

# The 10 'Ps' of Creating Loyal Profitable Customers

Ten practical steps to start adding extra value to your customer relationships today!

Innovate, initiate, differentiate - or watch your market share deteriorate. These are the choices you and I face in business today. Never before has the marketplace been more competitive. Never before have your customers had so many choices and options. They are now better educated, more informed and more astute than ever before.

So in our businesses, we need to make ourselves memorable. We can do this through staying in contact with our customers when they are not doing business with our businesses. The only way to have frequent meaningful interaction with our customers that adds value is through the effective use of your CRM system. Here are my 10 steps to maximising that customer contact.

## 1. Progress - Change before you need to change

For progress to be made, we need to decide to improve the way we do business with our customers. Ask yourself the question - What do I need to change in my business in order to give my customers a great service selling experience?

## 2. Passion - Create a passion worth pursuing

Everyone needs a goal, a vision for his or her business future. If you don't have a passion for what you do and for whom you do it for, then life becomes a long boring journey. If you are going to create a business that has a focus on creating loyal profitable customers, then you need to set the appropriate goals in your business to make it happen.

## 3. Product - Determine what business you are really in

"What business are you really in?" I think we all have basically two products. The physical product we sell and the memorable product we create in the service selling experience that our customers will rave about. Remember this, products come and go, but service selling experiences will last forever.

## 4. Process - Create a service selling system with personality

Systems drive businesses, but people drive the systems to create a customer service experience that generates real customer loyalty. I believe that to be consistent in business, you need to systemise as many processes as you can. This means you need to identify every step in the service transaction. Think about what you can do to create this loyalty generating experience before the customer calls or visits you; think about what you do during the service transaction. What could you do after the sale has been made and then what can you do to stay in touch and build a long-term relationship with that customer? What else can you do to use your CRM system to it's full potential?

## 5. Positioning - Create a unique point of difference that sets you apart

If your customer cannot differentiate between you and your competitors, they will make a choice based on price and not on value. I think one of our goals in business should be to discover the niche markets that best suit our business and become famous in that niche for adding great value to our customers. The first step

is to clarify who makes up your customer base, classify your customer database and then look for trends, similar buying motives and threads that draw these people to your business.

6. Profile - Create a customer loyalty system that works in your business

To create customer loyalty you need to design a schedule of regular contact to ensure that your business is at the forefront of your customer's mind when next time they need to make a purchase. How often you contact your customers depends on if they are an "A" Customer or a "D" Customer. Here are just 3 activities you can do to stimulate greater customer loyalty: -

Invite your customers to a Customer Care Meeting. Ask them what they think you need to improve, what else can you do to add value to them and their business.

Organize a speaker to run a seminar on a topic that would relate and be of interest to your key customers.

Read for your customers. If you find an article in a newspaper or magazine that would be of interest to a customer, cut it out, attach a note to it and send it to them. What would they think of you?

7. People - Are your people focused on what counts?

Have you got the right people, working towards the right goals with the right plan and producing the right results? If you cannot answer a convincing "Yes" to that question, then recruit the right people, work with them to clarify their direction and plan of action and then equip them with the skills, knowledge and tools. Continue to refocus your people on what counts in your business.

8. Partners - Build strategic alliances that add value to your customers

Look to build a personal and professional network that adds value to the relationship you have with your customers. Who do you know that could add real tangible value to your database? What businesses could you set up special offers or discounts with, for your customers?

9. Profits - Determine whether at the end of the day you are making a profit

You are either in business to make a profit or you will go out of business as an unregistered charity. Look for ways to work smarter, to drive down expenses and to maximise the selling opportunities within your customer database. Be creative when it comes to working smarter. Ask yourself - where can I save money, make more money, save time or make my people more productive?

10. Proactive – It's not what you say; it's what you do that counts  
Good intentions and good ideas are worth nothing unless you take action to change the circumstances in your business. These opportunities won't last forever, now is the time to make it happen. If it's not you, then who? If it's not now, then when?