HOW TO SYSTEMATICALLY AND CONSISTENTLY ATTRACT FIRST-RATE CLIENTS

THE PLENTY OF CLIENTS™ MANUAL

DOV GORDON

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How to Systematically and Consistently Attract First-Rate Clients

A Step-by-Step manual and workbook for consultants, coaches and experts who want to predictably attract a steady stream of ideal clients.

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Part One:
Marketing Alchemy

Chapter 1: The Clearest Thinker Makes the Sales

Clarity is Power. Clarity is Influence. Clarity Attracts Clients.

Imagine you have a 30 minute commute to work each day. You follow the same route over the same roads and get stuck by the same red lights every day.

One morning, when you're halfway to your office I call you up and say, "Hey buddy, quick, get off at the next exit onto Ocean Road!"

"Ocean Road!" you think to yourself. "That will add another 30 minutes to my commute!" You do NOT want to be in the car for an *extra* 30 minutes.

So you ask me, "WHY should I get off at Ocean Road?!"

"Because I know you take this route every morning. Today I happen to be driving in the opposite direction and I just saw a terrible crash two miles past the Ocean Road exit. Traffic on your side is not moving. If you don't get off at Ocean Road you'll be sitting there for much of the morning."

And so you get off at Ocean Road.

*

Attracting ideal clients is simple. It's about showing how your product, service or idea will give your client what he or she *already* wants.

So to make a sale:

(1) Understand what they want.
(2) Show them how your product and service gives it to them.
(3) Systematize so you can scale up and leverage.

In the scenario above, you wanted to get to your office as quickly as possible. As soon you saw how my Ocean Road advice would get you what you wanted faster than your original plan, you traded your plan for mine.

That's what all selling is about – showing your client that if he trades his plan for yours, he'll finally get what he *really* wants.

*

Does your business give you more freedom – or frustration? When you have all the first-rate clients you want, your business can give you freedom. Otherwise, you're guaranteed endless frustration.

The only way to create a steady and predictable flow of amazing clients is by building a step-by-step marketing and selling system.

This manual will help you build a simple, yet devastatingly effective, marketing and selling system because you will learn:

1. Your client's changing psychological needs as he decides whether to buy from you or not.
2. Exactly what to do and say at every stage to fill each need.
3. Most important of all: You will learn how to *think* about it all.

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In this manual, I'm talking to you the business owner, the entrepreneur. But if you have employees or salespeople, everything applies to them just the same. Have them read it and work through the exercises with you.

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The Map in Your Client's Mind

Moving a prospect along from Stranger to Happy Client is a journey that has a beginning, a middle and an end.

This journey takes place in your client's mind.

There are psychological stages he MUST pass through, or he won't buy. When you know these stages and build your marketing and selling system around them, you seem like a wunderkind. When you don't, it feels like an endless hike in the wrong size shoes.

*

Think about it.

In all but the easiest sales, your client knows what he wants. He wants to continue on with his life, deal with his problems – or avoid them; he knows his obstacles, frustrations and aspirations. And by default, he has decided to continue on the path he's on until he sees a really good reason to veer from it.

In short, his next step is very clear: Don't buy.

And here you are. You want him to veer from what he knows and buy your product or service. But your product introduces questions, worries and uncertainties where just a few minutes ago he was okay, even if not all that content.

There is a process for buying and a process for not buying. Before you show up, your client clearly sees the process for not buying. In order to make a sale, you need to make the process for buying even clearer and more enticing.

Isn't that what I did when I advised you to get off at Ocean Road?

The ONLY way you're going to do this is if your understanding of your client's needs, wants, aspirations, fears, etc. is clear, deep and specific.

But most business owners think they understand their clients because they have statistics or market "research." But the guy in front of you[1] doesn't care about research and statistics.

If you're making shallow guesses and broad generalizations, you won't really know what to do and say. When you make a sale, it'll be more luck than design. The unfortunate thing about lucky sales is that they're few and far between. And you can't systematize them and build leverage into your business.

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Again: In order for this client to buy from you, she needs to clearly see that your product or service is exactly what she was wanting all along.

For this to happen, there are several psychological stages she needs to pass through. She may not know it consciously. But YOU need to see them and base every action, question, response on where she is now on the "map" (which you'll learn in a moment) and what the next step needs to be.

In the end, whoever is clearer will walk away with the money. If your prospect is clearer on the process of NOT buying – she'll take her money with her. If you are clearer on the process of buying – she'll happily trade her money for your product.

Few entrepreneurs ever see their client's world that clearly. But you – you're reading this. You're different. In this manual I'm going to give you what you need to go out there with superior clarity for every step of your company's sales process.

[1] Everything in this manual applies to phone, direct marketing and internet marketing as well as face to face.

Chapter 2: Get This One Thing Clear and You'll Be Ahead of 90% of Your Competitors

Years ago my brother-in-law was driving across the U.S. with a friend. After half a day of driving through the Midwest, they pulled over at a truck stop to rest and stretch their legs.

They were getting back into the car when a middle-aged man came up to them.

"Hey, fellas, can I have a lift?"

"Where do you need to go?"

"New York."

"Sorry, we're going to LA."

"Hey, that's good too."

They looked at each other. There was no way they wanted to be stuck in a car for the next few days with someone who had no idea where he was going.

"Uh, sorry bro. It ain't gonna work. Maybe the guy behind us is going to New York."

They left the poor guy at the curb.

***

There's one thing above all else that must be crystal clear. It's the answers to:

"Where are you going?"

"What's your objective?"

"What do you want to accomplish?"

You'd think it would be easy for us humans to clearly know what we want. Funny enough, most people find it darn hard. (Not so funny, really. The simple skill I'm about to teach you can erase a lot of misery very quickly.)

Consider this. In an exercise a client of mine did as part of our work together, he wrote out two objectives he wanted to accomplish in his company:

Objectives / Desired Results:

- To intensify dialogue with supplier partners and work on relationships
- To travel with new purchasing staff to meet supplier and guide into stronger dialogue; to see new purchasing person look after this job following up through Skype, emails and phone conversations

Can you spot the problem? There's not a result to be found. These don't describe the *outcomes* he wants. These are all *means* to an end. But we don't know what he really wants and why!

And this client is not alone. Every day I'm pointing out to clients, all very bright people, that they're talking about the means (or the how, an activity, etc.) before they've specified the WHAT, the outcome, the result, the goal.

Have a look at another set of objectives, from the same client after I pointed out the flaw in his first reply. How did he do this time?

Objectives / Desired Outcomes:

- To shorten production time by 4 working days
- To drop pricing by 10%

Much better. These answers are all about *outcomes*, WHAT will *change*.

Once your desired results are clear, then your next step is to figure out HOW you'll achieve your shortened production time and lower prices.

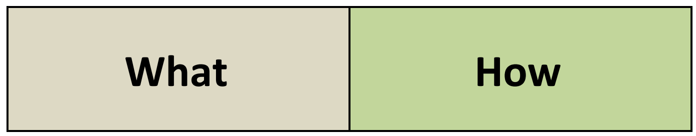
Taking your production staff to meet your suppliers might be a good idea. But it is just one possible 'means' or route to the true goal of shortening production time by 4 working days.

When I teach clear thinking skills to students in my *Plenty of Clients™* coaching programs the first skill we learn, and the skill we build everything on afterwards, is the skill of describing the *results* you want so clearly that there's no room for question or misunderstanding.

Now, I know, this doesn't sound very difficult, right? But it IS. Look around you and listen to what people say. You'll notice that most of the goals people talk about are really not goals at all. They are ACTIVITIES. **Things to be DONE, rather than *RESULTS to be achieved*.**

Even more interesting is how **people tell you what they *don't* want when you ask them what they want.**

Learning to see the distinction between WHAT and HOW is a tremendously important skill that forms the foundation of the sales system you're about to build. So I'm going to share with you an illustration from my *Plenty of Clients™ Mastery Program*.



The What vs. How Map[2]
If you're talking about an *action* or an *activity*, you're talking about a MEANS to an end. If you're talking about what will CHANGE, what will be different, then you're talking about a goal, an outcome, a result.

Reflect on this for a moment. Most people mix these up, and so they're unclear, waste time and lose sales. Your prospect will almost always ask for a *means*. Your job is to uncover the *ends* they want. Then, show how your product will help him get what he wants.

Few of us have thought through what we really want to accomplish. So when you invest some time and brain cells to get your desired results clear, you're creating a winning advantage. I'm soon going to show you how to do this in the context of marketing and selling.

Your prospect is also usually not so clear about what he wants. Through your questions, you help him clarify that for himself. And you then show how your product or service will give him what he really wants.

*

<u>Let's Summarize Chapters 1 and 2</u>:

✓ Selling is simply showing your client how your product or service will give them what they *already* want.

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[2] Notice that I call this little diagram, and the others like it, a "map." Why a map?

Because just like you can't be in New York and Los Angeles at the same time, **you can't be talking about What and How at the same time**. If you're here, you're not there. And I want you to really understand that these are literally two different "geographic" locations. Just like two points on a map.

- ✓ To do this, you need to deeply *understand* what your clients really want.

- ✓ Most entrepreneurs have a very vague understanding of what their clients really want, so their marketing and selling activities are ineffective and a waste of money.

- ✓ The first step in being able to understand what your clients really want is having the ability to differentiate between WHAT and HOW; between the end result they really want, and the means to achieve that end result.

- ✓ Until you make it clear as day that your product will give them what they *already* want, your prospect will continue along the path they're on.

- ✓ Before your prospect will willingly veer off the path he's on, psychologically, he needs to be walked through several very specific stages. In Chapter 5, you'll learn what these stages are. (We call them Levels. Soon you'll understand why.)

- ✓ Each Level has its unique psychological needs. The only purpose of your marketing and selling system is to satisfy these psychological needs and thereby move your client along from Level 1, to Level 2, 3, 4 and 5. Throughout this Manual, I'll be giving you dozens of exercises, scripts and other tools to help you easily and systematically move your own clients along.

Reality # 1

Don't fool yourself. It may seem like a lot of work to build a marketing and selling system. And the truth is – it IS work. Anyone who tells you this stuff is easy is lying to you.

BUT I will tell you that the hardest part of all this is just STARTING. Once you start, it all becomes much easier.

Put one foot in front of the other and you'll soon be leaving your competition behind.

The more you do, the easier it gets.

Chapter 3: You're Not Trying to *Convince* Them

The best salespeople don't try to convince. They preach to the converted.

When I first heard that, it didn't make much sense. But then it "clicked." And when you think about it, it makes a lot of sense, right?

Think about your own life. Who do you consider to be really smart? Who do you turn to for advice and help?

Usually someone who says things you agree with.

Most Democrats read leftward-leaning newspapers and listen to liberal talk shows. Most Republicans read the rightward-leaning papers and listen to conservative talk shows.

Why? Because we all want to reinforce our preconceived ideas of truth and justice. Judgment aside, it's reality.

And so when someone espouses values we agree with, we're more likely to listen to them, trust them and turn to them for advice.

It's the same with marketing and selling.

If you're a dentist who prefers hypnosis over Novocain, don't try to convince me that I should join your practice because hypnosis is better. You might as well be talking to your drill.

You're far better off talking to people who have fear of needles or some other issue that makes them want to avoid the Novocain. *Then you show how hypnosis is consistent with what's already important to them.*

This, on a simple level, is preaching to the converted.

*

Don't change minds. Align with what's already there.

It's important that you understand my point over here. My point is that the whole PURPOSE of your sales process is to show how your product or service is *consistent* with what your client *already wants,* *believes and values*.

It's NOT about trying to change her mind. You CAN'T change her mind. Forget it. The best you can do is *reframe* your product or service so that she sees it as consistent with her preconceived ideas. With what she already wants.

*

When a prospect hesitates and objects, he's simply saying, *"As you've explained it to me, your product doesn't seem to line up with what I believe is important to me."*

The way to overcome that is not to argue and say, "Well, it should be important to you." Even if couched in polite, diplomatic politi-babble, this rarely changes anyone's mind.

