

Foundations—a Pedestal Group Publication

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FOUNDATIONS

The Pedestal Group

Getting Them to Call You Back

Special points of interest:

- *Salary Info*
- *Phones*
- *Retention*
- *Texting*
- *Strategy*
- *Questions*
- *AND MORE!*

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It is a new year and everyone has a new commitment to their marketing! But how do you leave a voice mail that will get people to call you back? Here are tips from several experts:

Kathy Breitenbucher recommends leaving your phone number at the beginning and at the end of a message. There is nothing more frustrating than getting to the end of the message and missing the phone number, only to know you have to sit through the whole message to hear it again (because let's face it, we had training on our phone systems but who remembers the keys to rewind a little?). By saying, "this is Kathy Breitenbucher, 330-952-1121..." at the beginning of the call, you have a much better chance the person will write down the number and call you back.

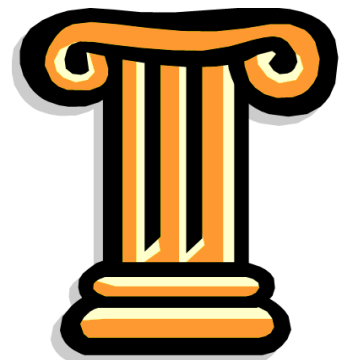
Dave Johnson of BNet recommends, "getting to the verb". That means make your point quickly and be sure it is an action item—please call back, want to discuss, etc. Long messages with lots of story on a cold or warm call are just not appropriate. Save those for email (NOT).

Jeffrey Gitomer's mantra of "Give value first" means leave something in their voice mail they can use. A fact or information that not only shows your expertise but that you aren't just blowing smoke, can go a long way to getting someone to call you back.

Mike Sigers in a recent blog post suggested to leave, "Only facts that will make his life easier, more efficient or more economical. The three E's. They are what he thinks about all day. They're what keeps him up at night."

Colleen Francis of Engage Selling has several great tips to share. The first, in your message let the caller know that if you don't hear back from them by a specific date, you will call again. If they want to make the calls stop, they just have to return it!

Next, let them out of the sale. If you are concerned they aren't calling you back for fear of a high pressure sale, let them know if they've gone a different direction you completely understand but just want to update your records so you don't keep them on the call list.



One of her clients, Greg Higgins goes with a more tongue-in-cheek approach and gets great results. His voice mails say, "Hi Bob, this is Greg from ABC Corporation. I'm beginning to feel that we have a love-hate relationship with your answering machine - I love to leave messages, you hate to return them. Maybe we can talk soon. Thanks." *

For most people this approach would be too much but for Greg, it yields a 99% return call rate.

Leaving good voice mail can definitely be a challenge but the biggest key is to have some fun with it. The calls where you went off script or you said something a little out of the norm are the ones people notice. So get some return phone calls in 2011!

*Originally printed in Stand Up - and Stand Out 12 Ways to Get Your Prospects to Call You Back on www.engageselling.com

Getting Salary Information

Whether it is for you, a family member or for someone you are hiring, it is always good to know what someone is worth salary-wise. And for those of us who don't hire often, it is difficult to know where a salary range should even begin!



There are great resources available on line for finding out what people are worth. Here are three of them.

Salary.com is designed to be a full service portal for job seekers. The salary wizard will allow you to customize by location.

Payscale.com is a more focused site on just salary and comparisons. You can refine your search based on title, but also by location, education, and experience as well.

CBSalary.com is sponsored by Career Builder and gives nice graphs and charts of salary norms if you are presenting this to someone else. You can also zero in on experience and loca-

tion with this site as well as see the actual job descriptions.

Finally, Glassdoor.com is a community-based site for job seekers with the option to get information from current and former employees of companies. This is a great tool for competition research.

Having real world information can be invaluable when hiring or getting a job so be sure to check these sites out for what they can offer!

Phones—the death of the land line?

AT&T has petitioned the FCC to set a date for the end of traditional land lines. They haven't done it yet, but many industry experts are certainly taking that action as the death knell for land lines. But what does that really mean for someone who doesn't talk telecom every day?

It means that phone companies are currently trying to manage two different networks—the “plain old telephone system (POTS)” and the new IP systems. And no one likes maintaining two diverse types of hardware, so they want to stop. They have al-

ready begun moving the majority of their personnel to services around IP technologies because the consumer market has definitely moved that way.

Many people have eliminated their other phones and gone strictly with cell phones. In fact 1 in 4 people do not have a land line of any kind today. Cell phones have become more and more powerful and the days of managing minutes have become something of the past for most people. But, do check out the data rates and what counts as a data usage as that is where most cell phone providers are making

up some cash flow.

For business, most people are looking at VOIP. Not counted as traditional land lines, Voice over IP or VOIP is a service that is becoming more and more mainstream. Instead of sending your phone signal through phone lines, VOIP systems use the internet. Typically this also reduces long distance costs as well as giving more options like call forwarding and different management tools. The downside to VOIP is it is only as good as both callers internet connection so be sure your internet can handle it well.

Retention May Be the Biggest Theme of 2011

Each year Manpower does a survey of workers to see how many want to find a new job. Last year, that number was 60% but this year it has jumped to 84%! Why the big change?

According to “The Street” it is due to money. With wages frozen, raises non-existent and budgets tight everywhere, people are really feeling financial frustration. But the reality is, peo-

ple generally do not change jobs just do to money. For most people, the tightening of budgets has also meant longer hours and more work.. And now that the economy is recovering, they see opportunities to find more appreciation elsewhere.

