

# The Secret of Getting All the Referrals You Could Ever Hope For

By Jeffrey Gitomer

Everyone in management will tell every salesperson to "ask for referrals" or "don't forget to ask for referrals" or "as soon as you make the sale, ask for a referral."

These strategies are not only wrong, they also jeopardize the future of the relationship.

First of all, why are you "asking" (begging) for a referral?

Second of all, why are you asking when you haven't earned anything?

REALITY: Asking for referrals makes EVERYONE feel awkward. And usually results in a turndown, or a delay. A delay that goes on for months.

A referral is the second strongest lead in sales. The first is an unsolicited one.

MAJOR CLUE: Referrals are not asked for - referrals are EARNED.

SCENARIO: You get a referral from a customer without asking for it. You make a sale. Your boss asks you, "How'd you get that referral?" And you respond, "I earned it." Your boss will NOT know what to say next.

Give to get.

There are all kinds of names applied to the process of "giving" a referral to a customer. Pay it forward. Netweaving. BUT the salesperson will forever live in darkness if he or she expects something in return.

Which brings me to this PRIME example of what not to do. I got this email "request for an answer" today:

*Hey Jeff, I can't seem to ever get any referrals! I go back to the customer after the sale, I give them an appreciation gift and ask them for some people and they say they don't know anybody or don't think anybody else can afford it?! What to do?*

The guy didn't even sign the email. That's a good start to not getting referrals.

This guy thinks by bringing candy that he deserves a referral. And his email proves my point. He will NEVER get referrals this way - AND NEITHER WILL YOU.

What is this guy's business logic behind his actions? And what's yours? Asking for referrals is not only a poor practice, it's also rude and embarrassing.

NOTE WELL: There are those who claim expertise in the referral process that will differ in opinion. Take their advice and end up like the anonymous emailer above - empty.

# The Secret of Getting All the Referrals You Could Ever Hope For

By Jeffrey Gitomer

I will admit my strategy is harder to perform. GOOD. That way the lazy salespeople will not be in competition. And you may actually get some referrals this way. Five referrals out of a hundred tries. BUT the other 95 people will avoid you forever. Not good.

*Ask yourself:*

- \* What have I earned so far?
- \* Have I done anything besides make a sale?
- \* On a scale of 1-10, how strong is this relationship?
- \* If I asked for a referral right now would it be or feel awkward?
- \* Why would this customer give me a referral?

NOTE: If you can't think of a reason, neither can your customer.

*Then ask yourself:*

- \* What can I do that will get me from where I am to where I want to be?
- \* Do I have a real referral game plan?
- \* What are the value actions I need to be (consistently) taking to begin earning referrals?

The questions above are the ones that need to be asked BEFORE YOU TAKE ANY REFERRAL ACTIONS.

*Here are the TOP 6.5 referral EARNING strategies:*

- 1. Deliver memorable service.** It's simple. Be friendly and helpful, and give positive response.
- 2. Be available.** Make it easy to do business with you and anyone else in your company 24/7/365.
- 3. Be a consistent value provider.** Create an email magazine and blog with content that helps customers, and a business Facebook page where you post positive and helpful **information and good news, and allow for customer interactions.**
- 4. Give a referral to the customer.** This requires work, but it's a great way to prove your worth.
- 5. Get them one LinkedIn contact they can benefit from.** See if any of your connections could be of value to your customers, and make connections.
- 6. Develop the relationship slowly over time.** Create your long-term value plan, and execute it consistently.

Always post a "thank you" for referred business.

**6.5 DON'T ASK FOR A REFERRAL IF YOU HAVEN'T EARNED ONE.**

There's an underlying powerful message in what I'm saying here. It's about having a philosophy of giving, without the expectation of getting anything in return. This philosophy, if adopted, will give you a lifetime of fulfillment without an ounce of regret, remorse, or resentment.

Give to give. Don't give to get.

*Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of The Sales Bible, Customer Satisfaction is Worthless Customer Loyalty is Priceless, The Little Red Book of Selling, The Little Red Book of Sales Answers, The Little Black Book of Connections, The Little Gold Book of YES! Attitude, The Little Green Book of Getting Your Way, The Little Platinum Book of Cha-Ching, The Little Teal Book of Trust, The Little Book of Leadership, and Social BOOM! His website, [www.gitomer.com](http://www.gitomer.com), will lead*

# **The Secret of Getting All the Referrals You Could Ever Hope For**

By Jeffrey Gitomer

*you to more information about training and seminars, or you can email him personally at [salesman@gitomer.com](mailto:salesman@gitomer.com).*

<http://www.gitomer.com/articles/ViewPublicArticle.html?key=ajcdMibak3ME3B0qWXLmRw%3D%3D>