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Merenda's Marketing Tip: Don't Be 'Outcome Oriented' in Your Sales Pitches

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Last Updated: 5/26/2004 1:17:45 PM

Most attorneys hate selling.

For them, the preferred method of gaining clients is through referrals. That's because business that is referred to them comes, in effect, pre-sold. They have third-party credibility.

The same attorneys hate "tire-kickers" and people who shop and compare prices. They would rather that every prospective client walked into their office waving their checkbook, suitably grateful for the opportunity to sit down in front of such an august personage.

But in the real world, how do you sell that prospect in your office, however they arrived there? How do you "close" them?

My advice is to proceed as if each and every prospect is already your client.

I advise my clients that the goal of a consultation is *not* to come away with a contract, retainer, or check. The goal is to bond emotionally with the potential client. The goal is to form a relationship. The goal is to be helpful.

If your potential client comes out of that meeting saying, "Wow, that John Jones is the nicest guy I ever met," then I promise you, Mr. Jones, you will have more sales than you can handle.

The true test is how you behave if the prospect leaves your office without committing, or even turns you down flat.

When I was about 12 years old, I sent in some sort of response card that provoked a visit from a salesman for *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

The man met with me and my bemused parents and made a wonderful presentation. But the fact is, my parents weren't ready to shell out several hundred dollars for something that was accessible for free in the public library.

"I'm sorry for wasting your time," I said to the man.

He smiled. "I'm never wasting my time when I'm talking about the *Encyclopedia Britannica*," he said.

I was enormously impressed, and about a year later we wound up buying the full set of encyclopedias from the salesman. Some 40 years later, my sister still has them.

Likewise, I would advise you to be "process oriented" in your sales presentations and less "outcome oriented." If you have presented your service well, and have bonded emotionally (made friends with) your potential client, then you have had a great consultation. You have

been successful. Some will become your clients, and some will not, but all can be your friends and advocates.

Remember that you are never wasting your time when you are telling a prospective client about yourself and your services. There is much to be learned -- about their needs, their concerns, their objections -- in every meeting. It is your privilege to meet with them.

Remember, too, your karma. I strongly believe that what you sow, you will reap -- perhaps not from the client sitting in front of you, and perhaps not this week, but as surely as the sun will rise and set, what goes around comes around.

Author Mark Merenda founded Smart Marketing in 1994. Since that time he has built it into one of the country's premier marketing firms for financial professionals. ElderLawAnswers members and site visitors receive a 33 percent discount on personalized marketing consulting. For more, [click here](#). Mr. Merenda can be contacted by telephone at (239) 403-7755 or by email: mark@smartmarketingnow.com. The company's Web site is www.smartmarketingnow.com

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