the more people know about you the more they tell people about you.

This may be news to you, but most people who want to refer you to their people will stop where they get stuck. If they lack the information needed to

talk accurately and intelligently about your business for two to three minutes, they will seldom start that conversation.

Will they talk? Yes, and they might give you an at-a-boy, a vote of confidence and maybe a review, but they will not bring you the clients and closed business that you will need to build your business.

The people that you choose to share life with will make the greatest impact in your life and business. If your intention is to build your business by word of mouth (referrals), you will need to begin with finding people who have the time, the attention span, and the willingness to proactively make you known to those they know.

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As a business owner looking to grow your business, you must be selective about the people with whom you collaborate and participate. If they are not serious about growing their business and sincere about helping you grow yours, they are not your people for this purpose.

Stop and ask yourself, who are the people in your life and around your business that you know could bring you more of your desired clients? Make the list. What information might they be lacking? The only way to know this is to reach out and ask for their time. Tell them that you believe the two of you could get better results for each other. Tell them that you believe that with a little knowledge and a better strategy, you both could be saving time and making money.

Once you have their buy-in, arrange a time where you and the potential referral source to talk uninterrupted – book an appointment. While in this appointment - #1 Share why you love your business and where you want to go with it. #2 If they get your “why” and “where”, close your meeting by scheduling a second meeting to talk about your “who” and “what”. #3 Begin the strategy conversation and end with one more scheduled meeting. In that meeting, you both will want to teach each other how to ask good introductory questions. You also want to teach them how to introduce you, how to edify you and how to book an appointment for you. Close this meeting with a commitment to meet again and to practice on 5-6 of your clients that best fit each other's target market.

When you get together in this last meeting, you are looking to solid up a commitment to help each other. A review of activities and a conversation about other top relationships that are good referrals for each of you should be the bulk of this meeting. You are approaching a place where you are agreeing

to have proactive conversations to bring your referral partner more and better business.

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Lastly, you must **Follow up**. This is about perpetuating the process. We can chat about where we are getting stuck, how things worked or did not work with a recent referral and always share more information.

Two things as I close - #1 The frequency of your interaction will drive your referral success. #2 The people with whom you interact will most often determine how you act, so be selective.

As always, I am here to help. Andy Springer, Business Consultant and Coach. You can reach at andy@andyspringerconsulting.com and 707.953.6681. My website is www.andyspringerconsulting.com.