

Develop Strong Follow-up Techniques

By Lisa Kanarek

Have you ever had that nagging feeling in the pit of your stomach that you have forgotten to call someone, then followed up only to find out that your competitor has just landed your dream client? Your competitor may not be more qualified for the assignment, yet he or she called at the right time. Chalk it up to strong follow-up techniques.

1. Persistence coupled with a clear follow-up plan definitely pays off. If you call a prospect and he or she asks you to contact the company in a few months, take steps to ensure that you call. If you don't, someone else will.
2. Make the task of following up easier by using a paper-based or computerized to-do list. The list will let you know what you need to do and when you need to do it. The list works only if you use it—a bit of common sense that is sometimes ignored. The time to remember that you need to place a call is before, not after, the deadline.
3. Use a calendar in conjunction with your to-do list. If you have more than one calendar, consolidate the calendars into one. Using more than one to record appointments and deadlines is time-consuming and confusing. You will be more apt to use your calendar if you keep it readily accessible.
4. If you tell someone that you are going to follow up on a certain day, and even at a certain time, do it. You could lose a sale simply by saying one thing and doing another.

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