



NewsWire

July 28, 2009

HELPING ENTREPRENEURS AND BUSINESSES GROW AND SUCCEED

A joint program of the Labovitz School of Business and Economics, Natural Resources Research Institute, and Swenson College of Science and Engineering.

New Expectations in Customer Service:

Service: Is there such a thing as Customer Loyalty?

Tuesday, August 18, 2009
11:30 am – 1:30 pm \$10.00
Lunch provided

Mesabi Range Community and Technical College – Rm. C156 (By Door 2)
1001 W. Chestnut St. Virginia, MN 55792

Presented by:
Lisa Jemtrud,
Director of
Outreach and
Industry
Services for the
Better Business
Bureau.



Attendees can expect to learn:

- How the evolution of the digital age has affected customer loyalty
- Top 10 current, useable strategies for increasing customer loyalty
- The quantifiable connection between customer service and customer loyalty
- How to create more trust in your business (Good news: trust = speed and profit)

To register: 218-726-7298 or www.umdced.com/workshops

BUSINESS BREAKFAST SERIES



Seats are still available for THE LEASING PROCESS!
Wednesday, July 29, 2009 . 7:30 am – 9:00 am . \$10.00

Presented by: Rachel Johnson, F.I. Salter

There's more to know about selecting a space for your business than most business people realize. So often, landlords and tenants find themselves looking for guidance because something has gone wrong during the course of a lease. This presentation will provide an overview of the leasing process with a comprehensive look at all the aspects you should be aware of. Information covered in this session will include:

- Determining space requirements/analyzing needs
- Surveying the market-what's available
- Selecting qualified properties
- Tour/technical property review
- Proposal Review
- Understanding a lease
- Negotiations
- Planning/permitting/construction

To register: 218-726-7298 or www.umdced.com/workshops

Morgan Fund Funding Available

The Morgan Fund, a fund of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, supports projects that foster community pride or economically impact the Twin Ports with priority given to projects that impact both communities with an ultimate goal of making an equal amount of grants to Duluth and Superior.

Organizations interested in applying for the Morgan Fund should fill out an inquiry on the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation site now.

Grant recipients have included a number of regional development organizations such as the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the Northspan Group, Great Lakes Aquarium, North End Arts Council, and Heritage Sports Center.

The next deadline to apply is October 1. To learn more about the Morgan Fund, please [check out this link](#).

BUSINESS BREAKFAST SERIES



Energy Conservation A Sound Investment for

Any Economy

August 19, 2009

7:30 am – 9:00 am

\$10.00

*Presented by Tim Gallagher,
Minnesota Power*

In rethinking your business strategies for today's economy, have you addressed your energy usage? Join us for a continental breakfast as Tim Gallagher, Minnesota Power, discusses energy conservation in a range of issues, from effective use of resources to its economic impact.

To register: 218-726-7298

www.umdced.com/workshops

Marketing in 3 Easy Steps

*By Curt Clinkinbeard, Executive
Director
The FAMEE Foundation*

When I wrote my book, *Customer Pillars*, I did not start out with the idea of generating nine pillars or key laws of marketing. They just happened to show up that way. I set out to be comprehensive and thorough, but I did not have a set number in mind. In fact, nine is actually a less "marketable" number than five, six, or seven. But when I asked the question, nine pillars emerged.

Three Easy Steps to Win More Business

Sales made simple with this proven technique.

By Tracy Crevar Warren



"We have a game plan for conducting an audit and one for the complex tax return, but wouldn't it be nice if there were a simple roadmap to help us when we are selling?" a professional recently remarked. Good news. There is.

Many professionals think sales are best won by the slick-talking salesperson who wears down the prospect with words. That is hardly the case in the business world today. If you went into the accounting industry to avoid selling — take note. It's not as bad as you might think.

Start With a Sales PDA

Selling professional services involves being a good listener and finding solutions to problems in an organized fashion, just like an audit or tax return. If you think about it, that is exactly what CPAs do best. So take comfort in knowing you are already equipped with many of the skills you need to succeed at selling. All you need to do is organize your actions.

PDA's are all the rage today. What would we do without our beloved BlackBerrys, iPhones and Palms to organize our lives? Think about the Sales PDA as a tool to help you organize your sales activities. The Sales PDA is a simple tool to help you organize your sales efforts easily and effectively and win more new business. The best news is it is F-R-E-E! No activation fees or roaming charges. Sound too easy? That is the whole point. It is simple and it works!

Three Simple Steps

Business development is not complicated, so don't make it complicated. The secret is to be prepared and persistent. That is exactly what the Sales PDA helps you do.

