

Basic Follow-Up Techniques

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A follow-up can be defined as an attempt to make a sale or to encourage a sign up to someone who has already shown interest in your company's product, service or opportunity. It is a chance for the person prospecting to answer questions and contradict any misgivings the prospect may have.

The follow-up is done when the original prospect (the potential buyer) has not made a purchase or definite decision after the original inquiry. In network marketing the follow-up is usually done to encourage the prospect to make a decision about getting involved in the opportunity provided by the company. However, in some cases it is to try the product or service. In some instances it is both. Yet, remember the purpose of selling the opportunity is to move the product.

There are three avenues of doing a long distance follow-up that I will mention in this article. They are via use of telephone, U.S. Postal Service, and the latest and my favorite, by email.

I will first venture into some tips about doing follow-up via telephone. Do not use this method if the prospect has not freely volunteered his or her telephone number. Many people because of their work schedules or because of privacy needs do not like to receive telephone calls from salespeople and/or strangers. However, if a prospect provides a phone number it is usually safe to phone. If the inquirer requests that you call him or her then definitely do so. However, don't do something as "corny sounding" as to dial the telephone number and when the person answers say, "Thanks for inquiring about the ACME company opportunity. I just made \$100,000 last year and I want to show you how to do it." If you resort to statements such as this then you are likely to get such responses such as: "Really, why don't you fly down here tomorrow and bring a few thousand cash along!" or "If you're so rich why are you calling someone like me?"

Using the telephone as just described is that of a pushy, overbearing salesperson. You don't want to appear to be a salesperson. The first thing you should say when you get an answer on the other end of the phone is to ask for the person who inquired. Once he or she answers reply, "My name is (your name here) and I'm calling because you recently inquired about the (name of company here) company. I saw that you provided your phone number so I assumed you didn't mind my calling. If you have any questions about the material you received I would be more than happy to answer them." If they say they aren't interested or that they don't desire to talk with someone, then it is best to drop the conversation. By the way, don't call at inopportune times such as the lunch or dinner hour or late at night. This is inconsiderate and is sure to turn people off to you and what you are attempting to do. Questions that may arise include: how long have you been involved?; how much money are you making?; how long has the company been in business?; is the opportunity legal?; what is network marketing?, etc. Be prepared with answers to questions such as these.

If the person would like more time to consider the opportunity you may ask them if they would like to receive communication from others in your organization (i.e., your sponsor and his or her sponsor, etc.). If so let your upline know. If the prospect joins it benefits each of you. Also, ask the prospect if they would like your phone number so that they may get back to you. It is important to ask for a commitment, although sometimes that commitment may be nothing more than one to look into the opportunity more closely.

If the person does not give a phone number, or if for some reason you can't call them, the other method to follow up is the written method, that of sending a letter or a series of letters to a prospect.

The first letter (you may and should send more) should introduce yourself, your reason for writing and what you will do to help the person build his/her sales organization should they join. Also, you should never assume that the prospect knows anything about network marketing. Therefore, it is wise to send along a copy of a report or booklet of some kind explaining network marketing (also known as MLM).

You should ask your upline to do additional follow-ups for you. You should also offer to do follow-ups for members of your sales organization. The more people who do follow-ups will show the prospect the amount of support that they can expect to receive.

Also, the more follow-ups one do the better. I've actually heard of marketers who send over 20 some follow-up letters to a prospect. Many of these have built a significant sales organization. A written follow-up, just like a telephone follow-up, should ask the prospect if they have any questions. On one of the follow-ups you can also provide a questionnaire so the prospect can list objections that may be keeping him or her from joining. If you're knowledgeable of these objections you can work on overcoming them.

You can offer some type of bonus in your follow-up. One idea is as follows: offer that if the prospect joins in a certain number of days you will: pay for a portion of their company promotional material, or kit; or send them a free book on network marketing; or purchase advertising space for them in a certain publication for one issue. These are just a few of the ideas to get prospects to act fast.

The other type of follow-up is one which you can do if your prospect is on the Internet. You can send him e-mail using the same letters that you would use if you were sending them by first class mail (and they'll get to him faster using e-mail)!!! If your sponsor or other team members have e-mail you should ask them to also do a follow-up to the prospect. This will show the prospect that you aren't the only one interested in their success. Let the prospect know that you and your upline (if your upline has agreed to such) will do the same type of follow-ups for the prospect should he or she join and become a distributor!!! If you plan on doing your written follow-ups via email you can automate the entire process through the use of an auto-responder system. An auto-responder is a email robot so to speak. You can set it up so that when you add a person's email address and name to it that it starts them on a the series of email follow-ups that you have added to the auto-responder.

There could be booklets written on all of these methods of follow-up and in addition on how to use mail, telephone and e-mail for prospecting. Indeed there have been booklets written on such subjects but this letter is just intended to give you a basic knowledge of do's and don'ts on doing follow-ups. In telephone, written follow-ups and e-mail don't be afraid of asking the prospect to make a decision. This is known as making a close. Hopefully, your decision after reading this article is to do follow-ups or increase your follow-ups and try new approaches.

Keith P. Stieneke has over 21 years experience in the fields of psychology, self-publishing, writing

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