



August 6, 2016

## Play Dumb and Dig Deep



Hands up who wants a constant supply of *quality* new leads to do *quality* business with every day of the week? That's all of us right? So for the month of August we are looking at ways to build a referral based business.

How do you ensure that it's a '*no brainer*' for your clients to refer you onto their nearest and dearest? In order to learn and continually develop your product offering, your business needs to get honest and direct feedback from your customers, clients or suppliers.

Sometimes this is easy - if you are doing a really terrible job people often tell you! They also tell everyone else they know! Ouch! Very occasionally, if you truly delight someone the same thing may happen. This is obviously fabulous. But how do you ensure that every customer is a truly delighted customer?

Over the course of this month I am going to share with you some fundamentals in business that if embedded into the culture and identity of your business will ensure that you begin building a referral based business today.

So this week's tip is to Play Dumb and Dig Deep. People often look a bit confused when I tell them that and that's probably fair enough! So let me explain... Playing dumb with your clients means having a culture of curiosity. It's about listening to your clients – *really* listening – and developing a deep and genuine understanding of what they want and need from you. Most people who start a business do so because they are an expert in their particular field, and this can serve them very well. But it's important to be fully aware that *you don't have all the answers*, and that to delight your customers you need to listen to them, not be arrogant and egotistical and *tell* them what they need. Play dumb and learn from your clients. They have a lot to teach you.

Digging deep is about getting to the bottom of what your customers really desire. Spend as much time as needed with them until you are confident you have really reached the core of why they came to you and what they want. You need to be exhaustive in asking questions before you start providing answers. You need to use your expertise and experience to serve your customers well, not to make assumptions about what they need. Don't be afraid to ask your clients as many questions as you need to. This doesn't make you look like you don't know what you're doing, it shows the customer you are truly interested in what their frustration is and how you can best solve it for them. Ask breakthrough questions that will truly get you to the bottom of the problem.

I heard this story from a friend of mine recently. His mum needed a new computer because her old one had started to run slowly, so she went into the local computer store and told the young man her problem. Being a computer geek, he heard only two words – 'it's slow' – so he sold her the fastest warp-speed computer he had. He told her it would 'future proof' her and featured the new Mega-gizmo 7.0 and a graphics this and a wireless that and be compatible with blah blah blah,

and all of it was *faaaaaaaaaast*. But there's *faaaaaaaaaast* and then there's just fast. My friend's mum only needed fast. She only used email and would 'look at Google' – as such she had been sold a machine that was completely in excess of her needs. When my friend saw the new computer he told his mum she'd paid way too much for a whole lot of things she didn't need. Do you think she was a delighted customer?

This computer salesman didn't play dumb and he didn't dig deep. He was only interested in a one-off sale not a long-term customer. Because he knew computers and she didn't, he thought it was his job to tell her what she needed; instead, a five-minute chat about how she used her computer would have seen him direct her to the right one. He wouldn't have made as much on this sale because he didn't sell her the top end model, *but* he would have had a delighted customer who would have come back to him every few years when she needed a new computer because she trusted him to sell her what she needed, and this is worth much more to the business over the long term.

You must view every customer as a potential repeat customer *and* a referral source. *That's* how you build a sustainable referral based business. Imagine if her son had been impressed with the service his mum had received and went to the store the next day and bought himself a computer too; and then referred his friends to the store too! The short-term opportunity cost in missed referrals can be huge.

Are you building for future growth by playing dumb and digging deep? Do you have a culture of curiosity? Do you listen to your customers or just sell them what suits you?

Having the best products in the world won't help you if you don't connect with your clients.

It's about win-win outcomes; they get the service they need – and more – so they are happy, and you've created a customer for life who never hesitates to refer you to their best friends ... so you're happy.

Simple really? Remember: **Get brilliant at the basics.**



### **M500 – How to Build a Referral Based Business**

Proving to be a hot topic with half the seats now booked, so if you want be the first to receive our whitepaper on how to build a referral based business which outlines strategies to build a referral based business then register today – Wednesday 24 August 2016.

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Have a great and action packed week.

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