



Referrals: The Path to Increased Sales

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The main reason most salespeople do not get the number of referrals necessary to properly elevate their sales is simple. They don't ask for them. Swept up in the euphoric high that salespeople experience when making a sale, they forget or do not feel it is important to pursue referrals.

Referrals, no matter what product you are selling, are vital to keep the pipeline of potential **prospects** full. In any new sales position, you are initially working on an 80/20 arrangement. In other words, 80 percent of your time is being spent attempting to find new people to talk to, while only 20 percent of your time is spent in front of prospective clients. The beauty of referrals is that, when you become proficient at getting them, your equation eventually switches to a 20/80 proposition, where only 20 percent of your time is spent **prospecting** and 80 percent is spent selling. When this happens, your **goals** and objectives can be met. Below are some rules to help you get more referrals.

1. Remember that the last step of any sales cycle should always be to ask for referrals. One thing that may remind you to do this is to have a pre-printed note attached to the back of the sales forms you use during the sales process. This form should have a place to write the names and phone numbers of 10 referrals. Keep in mind that no sale is finished until all paperwork, including the referral sheet, is complete.
2. Always solidify the sale first, and then initiate the topic of referrals. Make a point to understand why the client purchased the product or service from you. By having them restate their reasons, your new client will resell themselves on their latest purchase. Once that happens, they should be primed and ready to provide referrals.
3. Get the list of names first. All you want is the potential client's name. Once you have the list of names, you then ask follow-up questions in order to glean more information about each person on the list.
4. Ask for referrals from everyone, even from those people who will not give you an appointment or buy from you. The simple fact is that if you neglect to ask for referrals, you will not receive them.

If you will follow these simple rules, soon they will become a habit. You may want to set goals for yourself for a certain number of referrals at the beginning of each week. Write this goal down and keep it in the back of your mind. Once your goals are met, you will quickly turn your 80/20 prospecting to selling ratio to 20/80; at which point you can watch your **sales** and income increase..

Keith Benton is the founder and owner of Benton Marketing Strategies, a company that specializes in online insurance sales training. He has been involved in insurance sales and training for the past 25 years, and has had the privilege of training hundreds of insurance sales professionals with a simplistic 5 step approach to the sales of insurance products. Visit www.agentsalestrainer.com to learn how to get started with Sales Training from Benton Marketing Strategies!