

Ian: 00:00 This is Ian Altman and you're listening to the same side selling podcast. This week's episode is about referrals. We all know that word of mouth is the key to growing just about any business. In fact, you can spend a small fortune trying to get people to find you and one of the best things you can do is get referrals from existing customers who have had a great experience working with you. The challenge is that there's a couple of areas where people fall short when it comes to referrals and as Bill Cates, a friend and fellow speaker, mine who's often known as the referral coach says, look, the biggest problem is that people just don't ask for referrals. They don't actually take the step to reach out to their existing customers for referrals. They don't build a culture of referrals and then they're surprised that they don't get them.

Ian: 00:55 See, your client is not sitting there thinking to themselves, man, who can I refer to this person so they can get more business? They're not thinking that way. And so we need to change that dynamic a little bit. And there are a few things that you need to be conscious of. And the first step is this, is that you never want to ask somebody for a referral until you know that they're absolutely thrilled with the work you've done for them. And so one of the things we want to make sure of is that during the sales process we want to make sure that we define what challenges or issues they're facing and how those impact their business. And then what does success look like? And this is something that in the same side quadrants we talk about quite a bit, which is during the sales process we're going to ask people, Gee, what is it that inspired you to meet with us today?

Ian: 01:50 That's going to get us the issue, which is the upper left quadrant and our four quadrants in the upper right. That's where we talk about the impact of not solving that problem. So we ask questions like, well what happens if you don't solve that? You couldn't quantify that code you. And now we get information about the impact of their to their business or them personally. Then we ask what does success look like? So six months from now, how would we know this was successful? What can we measure together to make sure you can hold us accountable and then the lower right quadrant is the other people impacted or others involved to make sure that we don't miss anybody. I want to focus on that idea of the issue in impact as well as the results for the purpose of referrals. When we reach out to one of our customers for whom we've done great work, the first thing we want to ask is about these results, which is when we first started this project, when you first purchased our product, whatever the dialogue is you mentioned these are the results that would be important to you.

Ian: 02:57 How have we done and accomplishing those goals and if the client and prospect says, wow, you've done an amazing job, so zero to 10 how do you think we've done? If they come

back in an eight, nine or 10 then you've got somebody who is probably open to being a referral source for you. If they tell you, well, it's been about a five, why would they ever refer you? So it's very important that we focus on results with our clients and we make sure that we deliver. Now, assuming they give you that eight, nine or 10 then we'll want to make sure is that we don't want to be too broad. So oftentimes we'll hear people say is, Hey, do you know anyone else who might need our services? And it seems like a pretty innocent question, but if you get under the cover on that, your client, in essence, what you're asking them for is a fever for you at that point.

Ian: 03:55 Because what you're saying is, hey, listen, is there anyone else who I could try and sell my stuff to? And this is where it's important that we document the issue and the impact associated with that client's original challenge. Because now what I can do is I can say, wow, so we've delivered these results. So just remind me again, I'm looking through my notes. It looks like these were the issues that you were facing and how those were impacting your business. Is that right? And your client will often say, yeah, that's exactly what it was. And now we want to get very specific and we'll want to ask is, so can you think of one or two other people who might be facing those same challenges and would like to have a similar outcome? Let me say that again. Can you think of one or two other people who might be facing similar challenges?

Ian: 04:51 Who would like that same sort of outcome? If you think about it now, what we've done is instead of the, your existing client doing you a favor, you're not positioning it. So they're really doing a favor for those one or two other people. Now you might be wondering, well, Ian, why are you just asking for one or two? Why don't we get 10 or 20 in fact, some people would argue you should get as many as you can, but guess what? If I asked somebody, do you know anybody who might be facing that? What your brain does is it creates a big bucket and in that great big bucket, it doesn't have labels with names. It just says, yeah, I know a bunch of people who might fit that criteria. If I ask you for one or two specific individuals, your brain automatically slots those two names in there.

Ian: 05:41 So just kind of playing along with me, if I asked you as a listener, Gee, can you think of one or two people you know who are avid basketball fans? Your brain probably automatically slots the two people, assuming you know anybody who fits that profile. But if I asked you, do you know anybody, do you know people like hockey? You might think of one person than the rest is just this amorphous blob. So when we ask specific questions like, can you think of one or two other people, then your client is more likely to think of those two people and they say, yeah, you know, I do actually. Okay, what's the best way for us to connect together? How about I send you a draft email that you can send to them, copying both of us and keep mind. I'm just trying to confirm that they're having

the same challenge that you were having and if they are, maybe we can deliver similar results for them.

Ian: 06:38 I don't know yet. See, that's the disarm part. We want to make sure that our client knows we're not just going to bug somebody to the end of time. It's like they're giving us permission to harass somebody else forever. Instead, what we're doing is saying, hey, look, I'm willing to help this other person get similar results that you did. If you're willing to make the connection, I'll keep you in the loop. It's really important as you can tell in all this, that we've delivered great results and we know the specific problem we're solving for the one organization because then they can say, Gee, who else has similar symptoms? Who else has a similar condition to us? Who would like the same treatment? So they ended up with a better outcome. So when you're looking for referrals, remember what you want to do is first make sure that you're focused on the results with the client and that your existing client has had great things to say about you and feels great about the results you've delivered for them.

Ian: 07:39 Then we'll want to do is look at do we know what the underlying problems were, challenges where they were facing, and then we get to ask them, can you think of one or two other people who might be experiencing those same challenges and would like to experience a similar outcome? And that way you're focused on presenting yourself in a way that you can be helpful to someone else just like you were for them rather than just being seen as someone who's there to sell something. Remember it. This show gets a direction from you, the listener. There's a topic I should cover, a guest I should have on the program. Just drop me a note to Ian and Ian altman.com and be sure to pick up your copy of the new same side selling. You can pick it up on Amazon or just about anywhere books are sold. Have an amazing week. Add value and grow revenue in a way everybody can embrace, especially your customer.