The way to overcome that is to show how the product *does* in fact align with something so very dear and important to your client.

But isn't it better if you can avoid this sticky situation to begin with? Of course it is.

To avoid it, make sure you're aligned before you ever suggest he buy this or that, to avoid the objection. I'll show you how to do this in just a bit.

*

Naturally, then, as we mentioned earlier, you need to deeply understand your client's world to be able to sell like this. You need to be able to articulate your client's most deeply held beliefs, aspirations and desires even better than she can herself.

The sales system you're going to build using this manual will help you uncover what your prospect already believes, wants, fears, values, aspires to, etc., so that you can demonstrate how your product is consistent - *in alignment* - with everything they care about.

*

By now it should be clear, that to sell more you must understand that…

It's not about selling. Selling is the way *you* see it.

From your prospect's perspective, it's about <u>buying</u> or <u>not buying</u>.

From your perspective it's a question of, "Will I make a sale or not?"

From your prospect's perspective, it's not a question of BUYING or SELLING. It's a question of, "Should I BUY or NOT buy?"

This is important. Really important.

Most entrepreneurs are average because their ability to sell is average. **Their ability to sell is average because their ability to put themselves in their client's shoes is average**. (Or below average.)

Me	You (the client)
Sell	Buy / Not Buy

The "You-Me Map"
Think of this as a map. Where are you on the map? If you're thinking about yourself and your needs, worries and pressures, then you are not thinking about your client's needs, wants and aspirations. This is just as true as saying you can't be in New York and London or any two locations on any map at the same time.

The more adept you are at getting into your client's mind, the easier it is for you to align your product and service with what they already want; to preach to them about what they already believe, know and want to hear.[3]

In this manual I'm going to use the word selling, simply because it would be confusing to you if I didn't.

But it's important that you know your goal*: To make it easier for your client to buy than to not buy. This will only happen if the way forward with your product looks clearer than without it.*

You give them this clarity not by trying to convince them or change their mind. Just the opposite, you give them this clarity by first coming to deeply understand who they are and what they want. You then show how your product or service is directly aligned with what they most want.

We're almost ready to take all this theory and apply it in real life.

One more important concept first.

[3] To be clear: I'm not suggesting any sort of manipulation. Everything here is meant to be used ethically. We're simply designing a sales system that is consistent with human psychology so you can help the greatest number of people through your products and services.

Chapter 4: Your Goal Is NOT to Make A Sale. It's More Subtle, and More Powerful than that...

There's another nuance that probably clouds your thinking. Let's get it out of way now so we can move boldly ahead.

What I Can Control	What I CAN'T Control

"Can Control vs. Can't Control Map"
Either you are thinking about things you *can* control and doing something about them, or you are thinking about things you *can't* control and worrying for nothing.
You can't be here and there at the same time.

If I ask you, "What's the goal of your sales process?" you'll probably answer, "To make a sale! What else?"

I'll show you what else.

You see, **it makes no sense to set as your goal something you can't control**. And since you CAN'T ever make the decision to buy FOR your client, "making a sale" is a goal that is outside of your control.

If this sounds so far over the edge that you're starting to wonder about me, hang in there. You'll get it. And when the light turns on you'll be playing in a whole new league.

*

You can't *force* your prospect to decide to buy. So your goal shouldn't be to "make a sale" since making the sale is out of your control.

BUT you *can* set out to accomplish a more subtle goal. And when you achieve this subtle goal, a sale will be the natural consequence just as flicking the first domino leads the second one to fall.

So what *should* be the goals of your Ultimate Marketing and Selling System?

THE GOAL: The goal of your Ultimate Marketing and Selling System is to lead your prospect to see that buying your product or service is the path of least resistance. Meaning, buying will actually be better, faster, cheaper, more pleasant, satisfying, rewarding, etc., than not buying.

Once again, this is what I did when I told you to get off at Ocean Road. What first seemed to be the longer, harder route suddenly came to look like the Path of Least Resistance. And you took it.

Your clients are the same. Everything you do in your selling system is designed to make buying look like the Path of Least Resistance.

Here's another important way of thinking about this:

Think of it like a video game. The ultimate goal of a video game is to finish it. (At least this used to be the goal in the good ol' days. I'm told that today's games never end.)

But in order to finish a game that, say, has 5 levels, you need to complete level 1, then 2, 3, 4 and finally 5. So when you begin the game, you have two goals: The big picture, which is finish the game, and the immediate goal – finish level 1.

To finish level 1, you'll need certain skills, tools and disciplines. There will also be some pitfalls to avoid. When you get to level 2, the goals, tools, skills, disciplines will *change* and you need to equip yourself appropriately.

It's the same with your sales system. As you'll see in a moment, there are 5 Levels. Each has objectives you need to achieve in order to finish that Level. To do so, you'll need certain skills, tools and disciplines. And you'll want to be wary of the likely pitfalls.

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First and foremost, you need to accurately see which Level of the "game" you're at with the person you're talking to now.

If you mistakenly think he's at Level 3 when he's really at Level 1 or 2, you're not going to make the sale because you'll be using the Level 3 tools. And as long as your prospect is at Level 1 or 2, Level 3 tools will alienate him and frighten him away.

So pay careful attention now as I show you the five Levels and how to determine where you are with each prospect.

When this is clear to you, your Ideal Prospects literally finds you and your product <u>irresistible</u> and they become your Ideal Client.

Chapter 5: The Five Levels of a Professional Services Marketing and Selling System

I've never been much of a concert goer. But there was one concert my parents took me to years ago that I'll never forget.

It was a klezmer band. Three band members up there on the stage playing together. I think it was a clarinet, drums and bass guitar.

The music was lively, sure. But what made this an unforgettable concert was how much fun each band member was having. You could tell that they just LOVED being up there!

And they had a great system, too.

They always knew where they were going; what song they were playing now and which was next. Each player knew the role his instrument would play in the song. Each contributed his unique part to the whole. And this created a wonderful energy that infected the audience.

A marketing system that has clear components so that everything just flows also creates an infectious energy, making it hard for your client to resist. She'll really *want* to buy.

*

To give yourself the advantage of a super-effective selling system, you need to be clear on three things:

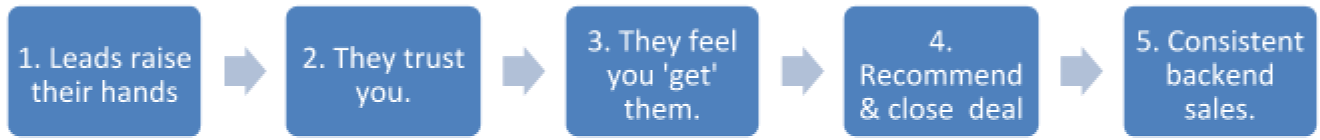
1. What does your client really want? And how will he decide to buy or not?

2. What is the *logical* and *emotional* continuum he must pass through in order to buy? (We'll call these Levels because your client needs to pass from one Level to the next, like in the video game we talked about.)

3. What tools and disciplines will you use to move him from one Level to the next so that his only natural conclusion is, "I should buy. Buying is my path of least resistance." Also, what pitfalls do you need to avoid at each Level?

Throughout the rest of this manual we'll be answering these three questions and applying them to your business.

A sales system that makes your ideal clients WANT to buy has five basic levels:



A few important points:

1. Each Level has an end goal. When the goal is met, the client is *eager* to move to the next Level.
2. Depending on what you sell, moving from 1 to 5 may take as little as a few minutes or as long as a few years.
3. As we said above, to accomplish an objective, you need tools as well as the discipline to use them. So each stage will have its own set of tools. You'll also want to avoid the most common pitfalls of each level.

	1 **Leads raise their hands**	**2** **They trust you.**	**3** **They feel you 'get' them.**	**4** **Recommend and close deal.**	**5** **Consistent backend Sales**
Objectives: What will be different once this stage is achieved?					
Tools & Tactics: What can we use to achieve the objectives?					
Disciplines: What must we consistently do or not do to achieve the goals of each stage?					
Pitfalls: Where many get tripped up.					

The Ultimate Entrepreneurial Sales System © Dov Gordon 2017

In the following chapters you'll learn and master the objectives of each level, as well as tools and disciplines you can use to achieve them. Plus, you'll learn how to avoid the most common pitfalls.

I'm going to give you simple templates, worksheets and even scripts that you can use to apply the concepts immediately to your business.

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Part Two: Taking Leads Through the Levels- The Workbook

Chapter 6: Level 1: Your Ideal Clients Raise Their Hands

The first step in any sales system is attracting leads. Research shows that most salespeople and many small businesses are most concerned with not having enough leads.

This is a big topic, but we're going to strike at the root so it's simple for you. One of the biggest problems in small companies is that you become paralyzed by too many good ideas when you can't possibly implement them all. So you dabble in many instead of mastering a few.

Let's avoid that because a good idea implemented always beats a great idea that goes nowhere.

Level 1: Your Objectives

At Level 1, your objective is to get people who are likely buyers of your products and services to "raise their hands." This means that one way or another they step outside the crowd and you can move them to Level 2, where they come to trust you.

> *Everything you're going to be doing for Level 1 must be to achieve this one goal:*
>
> *Qualified clients take some kind of action which shows that they are a likely buyer.*

This "raising your hand" action will probably be small. For example, they may opt-in to receive your email newsletter. Or enter your store to browse. Or call to ask you a question in response to an ad. Or stop at your booth at a conference.

Level 1: Tools and Tactics

The exercises in this chapter are designed to help you:

(1) Clarify who in fact is your Ideal Client;

(2) Articulate a clear message that will attract them; and

(3) Choose your primary method for getting in front of you Ideal Clients with that message.

We're going to break these exercises for Level 1 into five sections:

The Alchemist Entrepreneur's™

The Ultimate Entrepreneurial Selling System

Level 1 Process Map:

Here's the idea in brief: Everything begins with an understanding of the problem your ideal client has that your product or service can solve. The flip side is understanding his Most Desired Result. In 1A and 1B you get really, really clear about the problems and desires of your ideal client.

You then need to create some kind of free or low-threat offer that begins to solve that problem and to give him that result. When your Ideal Client hears of this offer, they're going to "raise their hands" to get it. After all, it promises to solve their problem. We call this the Hand Raising Free Offer, or the HaRFO –pronounced *HaRFO*. This is what we do in1C.

Before you begin promoting your HaRFO, you want to make sure you have an irresistible *paid* offer lined up because a certain percentage will want to pay for more. That's 1D. And finally, in 1E you choose the tactics you'll use to get your HaRFO noticed.

1A: What Problem Do You Solve? For Whom?

Everything begins with a problem. Problems get our attention. Your Ideal Clients are plagued by problems. If you want to get their attention, it's not enough to talk about solutions. Everyone talks about solutions. But solutions don't get attention. Problems do.

Example: Say you sell software that improves the functioning of a call center. You'll be tempted to talk about how your software helps enhances management efficacy and quality reporting metrics, how it manages the agents to make them more effective at their job.. increases productivity... trains them to do better…. tracks their abandoned calls… etc.

All this is okay.

But come with me to the Irish pub on the corner. Let's glide through the front door and head straight to the far corner table all the way in back. Sitting there is your Ideal Client with a longtime friend. Listen in to their conversation and you hear your Ideal Client grumble:

> *"I don't know what's really happening in my call center."*
>
> *"I'm sure we're losing money, but I can't figure out where or how."*
>
> *"I don't have the information I need to figure out which agents should be fired."*
>
> *"It's unnerving to be forced to make management decisions when I don't have all the information. The systems that we spent a fortune on simply don't tell us what we need to know."*

The way to get this guy's attention is NOT by talking about what your software does as you did above. That's the way to sound like everyone else.

Talk about the REAL PROBLEM as HE PERCEIVES it, as HE talks about it and you'll get his attention.

Problems also have two components: Logical and Emotional.

