



CUSTOMERS DO THE SELLING

You can reach out to your potential clients through advertising or through your website. But how do you convince them that what

you are saying about your product or service is true? How do you persuade them to choose you? You must use testimonials. Done properly, testimonials are a sure-fire winner. Testimonials are effective because they build social proof.

The weakness of testimonials that I have seen recently is that they have not been correctly constructed. I have seen a lot of testimonials that are outrageous in their claims – they are non-believable. Plus, they do not have any identity to the testimonials; the customer does not even have their name behind it. What is the value of having an anonymous testimonial? That is just plain dumb. As soon as I read such testimonials, I do not believe them. What you need to have is really developed, effective and powerful testimonials that will drive an enormous amount of business to you.

What do you do to get these? Testimonials need to have a name and a picture. A picture is important because there is a real human being there. I think that you also have to ensure that your customer who is giving you a testimonial has a location or a claim to fame. That claim to fame could be their position or their credibility in the marketplace. You need to also have their contact details because you should give your customers the opportunity to phone them up or email them. The most important thing here is that you have to state the specific results or benefits that they have achieved by using your product and service. In order to do that, you need to use this simple little technique.

The first step is to never ask for a testimonial – ask for *feedback*. You say to your client or prospect that you would really like their feedback. The next step is to ask them four specifically structured questions, which disarms them because you are not asking specifically for a testimonial. Here are the four questions you need to ask.

Q.1 Were you skeptical about buying a product or service from our company? This is the, “I was lost and now I am found” statement, which is the essence of a brilliant testimonial.

Q.2 What made you ultimately buy from us? It may have been price or product or service or a

range of options. What was the key proposition that you had that made them buy?

Q.3 What specific benefits have you received? What was the outcome? What has it done to your business or your life? That is now the, “Since I was found, I am now a changed person because of your product or service”.

Q.4 What sort of person would you recommend to our company? What sort of person would be ideally suited to this product and service? With this question you are zeroing in on how this is an amazing product for this customer, but that it may not be an amazing product for a housewife.

Here is the key after this. Once you get all of these answers, what you do is then ring back the person that gave you these answers and say, “Hey Bob, I got your feedback. I am just about to enhance our marketing and I was just wondering if I could take those thoughts that you had and squash them into a paragraph because we wanted to see if we could put it onto our website and our brochures?”.

Because Bob is a nice guy and it does not require any work on his part, he will generally say, “Sure, no problems”.

You say, “Of course I will send it back to you for your approval because I’m not going to do anything without your approval”. This statement builds the trust and confidence of your customer. At the end of that whole process, you politely ask, “Now Bob, when I send this back to you, do you think you could toss in a photograph of yourself?”.

So you use those four questions, crunch the responses together with his photograph and you now have the most potent weapon in marketing.

This is a brilliant and profound way to get testimonials. Additionally, you need to use exactly the same process on video testimonials. Frankly, I believe that video testimonials are now much more powerful than written testimonials because they show the true emotions of people.

If you were to interview people to get feedback from a product or service, those would be the same four questions that you would use. This will create a brilliant video testimonial that will also have the authority that comes from being interviewed. This will actually add and enhance your marketing presentations. It is just believable. **mb**

“The weakness of testimonials that I have seen recently is that they have not been correctly constructed.”

Tony Gattari is Founder and Chief Energy Officer of Achievers Group. He is a much in demand professional speaker, business educator, author and corporate and business advisor. www.achieversgroup.com.au