KNOWING WHEN ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

How many times should you contact the same prospect before saying “enough is enough”? To answer this question, we first need to outline how to reach out to a prospect.

Most sales reps do not use email properly. It is common to leave a voice mail and at some future time send a follow-up email. But there is nothing wrong with leaving a voice mail and immediately sending an email with “voice mail” in the subject line. This subject and a good message will grab the recipient’s attention. This tactic should increase the number of responses dramatically. Many prospects will find it more convenient to answer you through email than dialing the phone.

The number of times you should follow up with a prospect will depend on several factors, such as the title of your target, the source of the lead, and the potential size of the opportunity. A potentially large client warrants many more contact attempts than a small revenue generator. You have to determine the value to your particular agency. If a senior-level manager at a potential client requests information or is someone I have met at a conference, that person will get more attention than someone who is not in a position to make the decision about my service. Someone who has previously expressed an interest in your services should receive more follow-up attempts.

Of course, some prospects have said they are interested when maybe they are not, or perhaps they just are too busy to give you the time necessary for you to visit them. You should indicate that you understand they are very busy but would appreciate two minutes of their time on the phone to clarify what the next step could be to advance the sale. If you suggest the next move, then you are driving the sale and not waiting for the prospect to decide for you.

All prospects you are trying to contact, no matter what level, should be added to your database for future email campaigns so that you can keep your name in front of them periodically. These email campaigns are a type of tactic that needs to be prepared carefully—a larger topic that I will cover in the future.

If you are not getting satisfactory responses to the voice mails you are leaving, it very well could be due to the message contained in the voice mail. The value statement you are using is probably
off, and no matter how many times you call, the response will be “not interested.” One of my previous articles dealt specifically with leaving the correct message that would make you interesting to your prospects and thus make them want to talk further with you.

Every successful sales rep sets an objective for all calls, whether those calls are on the phone or in person. Your message should focus on your prospect and not on your company so it will be of value for the prospect to continue talking with you or to call you back. You might mention how you were able to help a client similar to your prospect so your message relates directly to them. Remember, you have to set yourself up to be different from all of your competitors.

Since your selling time is valuable, you should guard it closely and utilize it to the best of your ability. This means gauging how much time should be spent on each prospect. If you follow the above criteria and have the right message in both your voice mail and email, you should entice more people to return your calls and emails.

This article is by Paul Morrow, sales consultant to the collection industry. If you would like to discuss any subject with Paul, please contact him at 215-643-4282 or paul@pjm-sales.com.