Example: If you sell a computer backup service, the problem you help solve – or prevent – is loss of data. It's making sure that you don't one day wake up and discover that weeks, months or years of work and memories are gone. On the emotional side, it's avoiding the REGRET of not taking a simple, easy step to backup.

And so, the foundation of your Marketing and Selling System is to get very clear on:

- What problems do you solve?
- For whom?

The exercises in this section are designed to help you do precisely that.

<u>Level 1 - Exercise 1</u>: What Problems Do You Solve?

Make a list of ALL the problems you can help people solve through your products and services. Be specific and clear.

1A: What Problem Do You Solve? For Whom?

The next thing you want to do is make a list of all the kinds of people who have one or more of the problems your product can solve.

One of the most common reasons business owners are not systematically attracting all the new clients they want is because the owner is chasing too many rabbits at once.

The purpose of the next three exercises is to help you identify the best clients to market and sell to.

Level 1 - Exercise 2: List all the different Client Types who have one or more of the problems your product can solve.

Make a list of all the types of clients you can possibly help. Be specific. If, for example, you sell an online computer backup service, don't just divide your options into personal and business users. Divide each of these further. Are there some personal users who travel a lot and want access to their files without taking their computer everywhere? Are there business users who have a need for special levels of security? Whatever it might be, list every way of grouping them you can think of:

____	____
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1A: What Problem Do You Solve? For Whom?

Who is your Ideal Client?

Now we need to look at this from *your* point of view. *Not every client is equally attractive to you*.

So let's spell out what qualities / characteristics / criteria make a client very attractive to you. Once you've done this, you'll be in a position to see *which Client Types have a problem you can solve AND possess the qualities that make them an ideal client for you*. Later we'll figure out how to reach them. First let's identify them. Let's get clear both on who they ARE and who they are NOT.

<u>Level 1 - Exercise 3</u>: List the qualities, characteristics and criteria that make someone your ideal client:

<u>Level 1 - Exercise 4</u>: List the qualities, characteristics and criteria that make someone you DON'T WANT as a client:

1A: What Problem Do You Solve? For Whom?

Even if we assume that your product or service could serve many Client Types, *each Client Type buys for a different reason.*

Yes, there are many people in many situations whom you can help through your products and services. But to get your selling system up and running you need to focus. Why? Because the more specific you are about what problem you solve for whom, the easier it will be to formulate a message that gets people to turn their head and think, "Hey, he's talking to ME!"

Remember the lesson in Chapter 1? Each client has his own desires. You need to demonstrate how your product will give him what he wants. Each Client Type has its own desires. So the message and medium you use to reach one CT may not be ideal for another. So to convey a message that excites people and gets them to sit up, notice and say "Tell me more!" you've got to focus on solving a specific problem for a specific type of client.

Psychologically, why would someone take an action to "raise their hand and step out of the crowd?"

They'll do it for one reason: They heard or saw something which leads them to believe that you can solve their problem.

Articulating a clear problem you can solve is as close to calling her by name as you can get.

If you're concerned about locking yourself into a box, fear not. Let's get you up and running with one Ultimate Selling System and then you can build another that is designed to bring a second type of client.

Level 1 - Exercise 5: Create your *shortlist* of three Client Types:

Look at your list above and pick the three client types who seem most appealing.
This is an interim step. Soon you will narrow it down to ONE.
It'll probably be a hard choice, so we're doing it in stages:

1. ____
2. ____
3. ____

1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

Let's review our goal: To create a simple marketing and selling system that brings you a steady, consistent, predictable flow of your ideal clients.

This means we need to build a system that focuses everything you do on what's important and interesting to your Ideal Clients.

This means we need to identify who these ideal clients are AND what problem they have that your product can solve.

When we deeply understand all this we can decide what you should do that will attract not just their attention, but their INTEREST.

The exercises in 1B build on what you've done so far. Here we're going to get you reading the minds of your Ideal Client. When you get the insight we're after here, your Ideal Client will have a hard time resisting anything you offer them.

*

Nothing gives you more leverage as a marketer than having a deep understanding of your clients.

You can also be sure of two things:

- 90% of your competitors have a shallow understanding of what your clients really want and how they make decisions.

- 10% at the top are fanatical about continuously deepening this understanding and applying what they learn to their marketing.

As someone who wants to be safely perched within the top 10%, you no doubt understand that the time you invest to gain this understanding is time well spent.

Perry Marshall, a marketer I deeply respect, observed that you need to be able to understand your client so well that you can write a page in his diary.

All the exercises in section 1B – You, A Client Mind Reader! are designed to put you in the top 10%.

1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

We now move to 1-B: You – A client mind reader! Here we want to deepen your understanding of your Ideal Clients so that you can later create an offer that they will find irresistible.

*

What is your Ideal Client's Most Desired Result? The MDR is the other side of the coin from the problem. The problem is what they *don't* want. The MDR is what they *do* want. Make it your business to understand both.

Your client wants something. What is it? What does he *really* want?

This is a very important exercise. Do this well and you'll be able to effortlessly distinguish yourself from your competition.

Let's suppose you're a kitchen contractor. You get a call to come out and give a quote for a client who wants a new, larger kitchen.

<u>There are two ways to do this:</u>

(1) Go out there. Measure. Ask a few questions. Give a quote.

(2) Go out and really *connect* with your client. Bring her to a place where she sees you as someone who really 'gets' her. Learn about her real, true Most Desired Result (MDR).

    Then you become the 'trusted adviser' for her kitchen design. And when you get that far – you get the business, even if you're more expensive. It's simply too risky to go with the quote-givers.

*

Q: So how do you tease out your client's Most Desired Result?

A: Refuse to settle for a superficial answer. See the following dialogue as an example.

*

1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

Kate (Client): “We need a new, larger kitchen.”

You:

> To yourself: *[I wonder why Kate wants a new kitchen. I can see that it’s on the small side, so it’s easy for me to assume I know why she wants a new kitchen. But it’s foolish to assume I know what’s most important to her. So I’ll ask.]*
>
> To Kate: “Kate, tell me, why are you interested in a larger kitchen?”

Kate: “Well, the kids are growing and I’m finding that we’re stepping on each other more and more in the kitchen.”

You: “Mmmm. So you want a kitchen where you and the kids can do what you need without getting in each other’s way?”

Kate: “Exactly!” *[You’ve articulated what she wants very clearly.]*

You: “And when you have this new, large kitchen what else will be different?”

Kate: “The kitchen will be neat and clean. The way it is today, there’s just not enough space for everything. The cabinets are stuffed and it’s a pain to put things away. So things are left lying around. And no matter how much I clean it up, I feel like I’m in a race I can’t possibly win.”

> *[Kate shared how her current kitchen makes her **feel**. Very important to catch when clients talk about emotions. Ultimately we buy for emotional reasons; we buy because of how we believe the car, boat or Swiss Army Knife will make us feel. We then justify it rationally[4].]*

You: “Mmmm Hmmm. And when you do have the kitchen you want, how will that feel?”

Kate: “Well!...” *[You’ve just transported Kate into the future. She’s envisioning what she really wants. And it feels really good.]*

> “It’ll feel amazing. It’ll be easy and quick to clean up because there’ll be space for everything. The kids will be able to take care of themselves without us getting in each other’s way. The cabinets will have plenty of empty space – even though every possible utensil and appliance will be put away when not being used… It’ll feel like things are where they should be…”

[4] Attributed to Mark Twain: Men buy things for two reasons: The real reason, and the reason they tell their wives.

You: "And how will your interactions with your kids be different in this new kitchen?"

Kate: *[Laughs.]* "That's easy. I'll be more patient with them because I won't always feel like they're creating hours of cleanup work for me every time they come in here…"

You: "Kate, when you cut down the time you spend cleaning the kitchen each day, what will you do instead?"

Kate: "Family dinners and bedtime would certainly be more relaxed. I'd have more time for the kids - and instead of cleaning up every night after the kids go to bed, I could relax and read for half an hour."

> ***Note:*** *Kate's Most Desired Result is more time for herself to read and unwind in the evening and to be more patient and relaxed with her kids. If you come into this picture thinking that you're selling cabinets and countertops, you're at a great disadvantage. If on the other hand you realize that you are in the business of helping women to be the patient and loving mothers they really want to be – there's no limit to how many kitchens you can sell.*

You: "Sounds just like the kitchens my company builds every day for dozens of other clients just like you. The next step is…"

You then lead Kate through a process where you design the perfect kitchen for her.

Now, what if when Kate said "We need a new, larger kitchen" you had responded with "Sure, I can do that for you…" Can you see how you never would have uncovered what Kate REALLY wants?

1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

Level 1 – Exercise 6: What RESULT does your client want more than anything else?

Look at your shortlist of potential clients to focus on, from Level 1 – Exercise 5, above. From your experience, what do you believe is the Most Desired Result for those types of clients? Later you'll talk to some of these people and check your answers against theirs.

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1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

Now we're going to test your answers by interviewing both current clients as well as people who you think you'd like as clients.

<u>Level 1 - Exercise 7</u>:

List the names of 3 – 5 current clients who have the qualities of an Ideal Client. You want more like them.

- ____
- ____
- ____
- ____
- ____

<u>Level 1 - Exercise 8</u>:

Ask them these three Understanding Questions over lunch or by phone or video call. Record if you can get permission. Certainly take careful notes.

Ask:

1. **Why did you start doing business with us?**
2. **Why have you continued doing business with us?**
3. **What can we do to have an even bigger impact on your life / world / business / marriage / health / ______?**

(I also recommend you ask your current clients the question you'll see in the next exercise meant for non-clients.)

<u>Important</u>: Take careful notes. Record if you can. Listen for both logical and emotional dislikes and desires. Listen for beliefs about life, business, your industry, products and services, etc.

Listen carefully for words describing both what they have and don't want as well as what they don't have and do want. Both tangible and feeling / emotional.

For example, after talking to several prospects I noticed that they had all used the same word to describe their current marketing and selling activities: HAPHAZARD. Personally, I wouldn't have thought to use it. But now I do. It's a word that comes loaded with imagery and feeling. And it means a lot to my Ideal Clients. It makes them feel I really understand them. (And I do – because I perpetually do the kind of exercises and listening you'll be doing in this section.)

> *Note: If during this conversation they complain about your product, company, you, etc... don't be defensive. Just listen, and ask follow up clarifying questions.*
>
> *You want them to share their perception even if you see things differently.*
>
> *You can always set things straight later on.*

1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

Level 1 - Exercise 9:

Find three prospects who are *not* yet clients but they seem to have the qualities of an Ideal Client.

Schedule a lunch / phone / Skype conversation with the decision maker and have a conversation using the process outlined in Chapter 8. You can skip ahead and read it to prepare for the conversation.

Here, too, record if you can. Listen for both logical and emotional desires.

Here are some additional specific scripts you can use:

- "[PROBLEM] is an issue for you, right?"
  Be sure they agree they have the problem before going further!
- "Why has [PROBLEM] been an issue?"
- "As long as [PROBLEM] continues, how does that limit you?"
- "What's the worst thing about [PROBLEM]?"
- "When you think about [PROBLEM] how does that make you feel?"
- "When you've successfully solved [PROBLEM] what will you have in its place?"
- "What about [DESIRED RESULT] is so important?"
- "What else?"
- "And why is that important?"
- "What have you tried so far to get rid of [PROBLEM] and get [DESIRED RESULT]?"
- "And what has been most frustrating / disappointing / satisfying about what you've done so far?"

Level 1 - Exercise 10:

Develop a clear and detailed profile of your Ideal Client

Now, take what you learned about your Ideal Client and create a simple "Client Profile."

Holding a clear and accurate picture of your client in front of you in your mind's eye does wonders for your self-confidence.

Think about it: If you know someone's secrets, don't you feel more confident when dealing with them? When someone is an enigma, aren't they more intimidating?

When you feel that you know your Ideal Client, it's easier to talk as a peer, as an equal who is simply trying to help them get what they want.

In this exercise write out characteristics of your Ideal Client.

