How to Ask for a Referral

A referral is when a satisfied customer introduces and recommends you to someone who needs your service or product. Typically, you have to ask for customer referrals. Many of your customers will be delighted to recommend your services and refer you their contacts - it just never occurred to them. Who better to recommend your business than a satisfied customer?



Before You Ask For A Referral

1. **Timing Is Key:** Know when to ask for a testimonial or referral. Just as in any business interaction, there is a right time and a wrong time to ask your customer for support. If you haven't provided stellar customer service - for whatever reason - now is not the time to request a referral.

2. **Be Worthy Of Referrals:** Provide superior customer service so your clients want to share your product or service with their network - and know you will continue to provide your high level of service to them.

3. **Acknowledge All Referrals:** Thank clients for all referrals, and follow-up to let then know the outcome of their referral, such as a personal thank you email or call.

4. KISS: Whatever referral system you implement, make it simple for people to give you the referrals you want. Remember, *Keep it Simple, Salespro!*

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5. **Website**: Add a referral form to your website. This can be a specific referral page, a pop-up, a banner or other option that allows website visitors to refer your business. There are referral apps and tools you can add to your website.

6. **Newsletter**: Add a referral request to your newsletter. If you offer a service such as legal or financial services, use your newsletter to ask your contacts for referrals.

7. **Incentives**: Give an incentive or commission for referrals. For example, if you run a house cleaning business, give one cleaning free if a client makes a referral that becomes a new client.

8. **Give A Referral:** If you give a referral to someone, often the recipient will reciprocate and refer their contacts to you -

without being asked!

9. **Promotion**: Set up a special promotion for referrals, such as a summer referral promotion where all referral sources are entered in a drawing.

10. **Mailing:** Send a special mailing to satisfied clients thanking them for their business, and asking them for referrals.

11. **Client Surveys:** When you do a client satisfaction survey or client exit survey, ask if they would refer your business to their contacts. If they say yes, follow-up and request a referral. (See my Client Exit Survey: https://www.checkli.com/checklists/anthonycaliendo/client-exit-survey-1)

12. **Email Signature:** Add a CTA to your email signature inviting referrals. If you're running a special referral promotion, you may want to add the referral CTA to your emails signature during that period only.

13. **Ask For Online Reviews:** Asking customers to Like or give a review of your Facebook Page or an online Google Review is a great way to get referrals. When someone Likes or gives your FB page a positive review, it shows up in all their FB friends' feeds: that's a lot of free promotion for your business!

14. **Use LinkedIn:** Whatever your business or service, LinkedIn is an invaluable resource for customer referrals. If you're not on LinkedIn, create a page for your business and start connecting with your professional and personal contacts. Share valuable, relevant information about your industry, services and things that are important to your prospects. Keep your LI profile optimized and current!

15. **Referral Networks:** There are many online and in person business referral networks. Try finding them through your local Chamber, MeetUp or LinkedIn. Some are industry related, others are geographic, others are based on common interests such as college alumni groups.

16. **Pick Up the Phone:** Just as cold sales calls aren't dead, either are calls to ask for referrals. Your clients know you're in business - and want to stay in business. Be prepared: have 2 messages ready, one to ask for a referral if you actually speak to your client when you call, and the second if you need to leave a message. Prepare a short, quick referral request elevator speech (Tip: See How to Craft an Elevator Speech https://www.checkli.com/checklists/anthonycaliendo/7-tips-to-craft-a-memorable-elevator-speech-1) so you don't leave a bumbling message - and waste your client's and your time.

17. **Networking Events:** Networking events are a great opportunity to prospect for new clients - and for referrals! You may meet someone who is impressed by your business and services - but simply isn't a client. Have your referral elevator speech prepared so you can ask them to share you business with their contacts. Bring business cards - people attend these events to network, so they understand that you're there looking for business!

Checkout more of my resources, tips and checklists for small business and sales success: http://www.thesalesassassin.com