

Prospecting Do's and Dont's for Lead Generation

By Ken Cheo

We all know that prospecting for leads is the lifeblood of sales. I coach a lot of small business owners who wear a lot of hats in addition to sales and they want to know they or their salespeople are not wasting time while prospecting. Those that have salespeople feel they are not in front of enough qualified prospects. Other feel they can't get the momentum they need for lack of a plan. This leads to more aggressive sales tactics with those who are in the pipeline which compromises results and margins. So, I decided to offer some tips.

First the Don'ts:

1. Don't focus on the results. Prospecting activity is filled with rejection caused by things outside of our control. Focus on the behavior. That we can control.
2. Don't rely on just passive channels. This was the case for one of my recent clients and with a plan, their sales increased 36% in two months.
3. Don't fail to have a plan.
4. Don't put all your eggs in one basket. I find a lot of people working just one or two channels.
5. Don't sound like everyone else. Many salespeople, when they finally get the decision maker on the phone, fail to differentiate or make a first impression to continue the dialogue. Some ask manipulative questions like, "Do you want to improve your efficiency and productivity?" Leading questions like this will not get you anywhere, except off the call quickly.
6. When they get busy, a lot of people do not allow for enough prospecting time and it is not consistent.

Now for the Do's

1. Focus your markets – think about where you are strong and work on building market share there with solid customers and opportunity.
2. Focus on what is profitable – plan to spend more time on selling the products and services that will generate better margins.
3. Develop multiple active channels for prospecting (ones where you take the initiative on making contact not the prospect)
4. Change your attitude. Prospecting is a discarding activity. Get to no quicker so you can keep your pipeline filled with real opportunities.
5. Make sure your initial message moves you forward, not backward.
6. Track your results – you need to know your formula for success and be tracking it daily to learn, make adjustments and keep on track.
7. Schedule your prospecting time, especially when you get busy.

These are all probably things you already know, but are you doing them? It never hurts to be reminded...happy prospecting!