Earlier you narrowed down your Ideal Client to three kinds of people.

To help you choose you'll do a more detailed profile of each. This will expose the kind of person who can be most impacted through your products.

So fill out the form three times; Option 1, Option 2 and Option 3.

Keep in mind that there is no "perfect" client. So don't look for him. Look for the kind of client you can most help and who can afford to pay you well.

Use the template on the next pages. You'll probably need more paper.

1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

My ideal client OPTION # 1: ____

Has these pressing problems:____
____
____
____
____

Badly wants / aspires to ____
____
____

Worries about ____
____
____

Doesn't realize ____
____
____

His / her biggest obstacles are ____
____
____

Emotions he often feels and *doesn't* want to feel is ____________________________________
____
____

Emotions he doesn't often feel and *wants* to feel is ____________________________________
____
____

Is different from others around them in that ____
____
____

1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

My ideal client OPTION # 2: ____

Has these pressing problems:____

____

____

____

____

Badly wants / aspires to ____

____

____

Worries about ____

____

____

Doesn't realize ____

____

____

His / her biggest obstacles are ____

____

____

Emotions he often feels and *doesn't* want to feel is __________________________________

____

____

Emotions he doesn't often feel and *wants* to feel is __________________________________

____

____

Is different from others around them in that _______________________________________

____

____

1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

My ideal client OPTION # 3: ____

Has these pressing problems:____
____
____
____
____

Badly wants / aspires to ____
____
____

Worries about ____
____
____

Doesn’t realize ____
____
____

His / her biggest obstacles are ____
____
____

Emotions he often feels and *doesn’t* want to feel is _________________________
____
____

Emotions he doesn’t often feel and *wants* to feel is _________________________
____
____

Is different from others around them in that _____________________________
____
____

1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

Now that you've developed a detailed profile of three Client Types, if you could pick only ONE client type, which would it be? Why?

Same idea: Assuming you could only work with one type of client, who would it be? Why?

<u>Level 1 - Exercise 11</u>: Choose Your Ideal Client

My ideal client is: ____

Why is this your choice?

____

____

Choose one problem. What <u>single</u> problem will you focus on helping your Ideal Client solve?

____

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CONGRATULATIONS! You've crossed a MAJOR milestone
on the road to having your Ultimate Marketing and Selling System.

Reality # 2:

Big marketing and selling success requires that you move forward with confidence and commitment. To do that, you need a clear message. And to have a clear message, you need to be focused on solving a specific problem for a specific Client Type.

For too long, I resisted focusing myself and it slowed me down for years. Alas, such is life. I needed to mature.

The key idea is this: There is no single right answer to any of the questions in these exercises.

Hesitating out of concern that you may not have the right answer means only one thing: You're not moving forward.

Answering these questions is only the first step. It helps you focus your action. Ultimately, though, only going out and DOING something will really move you forward.

Where you are now:

- You are now very clear about who is your Ideal Client.
- You have chosen a single problem this Ideal Client has that your product can solve.
- You deeply understand your Ideal Client's Most Desired Result.

Where you are going:

- Next, you are going to learn to express your Ideal Client's problem and most desired result in simple, clear language. When your Ideal Client hears this language, they will take notice and ask to learn more. We call this crafting your "head-turning" message.
- You'll develop a simple, free offer that will address your Ideal Client's problem and desired result.
- You'll find a way to make this offer to your Ideal Client. When they step forward to take advantage of it, they will be "raising their hands." And that is the goal of Level 1.

1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

<u>Level 1 - Exercise 12</u>: What are YOUR points-of-view?

What do you stand for? Here we're looking for Points of View that you deeply believe in and which affect your clients. We're looking for your opinions about:

- Areas where clients in your market are underserved.
- Misinformation that leads clients to make mistakes. You have information, a point-of-view, that they all need to hear and consider.
- Counterintuitive wisdom.
- Contrarian point of view. Everyone in your industry says A. But you honestly believe the right way is B!

For example, I deeply believe that small business owners need to stop being afraid. We need to stop lying to ourselves about how we don't have the money to invest in ourselves and how we don't have the time to build our businesses wisely.

This point-of-view relates to the Most Desired Result of my Ideal Client. And it will turn off those who are not a good match. You'll be drawing on these later on when you develop ways to "Get Noticed."

What are your Points-of-View? List several:

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1B: You – A Client Mind Reader!

<u>Level 1 - Exercise 13</u>: What do you do?

Articulate a simple, clear message that will get your Ideal Client to take notice. You need a clear, crisp answer to the question of "What do you do?"

This message must be framed as a *result*. It's not about what your product or company *does*. It's about the *results* your clients get when they use your product or service. So whenever someone asks you, "What do you do?" the question you should hear is, "What results do you get for who?"

For example, if you own an accounting firm, it's not about the taxes you file and the reports you run, it's about what this *does* for your ideal client. It's about the headaches you avoid for them; the wasted time you free up so they can focus on what's really important and fun in their business, etc.

If you own a coffee shop, it's not, "We sell coffee and good food." It's, "We give tired and hurried business people a place to slow down, unwind and do important thinking work."

Fill in the blanks below:

> "We help *<u>type of person or business</u>* who *<u>has [PROBLEM] to get [SPECIFIC DESIRED RESULT]</u>*."

____

____

Many businesses and advertising agencies are tempted to use cutesy advertising slogans. Don't be cute. Don't be vague. Be effective. Cute and clever is never as effective as simply speaking to what people want most, right now.

I admit it. As a consultant, this was very difficult for me. I could do so much for so many people. It was *really* difficult to choose ONE problem to focus all my marketing around. So difficult, that I literally lost *years* because I didn't want to do it.

When I finally 'got it' and took the leap, my business picked up immediately. I mean *overnight*. And I haven't looked back.

Here's mine:

> *"I help business owners who love what they do, but struggle with getting clients to systematically and predictably attract all the clients they want."*
>
> My short version:
>
> *"I help business owners get more quality clients in less time."*

Force yourself to articulate and then harp on a small number of simple messages so it'll be like one bird calling to another in the forest. They may not be able to see you, but when they hear your chirp, it immediately resonates and makes sense.

NEXT: Now we're ready to develop your "Hand Raising Free Offer," the next step.

1C: Your Hand-Raising Free Offer

To get your Ideal Client to raise his hand, you need to offer him something he wants for free – or a very good deal. This complimentary "Hand-Raising Free Offer" gives him the reason to stop at your booth, enter your store, call you on the phone, subscribe to your email newsletter, etc. Many people call similar offers a 'lead magnet' or 'tripwire offer'.

Let's now design your Hand-Raising Free Offer, or HaRFO. (We call it your "HaRFO" for short.)

<u>Level 1 - Exercise 14</u>: Your Hand-Raising Free Offer (HaRFO)

<u>Example</u>: If I owned a wine shop, I'd invite people in for a free tasting[5]. Once in the store, I would have them sign up for my email newsletter so I can continue to communicate with them on a regular basis for virtually no cost.

If I sold a business process improvement software, I would offer some kind of white paper, webinar, teleseminar, etc. where I address a *very specific problem*. If I promote it to address the specific problem that my Ideal Clients have, they will take notice and register – raise their hands – to get it. I can then follow up with them and offer my paid products.

Your HaRFO doesn't have to be free. But it should be a great deal that someone with the problem you can solve will have a hard time resisting.

Depending on what you sell, your HaRFO may take any of the following forms:

- Free 1-1 consultation.
- Free seminar.
- Free teleseminar.
- Free webinar.
- Free 7 day / 30 day / xx day trial.
- Free taste.
- Free sample.
- Free gift.
- Free experience.
- Free version. Your paid offer is a step up.
- Free article.
- Free whitepaper.
- Free troubleshooting guide.

[5] Well, it would probably be more interesting. Say I realized that the biggest problem my ideal clients have is not understanding the differences between wines. They want to become wine-savvy. I would promote a tasting that is designed to teach them to be wine-savvy. And there, I'd offer to sign them up to my email list where I'd continue to educate them – and make them special offers of wine.

- Free tip-sheet.
- Free calculator ("See how much a mortgage broker could save you!")
- Free evaluation ("Take this quiz to find out what type of investments are best for you.")
- Etc.

1C: Your Hand-Raising Free Offer.

List 3 freebies you can offer:

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Next: Once someone "raises his hand" and shows that he may be a likely client, you need to be prepared with an irresistible paid offer. Yes, you won't actually TALK about it until your prospect is at Level 4 with you – where he trusts you (Level 2), feels you really understand his needs, wants, fears and aspirations (Level 3) and has asked you what you recommend (Level 4.)

But the time to prepare this irresistible offer is now – before you go out and start promoting.

It's simply preparing for success.

1D: Your Irresistible Paid Offer

You need to be prepared for success. You need to be prepared to offer a product package that your prospect will find irresistible. As you set out to prepare your irresistible paid offer, make sure it includes the following six components:

1. **The Irresistible Paid Offer will help solve a very specific problem and / or get a very specific desired result.** If you're trying to be *too* much to *too* many people for *too* many problems, you message is watered down and your credibility questioned. It must be crystal clear how life will be different once he becomes a client / member / owner.

2. **It is made to look easy. Or easier than the alternatives.** We entrepreneurs often overcomplicate what we're selling because to us the excitement is in the nuance. The problem is, our clients often get scared away. Keep it simple. Make it easy for them. Or at the very least, easier than their alternatives.

3. **It is believable.** Despite appearing as the easy alternative, it must be believable. If they don't believe they'll get the result they want, nothing else matters. They won't buy.

4. **It comes with options.** Options make it easier to get started. It makes the decision one of "Which one?" Instead of "Should I or shouldn't I?"

5. **It is limited / scarce in some way.** We want what everyone else has. We want what we can't have. When your offer is limited in some way – generally by some variation of Time or Quantity – your prospects feel the need to get involved now.

6. **The ROI is a no-brainer.** Even if we're talking about a non-business purchase. If it's clear how that luxury sports car will make him feel great for the money, it provides a no-brainer **R**eturn **O**n **I**nvestment.

In many businesses, you can have standard packages – especially for the first time someone buys from you.

Other businesses, say high priced consultants, will need to develop customized options each time. Even in these businesses, there are many 'givens' that stay pretty much the same. Get these clear and it'll be easier and less time-consuming to close and implement your deals.

Level 1 - Exercise 15: In a new document, write out your irresistible paid offer. Make sure you're using as many of these six factors as possible.

1E: Get Noticed!

Now that you have a Hand Raising Free Offer and an Irresistible Paid Offer, it's time to get noticed.

There are many, many tactics for getting noticed and they range from "High Touch" to "High Reach."

High Touch tactics help you get noticed by a small number of prospects at a time. Cold calling, for example, requires you to research and call one person at a time.

High Reach tactics help you get noticed by many people at once. Advertising, for example, can put you in front of thousands or millions of people at a time.

Neither category is better or worse. The right approach for you will depend on what you sell and the price and profit you earn from each sale.

- Cold calling
- Referral systems
- Conferences
- Networking
- Joint Ventures / Triangulation / Endorsements
- Email opt-ins
- Public speaking
- Product launches
- Advertisements (Online, offline, etc.)
- Direct mail: Sales letters, postcards, etc.
- Public relations
- Etc.

High Touch or High Volume? This is your first decision.

If you're looking to sell a product or service that is high-priced
AND has some level of customization
AND you want a quick bump in sales
AND you have limited capacity, you should probably begin with High Touch.

If you are selling something low priced, pretty standard and there's no real limit to how many sales you can make, then you probably should begin with a High Reach tactic.

Also, if you're looking for immediate income, a tactic with High Touch may give you that income boost more quickly. Building an email list and database through more High Reach tactics can take time.

So, which approach is right for you right now as you build your 1st marketing and selling system? Check one!

☐ **High Touch** ☐ **High Reach**

1E: Get Noticed!

<u>Level 1 - Exercise 16</u>: Choose a small number of tactics (1 – 2) that you can use to consistently communicate with your Ideal Client. STICK to just these until they're running like a smooth machine. After you have one system up in place you can build another.

