

**Sent:** Thursday, February 01, 2001 5:43 PM  
**Subject:** YOU WANT UNLIMITED REFERRALS !?!?!?!

Dear Aquathin Dealer On-Line;

At Aquathin University we "preach" the value of satisfied customers referring friends, relatives, neighbors. I have heard from several Dealers that as much as 70% of their business is referrals.

Read this terrific article for creating a PLAN FOR UNLIMITED REFERRALS..."*and remember, the next best thing to owning an Aquathin is recommending one to a friend!*"

Enjoy !

FOR THE BEST TASTE IN LIFE  
Think Aquathin..AquathinK !!  
Celebrating our 21st birthday in 2001 !!!  
(visit the allnew <http://www.aquathin.com>)

"Alfie"  
Alfred J. Lipshultz, President

P.S. When responding please continue 'REPLY' to include all previous correspondences on this subject.

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### Putting It All Together

This is Bill's 25th SalesDoctors article on referral selling. This time, he ties together everything he has covered so far in **Putting It All Together**. Whether or not you've read the rest of the series, you'll find this article a most valuable summary of the major components that separate those who receive unlimited referrals from those who don't.

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**B**y putting the foundation and the four cornerstones of referral selling carefully in place, you v create your referral castle.

In the introduction to this series of articles, I quoted Robert Kerrigan, who said, "The way of the

is meeting people through other people." I hope I've demonstrated to you the enormous selling you can create for yourself when you create great relationships with prospects and customers, people well (be they customers, prospects or referral alliances), and constantly think in terms of how you can leverage those relationships to create more win/win situations that go beyond the buyer/seller relationship.

To create unlimited referrals, you need to engage in expanded thinking. Every business relationship you create has the potential to lead you to other relationships. Thomas Stanley calls this offering more than the core. Find ways to move your relationships with customers to a level of mutual assistance that goes beyond the core product or service you offer.

When you sell something and gain a new customer, build that relationship so that you can serve other in ways other than what brought you together in the first place. That's the leveraging power of relationships. That's ethical opportunism -- looking for the multiple opportunities in every relationship.

## **People Will Enjoy Seeing You Succeed**

When you serve others well, they will help you. Many people love to have a stake in the success of other people -- people they like and trust, like you.

Not long ago, I was teaching my referral strategies to a group of salespeople. The sessions were successful and most of the salespeople started getting more referrals immediately. Those referrals translated into an increase in sales. However, one salesperson was struggling with this referral stuff. He called me and asked if we could meet for breakfast before the next sales meeting.

When we got together, he told me that he wanted to use referrals more but some block was stopping him. With a little exploration, I helped him figure out that he wanted to be successful by his own efforts. He wanted to "do it himself." Just between you and me, I think he was trying to prove to his father (who was successful and had a very strong personality) that he could do it on his own. For some reason, he felt that asking for referrals (asking for help) was not doing it on his own. So he found it difficult to ask for referrals. To help him reframe his thinking, I asked him the following questions:

- Do you serve your customers well, so they keep coming back?
- Do your customers like you and trust you?
- The times you've gotten referrals without asking, did you convert them into sales and create more happy customers?

He answered, "yes," to each question. Then, I said, "Who do you think is doing that? You are. You are serving your customers so well and creating such good relationships with them that if you call them, they would be thrilled to help you. You created that. You deserve to be rewarded even more than you are now. These people want to give to you; you just have to get it started."

I'm happy to say that he "got it." He stepped out of his comfort zone a few times to ask for referrals. To his amazement, they came easily. He converted most of those referrals into new customers and a chain reaction had begun. He is now on his way to creating an unlimited supply of referrals, because he now realizes that referrals from his customers are the highest form of praise he can receive. His goal is to create relationships and serve customers so well that they want to give him referrals as soon as he asks.

## **Working From Referrals Is A Mindset**

I can't emphasize this enough. To create unlimited referrals -- to build your castle of gold -- it has to become your constant way of thinking. You must constantly say to yourself, "I sell a quality product/service. I deliver incredible service. People like me and trust me. I deserve to get referrals. I serve people so well that they want to refer people to me. I deserve this highest form of praise."

## **The Attitude Of Service**

Do you have a true attitude of service? Are you constantly looking for ways to serve others? Are you serving your prospects long before you ever sell them anything? When you sell someone, do you ask questions that get him thinking in new ways? Do you help him see his situation from new perspectives? Are you giving referrals to other salespeople? Are you getting to know your customers in such a way that you can bring value to their lives in ways that go way beyond what you sell?

If you are doing these things, you have the attitude of service. You will have very little difficulty creating unlimited referrals, as long as you remember to ask for them. If you don't have an attitude of service, your ability to gain referrals will be severely limited.

Zig Ziglar says it this way, "You can get everything in life you want, if you just help enough other people get what they want." And Albert Schweitzer said, "I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know, the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."

