

Entice Your Prospects with Samples By Elinor Stutz

How Do You Engage Your Prospects?

Clients sometimes tell me that the most difficult part of the selling process is obtaining the initial meeting. I often hear, "Once I'm granted an appointment, everything is fine and I close business. But getting the actual appointment is another matter."



There are several methods for getting appointments worth noting. However, they all take a backseat to the umbrella theme of beginning from the other person's point of view. You must find commonality and connect with your prospect first before the sales process begins.

If you are selling to a company then you will need to study their website before calling for an appointment. You will want to view the executive bios, where they went to school, what their majors were in college, mission statement, where their stock is trading, key word importance, services, clients, and testimonials.

By reviewing the website in detail, you will be able to anticipate how you and your prospect company might work together, and suggest your idea when you call for an appointment. Prior to the appointment, try to find similar information about their competitors, industry challenges and understand how you may be able to assist in some of these areas.

If your prospect is an entrepreneur, you will want to find out as much as possible about them from their website if they have one or from the referring party. During the small talk phase, it is essential to find a commonality or two.

Recently a couple of consultants shared that some of their prospects will nickel and dime them to the point they waste time and money working with them. I suggested they emphasize their value in such instances. It is fair to begin the conversation with the statement, *"I'm not the cheapest consultant you will find, however I'm known for the care I show my clients."*

A good question would be, *"Is price of more importance to you or is service?"* You must demonstrate your expert status and speak with confidence to convey your value. Whether you are selling to an entrepreneur or a company, another good question is, *"What will be your cost of not moving forward?"*

A smart marketing tactic is to give away a free sample of what you have to offer. Prospects will appreciate the fun of it as well as your willingness to find a way to work with them. If you are generous enough with your time and information, Prospects will want to continue to do business with you.

Generosity in this case not only refers to giving but also includes thoughtfulness, caring and a willingness to work with the prospect to find solutions. This is your moment of opportunity to being building credibility and trust to secure business.

Entrepreneurs can implement the sampling strategy in their own way. Coaches, trainers and consultants will offer a ½ hour free consultation while some beauty consultants will offer small samples of a product they wish to highlight for the month such as hand lotion.

An enterprising restaurant held a no-host bar cocktail party for a large residential building during its slow season. I participated in such a party and it was impressive! The entire high-rise came for the free hors d'oeuvres and to mingle. Guests were purchasing drinks so the restaurant did not lose money that evening.

Most importantly, everyone enjoyed the camaraderie and the food was excellent. The restaurant has been hot spot ever since. In fact, the head chef is now offering cooking lessons to the residential buildings in the neighborhood.

Costco grew into a giant company due to its ingenious marketing. Yes, they sell things inexpensively, however, they offer road shows and People line up and wait just to sample a morsel of food. Certainly some people just want a free sample, but many run to the case to buy a super-sized box of what they just sampled. The method of giving away tiny amounts per person produces widens your reach and produces voluminous sales.

Mrs. Fields is another success story of an enterprising entrepreneur who gave enough cookies away in order to build up a huge demand. She literally walked up and down University Ave in Palo Alto with cookies on a tray, begging people to sample them. The rest is history.

The sampling will become a win-win for both you and your Prospects. They will enjoy your free morsels and be returning for more. After you receive enthusiastic welcoming of your give-a-way, be sure to follow-up with what you actually sell and close some business!

Additional Ideas to Build Business:

- Work on providing the best possible service
- Make it easy to do business with you
- Develop creative avenues for your business
- Always ask questions
- Provide thoughtful answers
- Work for a win-win not just commission

Your center of influence will grow
And Your Business Will Prosper

Elinor Stutz through **Smooth Sale** delivers: *Sales Advice for Building Business Swiftly and Easily* as original work in the form of Professional Sales Training, Licensing of Programs, Speaking Engagements and the "Sales Tips e-zine". Contact Elinor at www.smoothsale.net or elinor@smoothsale.net. Elinor is also Smooth Sale Mentor with our [WS Team](#). Watch for her new book - *"Nice Girls DO Get The Sale: Relationship Building That Gets Results"* to be released by Sourcebooks September '06. Her Sales Toolkit and *"Smooth Selling 4-CD audio seminar"* are available now at Smooth Sale.