If you want to stand out, don't do what most people do. Most people will feel they *need* to work on half a dozen things at once. The result is mediocrity across the board.

Next time someone says, "But you really need to be active in social media these days," or, "You need to be advertising," or, "You need to do direct mail," or any other well intentioned advice – ignore it. And just focus on the one tactic you're going to choose below until it's running smoothly. Let your competition be the fools who try and master everything at once.

List the tactics you might use to reach your Ideal Client. This could include networking, conferences, advertising (billboards, Google AdWords, magazine, newspaper, radio, online banner, etc.), PR, point of sale, joint ventures, public speaking, conventions, etc. Then pick the 3 that you would most enjoy:

1.
2.
3.

Now, from those three, pick ONE to start with. You're going to focus on this ONE until it's up and running as a system, consistently bringing you a steady stream of qualified leads. Now, don't fret about it, OK? There's no perfect or "right" tactic. So just pick one and make it work. Which will it be?

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In this chosen tactic, what is the simple NEXT STEP that you'll be asking your prospects to take as a way of "raising their hands?" For example, you may be asking them to sign up to an email newsletter, to visit your convention booth, to call for a free quote or consultation, to request a free gift, a free consultation, etc.

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1E: Get Noticed!

Level 1 - Exercise 17: Set up the infrastructure to recognize when someone raises their hand so you can easily move them to the "front of the line," so to speak.

17.1. What will you see when your "hand raising" system is working like a well oiled machine? What will be the results of this system?

For example, if you're at a conference and the way you want people to "raise their hands" is to request a free consultation, then what you'll see is:

- People reading a promotion for the free consultation.
- Many of them will then fill out a form to leave their contact information
- People are asking you and your team questions. The conversations lead more people to sign up. It also deepens your understanding of your clients. You are all well prepared and trained in what questions to ask and how to answer the most likely questions.
- After the conference, you systematically follow up with everyone, quickly.

1E: Get Noticed!

17.2. What are the steps you need to take in order to get this system up and running? Spell out the steps in your plan. Be clear as to who will do what by when.

17.3. Look at the key steps in your plan. What could go wrong? Identify the possible mess-ups now so you can take steps to prevent them.

1E: Get Noticed!

17.4. For each likely problem, what steps can you take to prevent it? What contingencies can you set up in case it happens anyway?

17.5. **Measure**. What simple tools can you use to measure your progress?

For example, you'll probably want to be tracking how many leads you generate and how many of them convert to sales. Or, in the conference example above, you'll want to measure how many people signed up for the free consultation, how many showed up for it and how many became clients and at what profit. A spreadsheet may be enough or you may need a more sophisticated tool.

1E: Get Noticed!

17.6. Monitor. Set clear milestones to monitor your progress. What key steps will you accomplish by what dates? Add these dates to your calendar as reminders to check on your progress.

For example, if the conference is a 3 day conference and you hope to get at least 100 people registered for a free consultation, by the end of day 1 – check to see that you have at least 33 signups. If you don't, something may be wrong with your approach. If you have 50 signups, you may need to add capacity to your system down the line to handle them all.

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Done with the exercise? Great! You've now gone through the Level One work and are leaps and bounds ahead of the game when it comes to getting new leads into your marketing system.

Before we move on, however, let's go through some common challenges you may encounter at this stage.

Level 1: Disciplines and Pitfalls

As you go through the Level 1 work, you will need to be disciplined about your choices - and there are some common pitfalls to avoid. Let's go through them:

1. **Challenge: Defining your "Ideal Client" too broadly.** You need the discipline to choose. And you must avoid the pitfall of "choosing" too broadly.

   How do you know if you're casting your net too wide?

   You run the common sense Message Test: Stand in front of the people you want as clients and you say what you do. If they yawn or look to escape, you haven't zeroed in on a problem that's important enough to them.

   If you do get some people who reply with interest, wanting to hear more, then you've probably done well.

2. **Challenge: Assuming you understand your Ideal Client.** The discipline here is to force yourself to go out and really get to know the people you most want to serve. You do this without any agenda because you're not looking to sell. You're looking to learn. You can only build a system that sells consistently after you really, deeply understand your customers. Try skipping this step and you'll be inviting endless frustration, wasted time and money.

   Use what you learn from these one-to-one conversations to develop the deep understanding you need to answer the "My Ideal Clients" questions accurately.

   The pitfall is to think you understand when you don't.

3. **Challenge: Limiting yourself to a small number of tactics.** Get one or two running smoothly. This is the discipline. The pitfall is thinking you *need* to do many things at once for whatever reason.

   You don't. You need to begin a "conversation" with enough qualified leads by getting them to raise their hands. One "hand raising system" that works well is far superior to half a dozen that sorta work. Be wise. Ignore all the experts who have an interest in getting you involved in more and more tactics.

When you see clearly that it's not about the tactics, but about the results, it's easier to decide on just 2 or 3 that you believe you can uniquely excel at. You then plan these activities and systematize them so you get leverage.

4. **Challenge: You're making it too hard for people to "raise their hands"** by asking them to take too big of a step before they're ready. You're trying to skip from Level 1 to Level 3 or 4.

   If you find what you have designed isn't getting the response you want, start here to troubleshoot. Make sure your HaRFO is in congruence with the principles we've discussed here.

***

Let's Summarize Level 1: When your Level 1 system is running smoothly, you'll be:

1. Looking to solve specific kinds of problems or fill specific wants…

2. …for specific types of clients.

3. Your message to these clients will be clear and relate to how you can solve their problem or give them what they want.

4. You'll be focused on using one primary method to get your clients to "raise their hands"

5. And finally, you'll have a clear plan for implementing this, including a tool to measure your progress as well as milestones to be sure you're on track.

Wow.

Look back on all you've accomplished over the past few weeks as you put one foot in front of the other and built major pieces of your ultimate marketing and selling system.

Few business owners ever approach this part of their business in the disciplined, systematic way that you have just done.

And that's why few ever experience the self-confidence and calm that comes with building a systematic, consistent, predictable stream of first-rate clients.

Go celebrate. Reward yourself. You deserve it.

Chapter 7: Level 2, Earn Their Trust

When a buyer is deciding to buy or not, your role is to **influence** her to buy *because it's in her best interest.*

"Influence" is a key word here.

Who influences *you*? Those who cut you off before you finish your thought? Those who tell you what you need to do before they know what you want? Those who have a clear personal interest in you taking their "advice?"

No.

What does it take to influence someone? This is a big subject and I'll recommend some further resources for you. For now, let's zero in on the few underlying structures that you can leverage immediately.

> You are NEVER influenced to do, think or believe anything unless and until you first believe that the other person:
>
> 1. Genuinely understands your situation and
> 2. Has your best interest in mind.
> 3. And will do what they say they will do when they say they will do it.

In other words, you are only influenced by people you TRUST.

When someone raises their hand, you've earned their INTEREST. Next, you need to earn their TRUST.

What is trust?

> *When you trust someone, you feel comfortable and confident that they will do what they say they will do when they said they will do it. And that they have your best interests at heart.*

Level 2: Objectives

So now we know your OBJECTIVES for Level 2: To lead your prospect to feel :

(1) Comfortable and confident that you and your product can and will do what you say it will do. And that…
(2) You have their best interests at heart.

Level 2: Tools and Tactics

It almost sounds hypocritical to use "tools" and "tactics" to gain trust. But tools and tactics are neither good nor bad. It's how you use them.

Here are some of the tools you can use to build trust:

1. Care. *Really* care.
2. *Earn* Your Reputation.
3. Call it as you see it.
4. Tell a good story.
5. Testimonials.
6. Provide a mouthwatering experience.
7. Offer a low priced entry product.
8. Be thoughtful.
9. Be vulnerable yourself.

Let's look at each one.

1. Care. *Really* Care.

When you really care about the people in your market; when you really want to help them achieve their Ideal, you have an advantage right from the get-go.

It's hard to teach this. If you are in a business where you don't really care about your clients, you should probably move on.

If you're reading this manual, you probably care a lot.

When you really care about your client, you're not afraid of them rejecting you. You care so much that it's worth the risk that you may not succeed in helping them this time around. Too bad. Either you'll help them next time, or you'll learn your lessons so you're better equipped to help someone else. Or both.

When you really care, your reputation will precede you. People will raise their hands – already having heard that you are someone to be trusted. Much of your work is already done for you.

Exercise:

1.1. Do you really care about the people you want as your clients? Why?

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Do your *employees* care deeply about your clients? They may or may not care as much as you do so you may need to work with them on this.

As a group, explore these questions:

1.2. If a company in our business really, really cared about its clients, what would it do? What would it not do?

1.3. If a company in our field didn't really care and was focused just on making sales, what would they do? What would they not do?

Painting these two contrasting pictures will help your employees[6] understand the image and reputation you're looking to craft – as well as what they need to do to help craft that reputation.

Which leads us to…

[6] This is a great little exercise to do yourself as well if you don't yet have employees. Try it!

2. *Earn* Your Reputation.

Your reputation is the sum of what people say about you. What people say about you is a consequence of your actions and behavior.

Same for your company, product or service. If you build a product that really helps people, people will talk about the results they got.

Sure it's possible to "fool" the market – but only for a while. The key is to put more effort into *earning* the reputation you want than into *publicizing* the reputation you want. Many large companies get this backwards. They try to buy a reputation by spending a fortune on advertising and PR, but this rarely works in the long run if their actions don't live up to their publicity.

There is a place for proactively *crafting* the right image. But that's the 20%. The 80% is to *earn* it.

How do you earn it? By being the kind of company you described in the previous exercise.

2.1. Exercise:

People will choose one company over another, one product over another, one restaurant over another, one cell phone over another, one doctor over another, based on how they perceive each option.

When your ideal clients consider buying your product or service, they'll choose the one they perceive as offering them one advantage or another. The deeper your understanding of what they're really looking for, the more you can do to create the reputation / perception that will lead them to buy from you. So…

How does your ideal client need to perceive you and your company in order to want to do business with you?

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Now what steps can you take in order to create that perception?

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One of the most important ways to build the reputation you want is to…

3. Call it as you see it. Especially if you challenge conventional wisdom – intelligently.

The best clients want someone who's not afraid to call it as they see it. They want someone confident enough to stand out in a crowd and challenge conventional wisdom.

Most people look around to see what others are saying and doing and use that to decide what to say and do. There are very, very few exceptions.

Your job is to look around and see what everyone is saying and doing. Then ask yourself: **"What about this doesn't make sense?"** Formulate an alternative point of view. Then spread your point of view when speaking to your Ideal Clients.

You're not looking for people to LIKE you so much as looking for people to RESPECT you. If you really care about your Ideal Clients you'll naturally be drawn to first call it as you see it rather than try to be popular. And that's the way it should be.

Exercise:

3.1. Notice what's being said in your marketplace. What are speakers saying at conventions? What's being advocated in the magazines and books? And what are the common threads forming your industry's conventional wisdom?

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3.2. Challenge conventional wisdom. What's the genuine weakness in what is being said? What do people *really* need to understand to get the result they really want?

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Now, you want to be able to tell some good stories to support your point of view, prove your points and make yourself even more appealing…

4. Tell a good story.

The power of a good story to draw people in is well known. We all love stories. Especially if it's a story of someone who successfully did what I want to do. Someone who overcame a challenge similar to the one I want to overcome.

Tell a good story, and your prospect will start to picture himself having the same experience.

Your marketing story will be most powerful when it includes these elements:

- **It's about someone just like me.**
  Tell me about someone who was in a similar situation to where I am and how she successfully got the result I want – with your help. Such a story builds my confidence in you.

- **It includes both Logic and Emotional motivations.**
  Apparently Mark Twain once observed that a man buys things for two reasons: The reason he tells his wife, and the real reason.

  We each have both *rational* and *emotional* needs and wants and your product needs to fit both.

  So in your story, make sure you touch on both the logical reasons someone would want your product as well as the emotional.