## **The Power Of Leverage**

"Master the power of leverage to build real business with long-term strength." So says Bill Brody, author, speaker and sales expert. Just as you must have an attitude of service to create unlimited referrals, it helps to have an attitude of leverage.

In his audio tape *Changing the Game: The New Way to Sell* (Nightingale-Conant, 1988), Larry Wilson says this about leverage:

In the past, prospecting was thought of as a funnel. You put a lot of prospects in at the top, and for that effort you end up with a few highly qualified prospects at the bottom. In this scenario, the salesperson's job is to keep the top of the funnel full by activity-intensive prospecting. A lot of time, energy and money is spent, and of course, most of the suspects who come in at the top never reach the buyer stage.

Based on the old "see more people" belief, it confuses activity with accomplishment. In this new model, the question changes from, "How can I make this sale?" to "How can I make this sale and how can this relationship lead me to other business?" This point of view is to never prospect for just one shot, one sale business.

I couldn't have said it better myself. Thanks, Larry. If you aspire to build a base of satisfied customers and referral alliances, you can constantly tap into this base for more business. This is leverage instead of "activity-intensive prospecting," you have "strategic-planning prospecting."

Larry Wilson goes on to say, "Be careful of spending time with businesses that have no leverage. No business should pass through you without putting it to the leveragability test." From my

perspective, this doesn't mean you don't take business that you can't leverage. It means that you're always looking for this leverage angle, right from the beginning of each relationship. If you have a new awareness of leverage, you're more likely to see the opportunities.

Please understand that the leverage I'm talking about is not manipulation or going for lopsided. Leveraging relationships should always be a two-way, win/win proposition. Getting your customers to provide referrals to you -- to "sell" for you -- is the greatest leverage in the world of selling.

## **A Solid Foundation And Cornerstones**

I'd like to remind you of the essence of each part of this article series:

### **The foundation**

First, we laid the foundation by talking about two fundamentals in selling -- relationships and service. The relationship allows everything else to occur. The attitude of service helps you build a trusting relationship where each party can keep winning for years to come. Then, we covered the four cornerstones of building your referral business.

### **The first cornerstone**

The first cornerstone is "exceed your customers' expectations." There are three main thoughts to leave you with on this topic:

- To exceed your customers' expectations, you have to know what their expectations are. You have to discover why you got their business, how the other guy lost their business, what it will take to keep them happy, and what it will take to make them unhappy. With this knowledge, you can make them say, "wow," when you serve them.
- Be ready, willing, and able to "be in the problems." When a problem arises, don't even flinch. Just be there and start working through the solution as best you can. Make it easy for them to complain; encourage it. Remember, a relationship that's had a problem that's been handled well is a stronger relationship than one that's never had a problem. You can brag about your problem-free relationships, but if I were you, I'd brag about the relationships where you faced the problems.
- Help them reduce their stress. Make dealing with you an oasis in their busy lives. Anticipate their needs, discover their stresses, and serve them beyond their expectations.

### **The second cornerstone**

The second cornerstone is "form referral alliances." Identify the people (and other businesses) in your world who have the ability to refer business to you, even though they may never become customers themselves, and find ways to meet more of these types of people. Make sure they know what you do and how you truly benefit others. Make sure you know what they do and how they truly benefit you. Then, find ways to continually serve each other. Network with the best networkers. Network with the centers of influence and you'll become a center of influence.

Steven Sullivan sums it up well. "As I reflected back on all the great salesmen I've known, a common thread ran through the fabric of their individual selling style. No, it is not creativity, intelligence, or urgency or communication skills. What they share with each other is an ability to build a successful network, a group of individuals whom they motivate to support and sustain their efforts. They recognize they are not an island unto themselves. They realize no matter how great their individual talent, it pales in comparison to a supporting cast." Richard Weylman says, "Successful people

interdependent, not independent."

### **The third cornerstone**

The third cornerstone is "prospect for referrals." Take control of your destiny (as much as any person can), and be proactive in gaining referrals. When you ask for referrals, do so in a way that lets your sources know it's important to you. Ask for their help. Upgrade the referral as much as possible. Help your sources protect their relationship with their friend or colleague, see if they want to call you a prospect before you do. Always keep your referral sources informed of the progress of the referral and always keep them "well thanked."

### **The fourth cornerstone**

Finally, the fourth cornerstone is "target niche markets." When you create a reputation in a target industry, the referrals will flow effortlessly. Having expertise in a target industry will allow you to add value to the table that none of your competitors can. Pick an industry you like and create a reputation for yourself. You'll have more fun and the referrals and sales will truly be unlimited.

Work on any one of these cornerstones and referrals will come your way. Work a little on all four and you'll build a strong house of referrals. Master all four cornerstones and you'll build a castle of referrals -- unlimited referrals.

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Bill Cates, president of PowerPoint! Communications, is the nation's foremost expert in how to increase sales and build a business through referrals. Companies, associations and other organizations call on Bill to help them increase their sales with his powerful principles, strategies and techniques.