Douglas Matthews, the president and COO of Right Management, a division of Manpower, feels the survey's

findings should serve as a wake-up call to managers. According to Matthews, the findings demonstrate the growing job dissatisfaction among employees rather than serving as an indicator of projected worker turn-over.

While many of those individuals will stay put, the message is clear. Many people are unhappy and that leads to job changes.

Texting From Computers to Cell Phones

Have you ever wanted to send a text message to someone on their cell phone from your computer? Well, you can! It is as easy as knowing where to send the information.

Cell phone providers don't generally publicize this feature but anyone can send a cell phone a text from a computer.

The only tricky part about doing this is if you don't know who the person uses for cell phone service. It is amazing how often this comes up in

conversation so you do often know. Also, there are certain phones that are only available on certain networks so if the person has an iPhone, it is a good bet they have AT&T. If you aren't sure, you can try using www.telcodata.us/telcodata/telco to look it up.

To send a text, open your email program. Create a new email and for the address, enter the person's 10 digit cell phone, the @ symbol and the appropriate carrier information (to follow). Keep your message to

around 150 characters or less for easy viewing. Click send and the user will receive you text just as if you sent it from a phone!



AT&T—@txt.att.net
Verizon—@@vtext.com
Sprint—@messaging.sprintpcs.com
T-Mobile—@tmomail.net
Alltel—@message.alltel.com
Virgin—@vmobl.com

Strategy Time

For many businesses, January is the time the review strategy. In his new book, "Seven Strategy Questions: A Simple Approach for Better Execution" Robert Simons of the Harvard Business School suggests seven areas of focus to gain clarity in 2011:

1. Who Is Your Primary Customer?

At some level this goes without saying but we recommend developing Buyer Personas that include specifics on who your primary customer(s) is/are. This is vital to your marketing and service.

2. How Do Your Core Values Prioritize Shareholders, Employees, and Customers?

Understanding the hierarchy can help in times of tough decisions. If shareholders come first, that is a significantly different culture than one where customers or employees are first. It is vital to identify and acknowledge this up front.

3. What Critical Performance Variables Are You Tracking?

Tracking is so important to really understand what is working and what is happening in your business. Identified

early, you can set up systems to ensure it is getting done.

4. What Strategic Boundaries Have You Set?

In Simons words, "Strategic boundaries—which are always stated in the negative—ensure that the entrepreneurial initiative of your employees aligns with the desired direction of the business." Allowing any individual to derail your strategy is something that can be prevented (in most cases) with some limits set up front.

5. How Are You Generating Creative Tension?

Allowing people to get comfortable means they won't innovate as readily. "Necessity is the mother of invention" so the best changes come out of a need or challenge. Be sure you are moving people out of their comfort zone often enough to continue to innovate.

6. How Committed Are Your Employees to Helping Each Other?

Many systems are built on self interest to keep employees performing at their

peak. But what does that do to the need to work together? According to Simons, most companies never discuss the dichotomy set up by this system and without acknowledgement, it can never be addressed. Be sure to think through your intent as well as the results whether you have employees in house or work with other companies as partners.

7. What Strategic Uncertainties Keep You Awake at Night?

Bringing those out in the open and making them a part of a plan helps you get ahead of them. Understanding how to watch out for new threats in the marketplace or changes in clients will take these issues from worries to action plans that will do what you can to minimize risk.

Having a strong strategic plan is vital to knowing where you are headed. Approaching the planning with these seven steps can help you keep your team on task, make sure everyone is headed in the same direction, and let you sleep better at night!

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Putting our clients where they belong.

The Pedestal Group was founded to answer a need we saw in small businesses to have a source for help. That could be how to find and integrate the right technology, how to better hire and manage people, how to set goals and create a strategic plan, or really attack and own your marketplace.

Our team has worked in a variety of industries including staffing, recruiting and executive search, retail, technology, healthcare software / IT, higher education and franchising and the consistent theme we have found it is very hard to see the forest for the trees. In small business, that is compounded by the number of resources available.

Our approach is unique in that we don't just say it is all about the customer, it really is. The Pedestal Group puts our customers on a pedestal – right where they belong. That isn't to say the customer is always right because that is an adversarial relationship – in our case, we always come to agreement. We are always in a partnership with our clients but also remember who's the most important – YOU.

The Pedestal Group - Putting our clients where they belong.

Questioning Skills

We all ask questions every single day but more and more we're finding sales people have lost the art of asking a good question. They are so busy trying to spew all their company information, they have lost the ability to learn about their client. So here are some good questioning techniques when talking to someone:

Open-Ended Questions: These questions allow for an open-ended response rather than a "yes" or "no" answer. These are the best for getting large amounts of information.



Need Development Questions: Asking questions that explain how the prospect sees using your product or service can open the door for clearing misconceptions, discussing features and benefits and getting into your expertise. Be sure to get to the most important need the person has. This will typically come at the end of other things as people prioritize as they answer the question. Don't assume their first answer is the most important!

Buying Motivation Questions: Understanding how the customer buys a product or service will go along way to getting you through their process. There is nothing worse than thinking you have closed a sale only to discover

you have just started the process so get those questions answered.

Broad—Narrow: Start with broad questions that are easy to answer and then narrow the focus. This will allow the prospect to be comfortable with sharing information and makes getting the information you need easier to manage.

Finally, LISTEN. It seems like an obvious thing but the reality is, it isn't. You want to tell them about your product and get your information on the table but the reality is, you need to listen to their answers.

A sales person with good questions and listens to answers can close sales!