  Logically, there's a problem I have today that I want resolved. Emotionally, I'm feeling something today that I don't want to feel.

In your story, talk about how someone with similar logical and emotional desires went from where I am today to where I really want to be.

Exercise:
What are some logical motivations your Ideal Client is likely to have to want your product?
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What are some emotional motivations your Ideal Client is likely to have to want your product?
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Now, incorporate these into a story.

- **Preempt my objections.**
  What objections am I likely to have to buying your product or service? Tell me a story about them. Maybe I think I can't afford it. Tell me a story about someone who thought he couldn't afford it. And tell me how he worked it out to be able to afford it, and how happy he was afterwards. Or tell me how he came to see the product differently and realized it was actually a great deal he couldn't afford not to find the money for.

  Maybe I think I'm not smart enough, or not skilled enough to benefit from your product. Or maybe I believe I don't have enough time. Tell me a story about how someone who believed what I believe today came to look at your product differently – and today he has exactly what I want.

Exercises:

The best and easiest approach is to collect stories from real people who used your product and experienced great changes. But be sure to collect and organize these stories so you can use them – and so your salespeople can use them.

4.1. Your first trust building sales story.
So, think of a good client story that you can use and fill in the questions below.

The background. Who is the story about? Let's call him Joe. What was missing from Joe's life before he found you and your product? How did Joe feel as a result? And how did he want to feel?

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The plot twists. How and when did Joe find you and your products? What was his initial reaction? What fears, worries and concerns did he have about going ahead? (Here you want to mirror the most likely fears, worries and concerns that your current prospect is or will be facing.) And what did he tell himself to push past his fears? What were his conflicting emotions?

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The conclusion. Once Joe pushed past his fears and uncertainties he bought the product and has been using it this way and that. And now his life is different in this way _____ and he feels that way _____.

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4.2. Now use it. Practice with it. Refine it until it feels natural and you're getting the response you want. Then develop a second story for a different set of problems, aspirations, desired feelings and so on.

Testimonials, the next tactic, are a form of story. But since they're told by a third party, they are often more credible.

5. Testimonials.

Most testimonials are weak. They're shallow and nonspecific, contain vague niceties and may seem forced or even insincere.

The best testimonials tell a compelling story. A story your ideal client *wants* to believe. A story wherein he can replace the main character with himself.

Aggressively request testimonials from your clients and use these testimonials wisely.

The best testimonials have an element of "Before" and "After." As in "Before I hired Dov, I had this and that problem. Afterwards, my life is like a bed of roses." Of course, you want to be specific, as in this testimonial from a member of my Plenty of Clients Mastery Program:

> "Although I am a marketing consultant for service businesses, I understand the need to have someone work on my business as well.
>
> "Lots of people say you need to have an image of your ideal client. And I thought I did. I've always focused on helping solicitors (lawyers), and I thought that was enough of a niche.
>
> "But you made me analyze which of those are my best clients. Which I enjoy working with the most and I get the best results for. And you made me target and talk only to them in the emails I send out to my list.
>
> "And that has made a major difference. As soon as I started talking to just the people I wanted as clients they started putting their hands up and coming to talk to me.
>
> "It's definitely working because they're enrolling as new clients and I get to work with the people I like working with most.
>
> "And the first four emails I sent using what you taught me, got me four new clients!"
>
> -- Nick Jervis

Exercise:

5.1. Think of a few satisfied clients. Call one up and ask if you may interview her about how she's used your product or service.

And say: "If you don't mind, I'm going to record our conversation because I'd like to ask you for a testimonial. To make it as easy and fast for you as possible, I'll write something based on what you say and then I'll send it to your for approval. OK?" They'll almost always say yes.

- Ask about her life, business, situation, etc. before she bought your product or service.
- Ask about her life, business, situation, etc. after she bought our product or service.
- Listen to her answers and then peel off another layer: "You said that before using our widget, you were unable to make soft boiled eggs. Your eggs would either come out too runny or too hard. Why was it important to you to get your soft boiled eggs just right?"
- "Why did you choose our company over your other choices?"
- "What advice do you have for other people looking for ____(result they wanted)___?"

5.2. Use the recording to write a testimonial in your client's own voice. Then get permission to use it. Ideally, have her print it out on her letterhead, sign it and mail you a copy.

The next best thing after hearing stories of how others just like you have gotten what you want is to experience it yourself. That's tactic #6:

6. Provide a mouthwatering experience.

What is the RESULT that people get from your product or service? (By now you know this cold, right?)

Now, how can you give them an experience of this result? A taste, just like at the ice cream store.

When buying a car, they let you go for a test drive. Most web based products will give you a free 30 day trial.

Of course it's not always possible to give a taste. If you are an architect, you can't necessarily draw up a blueprint to see if they like it. So what do you do?

Simple: Recognize that your prospect is looking for several levels of satisfaction. Yes, they want a great design because they want a great building. But, they also want to feel a certain way about their architect.

For example, if I was to hire an architect, I wouldn't want someone to just take my specs and create a few possible designs**. I would want someone who would first take the time to really understand me and what I really want**. Someone who will push back on some of my premises and suggest ideas I hadn't thought of. All to get what I want – not what he thinks I should want.

So even if you can't give me a blueprint, you can give me an experience of what it's like to work with you.

Note: In this last example, you'd probably be tying Levels 2 and 3 together.

Give information and know-how.

Another way to do this is to give people solid know-how that they can use today to get some of the results they want – even without paying you anything. Many – or even most – will come back for the full result.

Exercise:

6.1. How can you give your prospects an experience of the ultimate result they really want? Write out at least 5 ideas:

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Now, often, in addition to offering a free mouthwatering experience you want to have an entry level product. That's tactic 7.

7. Offer a low priced entry product.

How can you offer a low priced entry product that will make someone your client? Once someone has made a small purchase from you, and been satisfied, it's far easier for them to come back and make a larger purchase.

This is another way to give your Ideal Client an experience of buying from you.

The low priced product won't offer all the benefits of the higher priced options, but it will give them some of the results they want. And set them up to come back to you for more.

7.1. What problem(s) do your Ideal Clients have that you can solve with a lower priced "entry level" product or service? Write out at least 5 such problems:

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7.2. What are some products you can offer or develop to help your Ideal Clients get their "entry level" problems resolved? Write out at least 5 product or service ideas:

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Doing all these exercises is simple work, really, but that doesn't mean it's always easy. If you've come this far, you probably know that the hardest part is to just start. It's to just start thinking about what you're really trying to achieve and looking at some options for getting there.

Thinking about what *you* want for *yourself* is tricky, as we talked about at the beginning of this manual. Few people do it. Even fewer people make the effort to think about what *others* want. So when you do, you really stand out. And that's tactic #8:

8. Be thoughtful.

Put some real effort and thought into placing yourself in the shoes of your Ideal Client. What small gesture would he or she really appreciate? If you've done the exercise 1.2 under Tactic 1 above, you have a head start.

Sometimes your thoughtfulness will be directed broadly across your market. Other times it'll be highly personalized and for a specific Ideal Client.

In all cases, you're leading people to realize **how your company really cares for them**. On the psychological side, **you're creating a feeling of obligation on their part**. And they're likely to look for opportunities to reciprocate. Usually this will be in the form of buying from you instead of your competition.

Here's an example.

The owner of a jewelry store in a traditional, family-oriented middle-class neighborhood was looking to increase his sales.

Most of his clients were married women with young children.

Now, why does a woman in this community buy jewelry? My theory was that a nice piece of jewelry makes her feel good about herself. It makes her feel more confident, more put together, more in control.

It's always important to go out and speak to your clients. In this situation it was doubly important because we were two married men trying to understand women and jewelry. The good news is that my theories were validated as a starting point. Our conversations with clients gave us an even more nuanced understanding of the desires a woman satisfies with jewelry.

(Once you understand the real impact you are having on your Ideal Client's life, it's a lot easier to be thoughtful.)

My suggestion was to appeal to this deep desire in a variety ways by being a conduit for his Ideal Client to get the feelings of confidence, in control, put together in other ways.

What are some other areas that mothers of young children often want to feel more in control and confident?

Two such areas are:

- Keeping a neat and organized home and
- Being there for her kids. Being patient and supportive of her children. Having the calmness and being relaxed enough to be the mother she really wants to be.

When you have this deep an understanding, you can start to appeal to them in a different way. I suggested that he seek out joint venture opportunities with other businesses that help women achieve similar results and find ways to cross promote each other's products services.

JV partners might include a women's gym, a home organizer, someone who can teach tips and skills for better communication with your children, and so on.

This would probably not be a good strategy for Tiffany's. But it could be a fantastic strategy for a community jewelry store in a traditional, middle class neighborhood.

Another example:

Like you, I'm committed to ongoing learning and improvement. And so I'm currently enrolled in an outstanding one year coaching program with a couple dozen others.

In our second month we had a three day in-person workshop event in California. Unfortunately, a handful of us couldn't make it. So even though we have the recordings and we'll be able to catch up on the work we missed out on the community building aspect. We didn't get to meet and really get to know the people who are otherwise voices on the phone and avatars on a screen.

Personally, I wasn't too worried about it. I've developed many good, trusting friendships over the years with people around the globe who I've never met.

But a few days after it ended, I got an email saying the people who made it to the live event were concerned that those of us who couldn't make it really missed out. "What can we do to help those who weren't at the event to catch up and tap into the spirit of our community?"

They came up with a few ideas including to change the agenda of our next conference call to review the material from the retreat and help us get caught up.

Now, let me tell you how this left me feeling:

- It left me feeling that I'm with a group of people who really care about me and my progress. Remember, there were only a handful of us who didn't make it. A couple dozen did make it.

- I was impressed with the thought and planning they had put into this on my behalf.

- It left me feeling a strong sense of obligation to make sure to not miss this call!

- And it left me feeling that I want to make sure I do whatever I can to reciprocate and give back to the organizers and to my fellow participants[7].

If this is the kind of feeling you want to create with your clients put a bit of extra thought into what your clients really want and think of ways to give it to them.

All this leads to the final tactic…

9. **Be vulnerable yourself.**

Don't make yourself out to be superhuman. First, because you're not. Second, because people will trust you more.

So far, I've shared a vulnerability at least twice here in this manual. First, I shared how I lost years to my inability to focus my marketing on a specific kind of problem that specific people have. Second, the story I just shared about me being in a coaching program. It may not seem like much to you for me to say that I'm in a coaching program, but my inner self conscious "superman" nearly

[7] If you are a small service professional or service business and you're looking for some help, feel free to ask me about this coaching program. If it may be a good match, I'm happy to introduce you. I have no financial interest, except for the respectable fee I paid to join myself.

convinced me to leave it out.

There, I just did it again by sharing my doubts about including the coaching program story.

Let's connect this back to Storytelling because you now see how you can build trust by telling a story that makes you a bit vulnerable. Enough to make you human, but not so much as to undermine confidence in you.

Being vulnerable also means being open to changing your mind. This means you *really* listen to what people say.

If your prospect sees that you are genuinely open to being influenced yourself, that you are willing to be wrong, that you are interested in learning and improving, then your prospect will trust you.

On some level they'll realize that if you can admit mistakes, then they can trust that when you *are* certain, it's probably because you really know. You have the experience. They can trust you.

This is far easier if it's part of your character; if you've made it part of who you are. People's BS detectors can spot false humility in a flash.

Fortunately, you are human and so you are vulnerable in one or another area. So there's no need to fake it.

That's the good news. Just be yourself. ;-)

Level 2: Disciplines

1. **Choose one or two tactics to develop to excellence.** Any time when you have many tools and tactics available, the first discipline has to be to choose one or two to develop to excellence before adding others.

2. Start with 1 and 2, Caring and Earning your reputation. These will make everything else flow more easily.

   Remember The You-Me Map? Place yourself firmly in the **You** box. Try to really understand what your clients want and care about.

