

# RIGHT HERE WAITING

## Lost your clients? Here are six steps to win them back

**W**HEN you lose a client, it is almost always because of service. Price is rarely the problem.

Before you try to win back that lost client, you need to examine the problem and figure out why you lost the client in the first place.

What does your client think was the problem? What do you think the problem was? If you work together again, is the problem going to resurface?

Here are six steps to help you get back a lost client:

### 1 Give it some time

Don't go rushing after the client. Let him think about the problem if there was one. This will also give you time to think over your approach.

Client problems are sometimes like lovers' quarrels. Time will often heal the wound without you having to do anything else.

### 2 Provide a referral or offer your assistance

In the world of business, you run into people who need this or need that.

Keep your lost clients in mind for anything that can benefit them.



Ask the former client to solve a problem for you, such as asking him for a restaurant suggestion for an anniversary dinner. - AFPpic

By knowing the needs of your clients, it is easy to make suggestions that can help them either with a referral for business or your assistance for any problem.

Your former clients will appreciate the gesture — and they may be one step closer to doing business with you again.

### 3 Do not sever communication

Keep former clients on your mailing list. Ask to stay on their mailing list.

If you send out newsletters, keep sending to them.

If you use e-mail to stay in touch with your clients, keep your lost clients posted too.

It also will not hurt to mention any good news concerning the client in the newsletter or e-mail.

### 4 Make it easy for the client to return

If former clients call, sound happy to talk to them.

If you meet them face-to-face, shake their hand and give them a big smile. This will remind them why they worked with you in the first place.

### 5 Ask the former client to solve a problem for you

If you are working on a community project and you think the client might be able to help you out, give him a call.

If you respect his taste in food, ask him for a restaurant suggestion for an anniversary dinner.

Ask about software. Ask about people. Ask about virtually anything, but don't sound phony.

### 6 Thank the client profusely when he returns

Everyone likes to be thanked. People enjoy believing that they make a difference and that they are appreciated.

Show that appreciation to your lost clients.

It takes an effort to leave.

If your clients feel wanted in the first place, it is almost impossible to have someone else steal them away from you.

Once they are lost, you just need to gently look after them by reminding them of your services, your appreciation of them and your knowledge of their needs.

Once you have them back, keep them and treasure them. -

Source: ST/ANN

■ Article by Don Doman, who owns the business training site Ideas and Training.