First, let's take a look at the Sales PDA. It is a simple formula or roadmap for organizing your sales activities. PDA is short for the three simple steps involved in any successful sales pursuit.

P – Prior to the Call

D – During the Call

A – After the Call

The beauty of this tool is that it is not only easy to remember but easy to put to work for your individual style. You will be amazed at the power of this old-school tool.

Getting Started

As you prepare for your next sales opportunity, give the Sales PDA a try. Gather your pursuit team and use it as a guide to plan your actions. Consider what you need to know before you go on the call. Let this checklist guide your pre-call actions.

Marketing in 3 Easy Steps (cont.)

After the fact, however, I looked back at the pillars and saw that three stuck out. In fact, I saw a “system within a system” emerge. But let me warn you, before I divulge them, I do not think these three pillars (or laws as I have also referred to them), are more important than the other six. And, I will also say, that looking at these three pillars, without the others, is not as complete. (Looking at the whole list builds substance underneath all of them.)

These three pillars did appear to group together and did appear to present a simplified marketing development system. Those three pillars are...

- Sharpen Your Competitive Edge
- Connect Powerfully with Customers
- Manage Expectations Brilliantly

Each powerful (and challenging) in their own right, but when combined, this 1-2-3 punch, is the perfect marketing trifecta.

Let's look at how they work together:

“Sharpen your competitive edge” suggests a company must understand the competitive environment where they operate. It recognizes that other firms, in fact, other talented firms, are vying for the same business, for the same customers you are. To win, you must be able to articulate (directly or indirectly), why the customer should choose you over all the other options. In a crowded marketplace, why should the customer choose you?

Three Easy Steps to Win More Business (cont.)

Prior to the Call

- Who will you take on the first call, who will they involve?
- Research the organization;
- What similar clients do you currently serve — what successes have you helped them to achieve?
- Determine mutual connections;
- Have you proposed on the work in the past?
- Determine who will play what role on the call;
- Develop an agenda and key objectives; and
- Prepare 20 questions — you may not need them all but they will get you started.

In an earlier [article](#), I addressed the power of questions in winning new business.

Showcase Your Strengths

Whether you realize it or not, a potential client bases their decision to hire you on how you present yourself on a sales call. Besides a recommendation, it is all they have to know what it might be like to do business with you. When you show your appreciation for their time by being organized and prepared, it will say miles about your management style. By asking powerful questions you demonstrate not only a genuine interest in your potential client, but it also helps them consider new ways to address current issues, thereby separating yourself from the competition.

During the Call

Now it's time to put the results of your pre-call planning into action. Just follow this outline as you walk through the call.

- Make introductions and state your purpose for the meeting;
- Reference any common connections;
- Respect the buyer's time — confirm your time frame;
- Ask questions and encourage them to talk;
- Don't be quick to respond — Listen, Listen, Listen;
- Restate your understanding of their answers;
- Help them understand how you can help them solve their problems and accomplish their goals;
- Share examples and stories of how you have helped similar clients; and
- If you want the business let them know — determine next steps.

After the Call

Your work is not complete until you debrief each sales call. Gather your team to uncover answers to these questions.

- Is there currently an opportunity to do business with the prospect?
- Do you want the prospect as a client?
- What will you need to demonstrate to the prospect to retain them as a client?
- What objections will you need to overcome?
- Did you promise anything to the prospect in the meeting — references, checklists?
- What are the next steps to move the call along?

Marketing in 3 Easy Steps (cont.)

Once you know this, it becomes important to “connect powerfully with the market,” or the second pillar highlighted in this “mini” system. (In the full Customer Pillars program, this is actually the sixth pillar.) While developing messages to share with customers does extend beyond just the “competitive edge,” this should be an important part of the message you aim to share with customers. Simply, once you know why customers should choose you over other options, you need to tell your customers and prospective customers about it. This is the customer communications aspect.

If you know why you are advantageous to competition, AND you clearly explain it to your customers (to the extent that they really understand it!), they should be willing to give your business a try. When accomplished, these first two steps should get customers “in the door.”

But the game is not completely won yet. Companies must “manage expectations brilliantly” to close the deal. In this third step of our mini system (the 7th pillar in the whole system), you make good on the promise.

When you communicate your competitive edge (steps 1 and 2), you make a promise to the customer. You essentially tell them why they should buy from you. To get them to try, you have to tell the customer your option is better than others; there’s a little bit of persuasion going on here! After they buy, they will see if what you delivered met or exceeded that commitment. And they will judge you.

Three Easy Steps to Win More Business (cont.)