Me	**You** (the Ideal Client)
Sell	**Buy / Not Buy**

The You-Me Map
Think of this as a map. Where are you on the map? If you're thinking about yourself and your needs, worries and pressures, then you are not thinking about your client's needs wants and aspirations. This is just as true as saying you can't be in New York and London or any two locations on any map at the same time.

Level 2: Pitfalls

Here are some of the most likely pitfalls when you're at Level 2.

1. **You don't really care**. If you don't really care about your clients, you're going to have a hard time. Best to figure out where you can go into a business where you do care about the people you'll be serving.

2. **Carrying someone else's luggage.** This may be the flip side of # 1. Some people mistakenly think that really caring means they need to do everything and anything for their client. Not so.

   In any relationship, each party must do their part. If you do your part and your client doesn't do theirs, doing it for them will usually work against you both.

For example, if someone looks like a really good prospect, but they don't keep phone appointments or you've noticed a pattern of letting things slide on their side, despite promises… DON'T bend over backwards. All you'd be doing is enabling their behavior.

What should you do?

First, put their behavior on the table for discussion. Do this by focusing only on observed behavior without adding any judgment. You may say something like this:

> *"Joe, I just want to be sure that I'm not misinterpreting something here. This is the third time that you promised to have the information for me and it's the third time that you've come back asking for more time. Is there something I should know?"*

In other words, your first step is to call them on their behavior without judging them for it.

Once they agree with your observation, ask them how you should relate to it in light of your mutual commitments.

Often just your courage and willingness to respectfully call them to task will be a trust and respect builder and lead to a change in their behavior.

If not, and if you still believe there's a possible deal in the works, be polite but firm about what you need from them to move to the next stages. It looks like this:

> *"Joe, you told me that X, Y and Z results are important to you. I can help you get those results. But I can only do it with your cooperation. It seems that these results may not be such a priority right now because we've noticed how other things keep taking precedence. As much as I'd love you as a client, I need to respect that.*
>
> *"So let's do this. Let's look at our calendars right now and schedule a time to speak for 10 – 15 minutes in three to four weeks and we can see if anything has changed by then…"*

When you really want a deal, it's hard to see. But when you step back and take in the big picture, you remember that you can't afford to waste time with people who are just not that motivated to buy right now. And if they're not keeping their agreements, they're not serious.

Walking away from a deal that doesn't meet your standards is a tremendous confidence booster. Especially if you're under great financial pressure. I'm talking from experience.

CAUTION: When you do manage to carry someone else's luggage all the way through to a sale, it almost always turns out to be the deal you wish you never made.

3. **Instead of calling it as you see** it, you're contrarian for the sake of being different. And so you stake out positions and points of view that are really hard to defend.

   We also find people who've been taught "You need to be a contrarian" who go ahead and loudly criticize a convention. They then propose the same idea but with a new name and an insignificant twist. I can't say that this won't work, because I see it all the time. But it does make me hold my nose and turn away.

   If you're going to be contrarian, be contrarian because you are expressing what you deeply believe. Not just to make noise. **Call it as you see it.**

FURTHER READING:

- If you want to better understand the influence process, read "Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion" by Robert Cialdini. This book is considered a must read amongst savvy direct marketers.

Chapter 8: Level 3: Understand their Needs and Aspirations

Level 3 is where your conversation with your prospect moves from somewhat general to his specifics. It happens after your prospect trusts you enough to be willing to open up and share some of his specific needs, wants and aspirations.

It's where you really, really listen to your prospect. It's where you once again completely forget your own wants and desires to make a sale so that you can really be there for this other person.

Remember: You're not here to *make a sale.* You're here to *help them buy and get the results they most want.*

Level 3: Your Objectives

To finish Level 3, you need to get to a place where:

- Your prospect **feels so completely understood** by you that they're practically begging you to tell him how to buy. (That's Level 4.)

- You've learned so much about your prospect's needs and wants, and WHY he has those needs and wants, that you can **articulate it better** than he can himself.

    - This will help you preempt or move past his own objections if and when they are raised.

Level 3: Tools and Tactics.

Ask Good Questions.

A good question. The purpose of a good question is to make it easy for your client to start talking. The more they talk, the more you'll learn about them. The more you know about them, the easier it will be for you to help them make the right buying decision. The more they talk, the easier it is to see how to present your product or service in alignment with what's already most important to them.

A bad question is one that leaves your client feeling pressured. Like a witness being led. Bad questions are the result of you being in the ME box on the map, not in the YOU / THE CUSTOMER box. Your motivation is not to learn about them, but to lead them somewhere *before you've earned the right to be their leader*.

How to ask good questions:

Ask questions about their past, present and future.

Past	Present	OBSTACLES	Future

Past. Present. Future.

You can ask questions about their past, their present and their future. The past is a good way to develop a relationship. Talking about the future they want is a good way to learn more about their needs and wants. Talking about the present also helps them draw a contrast between what they have today and what they want for tomorrow. The more you know about their past, present and future, the easier it will be for you to show how your product is the bridge between where they are today and where they want to be.

Here's the format you're going to use:

1. **Ask about their past and present.** Just a bit, to make them comfortable.

2. **Ask about the future they want.** Here you'll be pushing for clarity *to help them get clear*. Done well, they'll begin to see you as someone who really cares about them and can help them.

3. **Ask about the present.** Today things are NOT how they want them to be. Have them describe today's reality very clearly. You're looking for them to draw a contrast between what they really want and what they have today.

4. **Ask about the obstacles** between where they are today and where they want to be. This will help them zero in on why they need help. This is the opening for your product or service.

5. **Summarize to be sure they feel you really 'get' them** and to see if they're ready to go to Level 4 with you. Ask them to summarize as well.

Let's break each one down:

1. Ask about their Past and Present.

Questions about their past can be a good way to get to know one another. The precise questions will vary depending on what you are selling, of course. To have an example to work with, let's say if someone comes to you looking into buying your *project management software*, you may want to ask some questions such as:

- How did you hear about us?

- What did you hear that made you interested in having this conversation? (What made you interested in raising your hand?)

- What's happening in your world now that prompted you to reach out to us?

- Is this a new need for you, or have you had similar needs in the past?

You probably shouldn't spend too much time in the past. Just enough to connect with the person and for you to get a bit of the background picture so you can be more helpful.

Important: Do you want to know how to avoid wasting time with people who are not real prospects for you? If yes, then ask these questions. You'll get an immediate sense as to whether or not this person has a real urgent need or want for what you sell.

2. Ask about the Future they want:

Ask some open questions about the results they want to see in their future:

- What will the right project management software enable you to achieve in your business?
    - Listen to their answer and ask a follow up:
      "And why is increasing efficiency so important to you?"

  NOTICE: These questions are NOT about your project management software. It's about THEM and what it will do for them in their business. As simple and obvious as this is, most salespeople are NOT thinking about the client.

  NOTICE: This question EXPANDS THE VIEW of your conversation. Most people and companies focus on the product, its features and benefits. But this kind of question, and the direction it takes the conversation, is about the desires and aspirations of the client.

I don't care if you're talking to a mother about buying a clothes iron. If you take a few minutes to ask questions that help you understand which LIFE desires and aspirations this mother wants to satisfy, your likelihood of making the sale jumps through the roof.

When you ask questions that broaden your conversation, you'll find out that what he really wants is to be able to sell his business in three years for x amount of money. For that to happen, x, y and z must improve.

Now, who has a better chance of closing the deal? You, who is talking about how to help him sell his business or your competitor who is talking features and benefits of their system?

NOTICE: Many people in sales will balk at the idea of asking a "stupid" question like, "Why is increased efficiency important to you?" because everyone wants increased efficiency. It's **obvious** why they want it.

Or is it?

Actually, it isn't obvious at all.

One prospect will want to increase efficiency because it'll improve profits. Another wants to increase efficiency because it will free her up to do more of the creative work she enjoys since she'll be able to spend less time checking up on her employees.

But when asked, "What will the right project management software enable you to achieve in your business?" each is likely to answer "Improved efficiency."

THE LESSON: Don't settle for answers that are packaged in vague words. Gently push to peel off another layer. And then another. Did you notice that one prospect said he wanted to "increase profits?" That's not an ideal outcome on its own. So peel another layer and ask:

> *"What will be the impact of increased profit on your business? On you personally?"*

>> *"Well, if we can increase profit by just 10%, I can add much of that to my investment plan. And prices are low right now, I'd really like to be able to up my long term investments and that will give me and my family more choices ten years from now."*

> Bingo. This person wants more choice for himself and his family now and in the future.

Here's how you stand out from the crowd: Your competition will be talking about the features and benefits of the software. YOU will be showing your prospect how your software will enable him to retire with an extra few million dollars in passive investment income. Imagine all the extra choice that will offer!

Who would YOU want to buy from?

When you're firmly planted on the "YOU / THE CUSTOMER / Help them buy" side of the map, you have such a deep interest in really understanding who she is and what's important to her that you can't *possibly settle for anything but a* *<u>specific</u>*, *<u>clear</u>* *answer*.

*

BE PREPARED: When you ask your prospect to talk about the future, he will almost always bounce back and speak about the problems he has today. There are two ways to handle this. Use them both.

For example:

> <u>You ask</u>
> *"What will your job be like when you have increased efficiency?*
>
> <u>She answers</u>
> *"Well, I waste so much time following up on people to see if they completed their tasks and it takes up so much of my time that I don't get to my really important work."*

Where is she? She's in TODAY. She didn't answer your question about the future.

If you miss this, you've lost control of the conversation. And remember how we said that you need to see the sales process more clearly than your client – or you'll lose the sale? This is an easy place to lose control. Stay vigilant.

Here are your two options for moving your prospect back to the future:

1. **Project what she *doesn't* want today into what she *does* want in the future:**

   "So I think what I'm hearing you say is that in a few months from now, you'd like to be in a situation where you no longer chase people to get the status of their tasks. And instead you are spending most of your time on your really important work. Is that right?"

   "Yes!"

   "So tell me, what is that really important work that you'd like to be doing? Tell me about it…"

   "Well, I'd be doing a lot more A, B and C."

   "I understand. And tell me, when you look ahead and you see yourself spending more and more time on A, B and C – how does that feel?"

Listen carefully, because you'll soon want to be talking about how your product is exactly what she needs to enable her to do A, B and C and to feel the way she really wants to feel.

2. **The second method is to gently remind her to go back to the future.**

   "Hmm. So that's how it is today. And how would you really want it to be 6 months from now?"

After you have a clear picture of the future, both the tangible and emotional desires and aspirations, you're ready to look at the present.

3. Ask about the Present, the way it is today:

The purpose of this step is to make the contrast between what your prospect wants and what they have as clear and stark as possible. This clarity is as important for them as it is for you. Most of the time, people have only a fuzzy idea about where they are and where they want to go. **When you ask them to speak it out loud, you help them clarify their thinking.**

Questions about the present would be along the lines of:

- And how is today's situation different from what you just told me you really want?

- Now that we have a clear picture of where you want to go, describe how things are for you today?

- …And when you think about today's situation, how does that leave you feeling?

Here, too, push them to be specific and clear. Don't settle for vague generalities.

Now that you have a clear picture of today's situation, help her see the obstacles and challenges lying between today and what she really wants.

4. Ask about the Obstacles between where they are Today and where they want to be.

The purpose of the questions at this stage is to help your prospect realize that the obstacles are indeed big and it's important that they buy the right product to get the right help.

Questions about the obstacles will be similar to these:

- And what obstacles do you see between today's situation, and what you told me earlier you really want?

- As you set out to create what you told me you want to see (*specify what they told you - reflect it back*), what might make it difficult?

- What may pop up and make this take much longer to achieve what you really want?

- What's the worst thing about these obstacles?

- When you think about these issues, how does that leave you feeling?

5. Summarize to be sure they feel you really 'get' them and to see if they're ready to go to Level 4 with you.

The purpose of this step is both to be sure you've achieved your Level 3 objectives and to fill in any holes that may need filling to achieve them.

