

Maintaining Your List

by Max Associate Al Lee

When we start out in this business, we all begin by making a list of people we know who we intend to contact about the products and the business opportunity. These people are what are called our “warm market” because we already know them at least casually—they are not complete strangers.

Some of us certainly have larger lists than others; but the list is finite for everyone. If all we ever do is work from our original lists, we will all run out of people to contact after a little while. To newcomers to the business this is a point of concern. *What do I do when I run out of people on my list?*

Do These Two Things

In fact, you should never run out of people on your list if you do two things. The first is to always ask for referrals from anyone you contact who does not join the business. Some people will and some won't send you referrals; but you might be surprised at how many do send referrals if you have handled your contact with them well and *if you asked them to*. The second thing is to learn to prospect the people you meet in everyday life.

Suppose your original list consists of 30 people. That is actually a rather short list. You most likely do know far more than 30 people if you really think about it. How many people are in your phone's contact list, your email address book, your Christmas Card list?

Now, suppose that you contact all 30 the first week and follow up with them for the rest of your first month. Suppose that you manage to get 2 Associates enrolled and 3 Preferred Customers and 25 Declines. You should have asked the Preferred Customers and the Declines all to refer people to you. How? Simply by saying: “I understand that you are not interested in this business yourself, but if you know anyone who might be interested, please send them to me. I would like to talk with them.” That is not difficult and it makes it clear that you want them to refer people to you.

If you have been polite and not unpleasant in your talks *with them*, they are likely to be comfortable referring other people to you. Of course, Preferred Customers are natural sources for referrals because they are testimonials for our products. A fair percentage of Preferred Customers actually eventually upgrade to Associates, probably after calculating how much commission they might have made on the referrals they have sent you.

Unlike Diamonds, No is Not Forever

You should also note that those 25 Declines are probably not absolute declines. I have experienced people telling me “no” initially, then returning later on with a complete change of heart. In some cases, the Decline referred someone else to me and when they saw how enthused their referral was about this opportunity, they decided they might as well jump in and have the person they referred be under them. Therefore, always accept a “no” graciously. The person who turned you down today might become a star for you in the near future. I think it is actually very rare that someone accepts your offer to enroll them immediately the first time you propose it to them. It usually takes some time for them to thoroughly assess their own situation and the possibilities you are presenting to them.

Never take a “no” personally! It is not about you, it is about them. They have to be ready for this. If they are not ready, nothing you say will get them to join. If they are ready, they will join in spite of even a stumbling proposal you might have given.

Do Talk to Strangers

Now, what about strangers you meet? How can you prospect them? Micheal J. Durkin has a little book he wrote titled: “Double Your Contacts” in which he talks exclusively about prospecting. He states unequivocally that *we are in the Prospecting Business*. Prospecting is, to him, the key to success. There is plenty of evidence and logic to support that position, also.

Some people are naturally gregarious while others are more introverted. For the gregarious it is easy to meet new people. They just say “Hello!” to anyone at all. For others it takes a bit of self-improvement training to develop the skill of meeting people.

I happen to be the sort of person who will strike up a conversation with anyone, anywhere, any time. Durkin describes a number of tactics to help you and I concur that what he says is correct. I will give a very brief recap of his methods here. You might consider buying his little overpriced, poorly-proofread, but potentially very valuable book.

Costs Nothing, Pays Off Big

Smile! You will find that it is much easier to meet people if you smile. Not a Cheshire Cat or One-Flew-Over-The Cuckoo-Nest idiotic grin; a genuine pleasant smile. Almost nobody wants to meet or talk to you if you have a scowl on your face. If you look happy and pleasant, most people will actually be eager to talk to you. Many people will reflexively smile a bit when they see your face. From there, a simple “Hello!” or “How are you?” is easy. Doing that may not always initiate a conversation; but it will be good practice for you to adopt the right attitude and frame of mind for meeting people.

Striking up a casual conversation with a stranger is not as hard as you might think. Assuming that you have the pleasant look on your face that the previous exercise taught you, you then can comfortably make a small comment about something obvious and not threatening or embarrassing. For instance, the weather, or the comfortable looking shoes someone is wearing, or the slow line at the checkout counter, or what have you. Avoid anything that might hit a sore spot or seem too personal or prying or (of course) anything critical.

A real smile is so powerful a tool that I will bet that you start experiencing strangers initiating the conversation with you on occasion because you look like you would be pleasant to talk to.

Don't Get Pushy

Don't try to maneuver the conversation into talking about your business. That will make it obvious that you had an agenda from the start. But, do let the other person do most of the talking if possible and listen for clues. Remember that people like talking, especially about themselves and what they want, to someone who is an interested listener. Then, *if the timing seems right*, as you are terminating the conversation and about to walk away, you might say, as an afterthought, "I might know something you might be interested in." as your reaction to something they said. For example, if they said that they were having to work odd hours and did not know what they were going to do for child care, you might mention that you used to have that problem and they might be interested in how you fixed it. Do not get into any explanation about what you do or the products. All you want to do here is arouse curiosity and have a way to contact them later so you can invite them to a presentation (or some other event) and then immediately leave. Always leave them wanting more! (That is why you wait until you are about to leave to mention your business.)

A Numbers Game

Do not expect that a high percentage of the people you stand in line with at the supermarket will jump onto this opportunity. Prospecting for people is like prospecting for gold, you sift through a lot of sand before you find a nugget. It is what we call a "numbers game", meaning that the more people you talk to the more people you will enroll. Just keep prospecting!

Develop the habit of being friendly, smiling, and meeting people even though you might never even mention your business to most of them. Meeting people is enjoyable even when it does not lead to business.

You might think that some mystical skill set is the secret to success at this. Actually, the secret is persistence. Remember, if people are ready for what you have to offer, they will join. If they are not ready, they will not. Many people are not ready today; but might be ready later on. If you persist in prospecting, you will find some nuggets among all that

sand. Not only that, you might even make some interesting new friends, regardless whether or not they join our business.

Know What You Do

There will be many instances in which someone will ask you: “What do you do (for a living)?”

You need an answer. It is not good for you to stumble around trying to explain what it is that you do while trying to avoid saying “network marketing”. It gives the signal that you are not too proud of what you do. You need an answer and you need to have it memorized and practiced so that it will roll off your tongue naturally and clearly. It needs to be short and succinct, 10-20 seconds long, no more.

Try these, or your own variations of them:

“I am a network distributor for a new patented nutraceutical that is used and promoted by doctors, athletes, and regular people like myself.”

“I manage a network of distributors for...”

“I am developing a network of distributors for...”

Or, make up your own way to say it that you are comfortable with. The important thing is that you practice saying it and memorize it. When you are asked it will roll off quickly and naturally and will sound like you are proud of what you do. That is your goal.

Judge Not

One final thing: do not try to judge who will be good at this or who will be interested. History shows that even the most experienced professionals in the industry can not predict which people will do well with much accuracy. The person you thought would make you a superstar in the business might turn out to be a complete dud while someone else who you had little hope for suddenly catches fire and becomes your best producer. The wisest strategy is to enroll as many people as you can with the expectation that some percent of them will shine—but don't bet too heavily on which ones they will be.

If you had to bet on which people would be the most successful in this business, make your choice based on their Attitudes and Motivations. Those things trump every other attribute because every skill needed to succeed is easily learned. With a good attitude and a strong motivation, anyone, regardless of education, intelligence, looks, or even past success, will learn to do what will achieve success.

Summation:

1. Ask for referrals!
2. Always be prospecting!
3. Don't prejudge people!

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