Be Patient, Persistent

It is important to understand that the sales process takes more than a meeting or two to yield a new client. Don’t expect to get a signed engagement letter on that first call. The initial meetings are usually about getting to know each other and gaining an understanding of whether each feels comfortable placing their trust with the other. Stay focused. Remember, your main objective in sales is to move the process along during each meeting, ultimately positioning your team to win the business. Patience and persistence are the keys.

At last, a simple roadmap to help you win more business. Not only is it simple and free, but it produces results. So put it to work on your next sales call and reap the rewards!

www.cpa2biz.com/Content/media/PRODUCER_CONTENT/Newsletters/Articles_2009/CPA/July/WinMore.jsp

Register early for upcoming Business and Computer Workshops at: www.umdced.com/workshops

BUSINESS Workshops

<u>Writing a Business Plan</u>	08/26/2009 (2:00pm-4:00pm)	\$25.00
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COMPUTER Workshops

<u>Access I - Basics of Database Management</u>	08/19/2009 (9:00am-12:00pm)	\$60.00
<u>Access II - Beyond the Basics of Database Management</u>	08/19/2009 (1:00pm-4:00pm)	\$60.00
<u>Computers 101 - Basics of Computer Operations</u>	08/18/2009 (1:00pm-4:00pm)	\$60.00
<u>Crystal Reports Basics</u>	08/18/2009 (9:00am-12:00pm)	\$60.00
<u>Dreamweaver - Web Page Design I</u>	07/29/2009 (9:00am-12:00pm)	\$60.00
<u>Dreamweaver - Web Page Design II</u>	07/29/2009 (1:00pm-4:00pm)	\$60.00

Marketing in 3 Easy Steps (cont.)

If what you deliver exceeds what you promised, customers will be satisfied with the transaction. They will likely want to buy from you again. If they're really happy, they may even tell others about your firm. On the other hand, if you fail to make good on your promises, they will not be pleased, may not buy from you again, and may tell others you are not a good company to work with. (That's called momentum! Make it work in your favor as opposed to against you!)

So that's it. Do those three things really well, and by improving them, you have done a great deal to implement a winning marketing strategy. (Now remember, it doesn't mean those other six pillars are not important!!!) But the following three pillars do make a great "mini" system: sharpen your competitive edge, connect powerfully with customers, and manage expectations brilliantly.

Three simple steps to excellence in marketing!

Marketing is not ever easy, but this system is extremely simple to understand, and if you make progress on those 3 steps, your are definitely working on GREAT marketing concepts!!!!)

Curt Clinkinbeard, is the Director of The FAMEE Foundation, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping entrepreneurs "advance marketing excellence" and build profitable revenue streams. More information on their free small business marketing programs can be found at <http://www.famee.org>.

[Dreamweaver - Web Page Design III](#)

08/05/2009 (9:00am- \$60.00
12:00pm)

[Dreamweaver - Web Page Design IV](#)

08/05/2009 (1:00pm- \$60.00
4:00pm)

[Excel I - Basics of Spreadsheets](#)

08/20/2009 (9:00am- \$60.00
12:00pm)

[Excel II - Beyond the Basics of Spreadsheets](#)

08/20/2009 (1:00pm- \$60.00
4:00pm)

[Illustrator I - Basics of Graphic Design](#)

08/26/2009 (9:00am- \$60.00
12:00pm)

[InDesign I - Basics of Desktop Publishing](#)

07/30/2009 (9:00am- \$60.00
12:00pm)

[Photoshop I - Basics of Digital Images](#)

08/13/2009 (9:00am- \$60.00
12:00pm)

[Photoshop II - Beyond the Basics of Digital Images](#)

08/13/2009 (1:00pm- \$60.00
4:00pm)

[Word I - Basics of Word Processing](#)

08/25/2009 (9:00am- \$60.00
12:00pm)

[Word II - Beyond the Basics of Word Processing](#)

08/25/2009 (1:00pm- \$60.00
4:00pm)

The University of Minnesota Duluth Center for Economic Development offers numerous workshops to help entrepreneurs and employees operate more efficiently.

All workshops are held at the Duluth Technology Village, 11 E. Superior Street, Suite 210, unless otherwise noted. To register call: 218-726-7298, 888-387-4594 or register online:

www.umdced.com/workshops.

The mission of the University of Minnesota Duluth Center for Economic Development is to assist entrepreneurs and businesses to grow and succeed.

Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development and sponsoring centers. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. For arrangements, contact: UMD Center for Economic Development, 11 E. Superior Street, Suite 210, 218-726-7298

1986 – 2009 Celebrating 23 years of excellence and also recognizing UMD's 25 year partnership with the Minnesota Small Business Development Centers

The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

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