As a reminder, the objectives for Level 3 are:

- Your prospect feels so completely understood by you that they're practically begging you to tell him how to buy. (That's Level 4.)

- You've learned so much about your prospect's needs and wants that you can now articulate what they want even better than they can themselves.

- You've learned so much about what they want that you'll be able to use the information they gave you to answer their own objections if and when they are raised.

How to Summarize:

- *"Let me summarize what I've heard you say so far. You want to get to a place where _____ [reflect what you heard from them about where they want to go.] Today, your situation is ______. The things that will make it difficult to achieve what you want include _______. Have I missed anything?*

NOTE: The answer you want is an enthusiastic, "You've said it better than I could!" or some version of that.

If you get a less enthusiastic answer, you may have not completed Level 3 fully. Going on to Level 4 before completing Level 3 is almost certainly going to mean no sale. You haven't yet made it EASIER for your prospect to decide to buy than to make no real decision and stay with things as they are.

<u>NOW</u>: After you've summarized, ask your prospect to summarize. You can say something like

> *"Well, I've just shared what I've gotten from our conversation so far. Now it's your turn. What have you gotten from our conversation so far?"*

Listen carefully! If you can feel that you really connected with this prospect, say something like, "Well, there are a few ways we might be able to help you. Would you like me to tell you about them?"

Of course they'll say, "Yes." And when they do, you're in a very strong position. And they're all but selling themselves.

CASE STUDY:

A client just told me how he ended a meeting with a valuable prospect of his.

> *"I asked him, 'Nick, tell me, where do you really see this business going for you?'*
>
> *"Nick said, 'In three years, I want to sell my company to Apex Inc.'*
>
> *"I said, 'Nick, I get it. Now I really get it."*

My client did well. My only suggestion is that next time he *begin* with that question. Fortunately, he has a follow up meeting and the opportunity to continue his conversation.

Level 3: Disciplines and Pitfalls

Here are some of the most likely pitfalls when you're at Level 3.

1. **Not talking to a real decision maker.**
   a. This should be vetted in Level 1. Make sure you're talking to the person who can decide to write you a check or swipe their card.

2. **Moving on to speaking about your product or service before the clients is ready,** before they really feel understood and cared for.

3. **Speaking about your product and what it can do for the client instead of** asking questions to learn about the client's bigger picture, deep aspirations, desires and wants, both logical and emotional.

Chapter 9: Level 4, Recommend and Close the Deal

Now that your prospect feels so completely understood by you that he's practically begging you to tell him how to buy - now that you've learned so much about his needs, wants and aspirations that you can articulate them better than he can - you're ready to make a recommendation.

Level 4: Objectives

In order to complete Level 4, you need to achieve these results:

- *Your client realizes that the easiest, fastest and ultimately the most inexpensive way to to get what he really wants **is through your products and services**.*

- ***Your client feels supported**. He may know that your product is right for him but still have some concerns, worries and reservations. You help him feel at ease about these so he can feel good about buying.*

- ***He makes the right decision. For him.** This not about you. Your product is the bridge between his life today and the life he really wants. It's your obligation to help him own your product so that he can move forward.*

- *He commits and arranges payment.*

Level 4: Tools and Tactics

1. **Ask permission to make a recommendation.** Even though your prospect now trusts you and wants your advice, don't launch into a product recommendation. Easy does it. First ask permission:

   May I share with you how my products can help you get X, Y and Z? (In place of X, Y and Z, reflect back what they most want in a concise sentence or two.)

   He's going to say "yes." If he doesn't, then you haven't really finished Level 3! Go back!

2. **Offer options. But only a few.** If you offer one option, their choice is "Take it or leave it." If you offer 2 or 3 options, the choice is those 2 or 3. Rarely do you want to offer more than 2 or 3 options. Research shows, and my own experience confirms, that once prospects have 4, 5 or

more options, choosing becomes an ordeal. When you are so close to the finish line, you don't want to suddenly make it HARD for your prospect to buy, right?

Your job, from beginning to end, is to make it *easier for your prospect to buy than to not buy*. Make the path to buying clearer than the path they are on today.

If you have two or three options, but you know from your experience that one is ideal for this prospect, say so.

> *"There are three good options for someone in your situation. I'm going to share all of them with you. I'm also going to tell you which one I believe is best for you – and why I think so, so you can make the very best decision, now.*

A good idea at this point is to not mention the price for each option. Simply explain the options, along with why you feel one is best for this person.

3. Get all questions, concerns and fears out on the table.

Let's face it. Buying may be a scary step. He may have some legitimate hesitations and concerns. And you're here to help him do what's best for him, so you want to help him work through these fears and concerns. It's an important part of your job. Your job isn't to "overcome objections." Your job is to help him be strong, clear and focused so he can do what's right. For himself.

You can ask:

- "Now, as you hear about these options, what questions come to mind?"

Stop and listen. Take notes if it makes sense. But don't yet respond. You're not in a rush here. They need to feel comfortable. If you are relaxed and "with them" they'll be more relaxed and "with you."

- "Now, before I answer those questions, is there anything about investing in this product that has you worried or concerned? Let's put it all out on the table, because only then will I understand your big picture. And only when I understand your big picture can I give you my best advice."

Now, listen again. And take notes.

The final step here is to address their concerns. Again, you're not here to overcome their objections. You are here to help them feel heard and understood.

Now that you deeply understand his wants and aspirations, you take a seat next to him on his side of the table, figuratively speaking:

> *"These are good questions and legitimate concerns. Here's my thinking about this, let me know if you agree. My thinking is that we need to get you set up with A, B and C. (Their desired results.) So our approach here should be to see if we can answer your questions and give you the comfort and confidence you need to go ahead with this purchase so you can have A, B and C right away. Are you with me on this?"*

They'll agree. What else could they say?!

NOTICE: Everything we're doing here is building on your understanding of his real, deep, desires and aspirations, rather than a list of features he may have brought to you at first.

Now look at each question and concern in turn and give your best honest answer and recommendation.

When you feel you've done your best, it's time to bring his mind and attention back to where he wants to be in the future; when things are the way he wants them.

4. **Get him to see and feel himself having the results of your product.** Ask a question like

> *"Now, as soon as this is up and running for you, how again will things be different? What will that be like for you?"*

Again, you want to keep his mind focused on what he really wants.

If he decides not to buy, it's often their weaker self giving in to fears. You are where you are to be the leader; to *enable* him to live a richer, more fulfilling life. That's why you sell your products and services. You need to keep making it easier to buy through the very, very end.

5. **Tell him how to order.** Tell him what to do next.

This is not the time to be timid. You're about to help someone buy something that will make a big difference in his life. And by now you've earned the right to lead. Tell him what to do next.

> *"Joe, here's what you need to do now. All I need is your credit card number and the rest you'll have A, B and C already today."*

Or:

"Paul, here's what you need to do now. Sign here and leave me either one check for $500 or three checks for $175 each and I'll set you up with everything we talked about right now."

Level 4: Disciplines

Practice. Role play. Many people who are good at the skills needed for Levels 2 and 3 will often trip over their own feet when it comes to Level 4. You need to get it so clear that you are not "selling" to them but *helping them buy the life they want*. Until it's clear, you're going to trip over yourself when it comes to making an offer.

Level 4: Pitfalls

1. **Not having a clear offer.** If your product or service needs to be more clearly defined and customized, you're not yet ready to make an offer recommendation, etc. If you do, you'll come across sounding unsure of yourself and you'll undermine the trust (comfort and confidence that you will do as you say you will do.)

2. **Skirting by their legitimate questions and concerns.** It's OK if you don't have all the answers on the spot. If that's your situation, then schedule a very clear next step. As in, "Well, it seems I've been able to answer all your questions and concerns except this one. I'm going to need to get back to you on that. So let's schedule a follow up phone call for 20 minutes in 2 – 3 days. Do you have your calendar out?

   And schedule it on the spot.

3. **Getting nervous when asking your prospect to take action.** This is often the hardest time to keep your mind focused on THEM and not on YOU. You're about to make a sale. You LOVE and WANT to make sales. It's so hard to forget what you want at this stage!

   Especially if they've raised some objections and seem to have some fears about going ahead – even though it's clear to you that they need what you're selling.

   Don't let this trip you up. Remember that you are here to lead them. And as I said above, by now you've earned the right to lead them. So lead.

4. **Committing yourself to any one method, product or solution for achieving a result.** Instead focus on the result and be flexible in how you achieve it.

   Too many people and companies have become insignificant – or nonexistent – because they were wed to one particular technology or product instead of being wed to helping their clients continue to get a certain result.

   It's OK to advocate one method or product today and a different one tomorrow when you've learned that there's a better one.

   What isn't OK is to commit to the superiority of your method and ignore all evidence that the world has moved on.

Congratulations! You have a new client. In the next chapter, we'll discuss how to maximise each new client you get.

Chapter 10: Level 5, Build Back-End Sales

It's well known that the most valuable clients are those who come back for more.

So figure out how you can make more sales to your current clients.

> **Example**:
>
> GoDaddy is always coming up with new products and services to offer their clients. With GoDaddy, it's so easy to agree to another product or service that bills you only a few dollars a month – forever.

Level 5: Objectives

Your objectives at Level 5 are to:

- Grow your sales and profitability by making it easy for your clients to buy other products and services that will help them get what they told you they want.

  Even better: After your first product helps them to one level of success, now you should be the one to help them get to the next level.

- Leverage from your past and current clients.

Level 5: Tools and Tactics

1. **Build a client database.** If you're not building a client database, you have a money leak right under your cash register and you're simply ignoring it.

2. **Find additional products to sell to your clients.**

3. **Find JV partners who can sell more of your products.**

Exercise:

1. When someone purchases my product, what other products or services would be natural complements at the time of sale?

   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____

2. When someone has benefited from my product, what's another product or service he's likely to need in the future?

   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____

3. How can I offer one or more of these products directly? Or via a joint venture partner? Can I license a product?

   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____

Level 5: Disciplines

1. **Set clear criteria for products.** Don't just introduce anything. What MUST a product or service have in order to be suitable for your business and what would you WANT it to have as well?

____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____

2. **Set clear criteria for partners**. Don't partner with anyone who is open to it. What would make an ideal partner for you in your current situation? What MUST they bring to the table? What would you WANT them to bring to the table?

____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____

3. **Test.** Don't invest or risk a large amount of money or time in an unproven idea before you've had a chance to test it. Once a product or partnership has passed your criteria test, how can you run a test to see your market's reaction?

____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____

Level 5: Pitfalls

1. **Offering the wrong back-end product or service.** Sometimes companies will abuse their relationship with their clients and try to sell them anything they can. Be very selective. It must be comparable in quality to your original product and it must in some way match the theme, or image that you've established.

   In other words, if you sold someone a car, it's a stretch to try to sell them a vacuum cleaner, even though they can use it to keep their car clean. (But, hey, there's probably some unique car dealership out there for whom this is a great idea.)

2. **The wrong JV partners.** Make sure whoever you select as a partner will provide the level of service that your clients are accustomed to.

3. **Treating everyone in your database the same.** Segment your database based on client behavior and responsiveness. If someone responds to a promotion and buys, they should be added to one segment. If they don't respond, that should also be noted, noting as well if they respond but don't buy.

   Intelligent segmentation helps you communicate directly with people at where they are today. **And this, of course brings us full circle, back to Level 1.**

CONCLUSION:

If you want to consistently attract and sell to your ideal clients, you must build a system that will do it for you.

In this Manual I've laid out a process to follow, given you tools and showed you how to acquire and master the skills.

If you apply this, you will see real and rapid results.

Whether or not we work together to make all of this happen faster or you take the long, slow road alone, I believe you'll get there.

Dov Gordon

The Plenty of Clients Mastery Program

It would take years to develop the clarity and confidence that you can easily have – when you're getting savvy coaching.

If you know you should be able to add at least $100,000 to your income in the next 12 months, go now and request a free "Consistent Flow of Ideal Clients" strategy chat with Dov Gordon.

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