

This Free E-Book is brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Information Technology Consultants and Professionals: How to Avoid Being Seen as Just Another Salesperson

By Andrew Neitlich

Information Technology Consultants and Professionals: How to Avoid Being Seen as Just Another Salesperson by Andrew Neitlich

Here are tips for information technology professionals to meet with prospects without being seen as an annoying salesperson:

1. Don't make cold calls. An unsolicited phone call is the easiest tip-off to a prospect that you are a salesperson. How do you react when strangers call you by phone? Instead, develop an information- and trust-based marketing plan that influences prospects to CALL YOU. You do this by offering educational, valuable information that helps your target market address key problems and opportunities related to your area of expertise. You offer this information in any number of ways: seminars, your web site, newsletters, audio programs, videos, articles, and publications.
2. Only give your business card to a prospect if asked. Otherwise, you will be perceived as somebody with something to sell.
3. For business prospects, do research prior to any meeting. Learn everything you can about the prospect's organization and situation.
4. Consider getting videotaped to see how you really come across in meetings. I have videotaped a number of IT professionals in mock prospect meetings, and the experience is almost always illuminating!
5. Make sure that during meetings with prospects, 75% of your sentences are questions. Ask questions to understand the prospect's situation, what it is costing him or her, how long they have had the problem, what else they have tried, what will happen if they don't do anything, and numerous other questions to help you thoroughly understand the issues.

6. Listen closely, with your undivided attention. Turn off your cell phone and pager, and eliminate any interruptions. Otherwise, you give your prospect the impression that they are not important now, and will not be important if they hire you.

7. Try to adapt your style to the prospect's style in order to build rapport and make them feel comfortable. Sense their mood, how fast or slow they talk, whether they focus on business or technical issues, and their body language.

8. Make eye contact. Don't look down, or at other things in the room.

9. Empathize by stepping into the prospect's shoes. Nothing is more powerful than to be able to reflect back the prospect's frustration with his or her problem. Similarly, instead of saying, "Here is what you should do..." say, "If I were in your shoes, I would..."

10. Focus on specific business results, not technology. Your prospect wants a result that will help his or her situation. Technology is a means to that end. If you focus on the result the prospect wants to achieve, then you can have an open and honest discussion about whether you can get that result.

11. Do not make the prospect feel stupid. For instance, if the client is not tech-savvy, don't use jargon. One client of mine developed an IT glossary to give to prospects, which was a great way to make them feel comfortable.

12. Once you understand the client's situation, offer your experience of the problem, suggest solutions, and show how you have helped others in similar situations before. Try to create a sense of urgency by explaining what it will cost the client if they don't act quickly. Do all of this in a way that educates and informs the client, without any gimmicks or tricks.

13. Make a business case to persuade the prospect to hire you. One consulting firm I worked with guaranteed clients a tenfold return on their fees. Show the client how much they can save or earn by hiring you. Show the client the risks of doing nothing, compared to the benefits of hiring you.

14. Invite questions, and answer them professionally, without getting defensive. Don't argue with the client about the question or concern. Tell them their point is a good one, and answer by providing the truth. Prospects will ALWAYS ask questions, sometimes to object but more often just because they are making a big decision and want to be completely sure that they are making the right choice. They may need you to repeat a point they didn't understand earlier, or they may simply need to hear what you had to say again for reassurance.

15. Show the prospect that you are completely committed to his or her success, and that you really want to be hired. Create a sense of team by explaining what "we" can do together. Listen closely. Empathize. Give examples of others you have helped. Tell the prospect that you want to work with him or her. Your enthusiasm might be infectious.

16. Don't use fancy sales closing techniques. Any sales training course you take (except mine) teach gimmicky formulas like the "double reverse close" or the "ABC three-step close." Your clients are too

savvy for this garbage. If you use these techniques, they will immediately recognize you as an inauthentic, untrustworthy hawker of questionable services and products. Instead, let the prospect make up his or her own mind about what to do. For instance, don't ask the client, "When should we start?" or "As you can see, I can solve your problem; just sign this contract." Instead, put the decision in their hands by saying, "From the information I've provided, I sincerely hope that you understand the importance of acting now."

17. Don't accept a sale unless you can deliver, want to do the work, and the work will advance your business. Closing a bad deal for the sake of a deal is a recipe for disaster. I worked with a client who won a contract with a major metropolitan county health system. My client knew that the county was highly political, and that the project would stretch every resource he had in his small firm. But he was blinded by the size of the contract. Within three months, the county made the client the scapegoat for all of their problems, and his firm's name was posted in all the local papers. Six months later, he had to lay off half his staff because he had no work. Be willing to say "no."

18. Follow up. If the prospect hires you, thank him or her and provide reassurance that they made an excellent decision. Send a thank you note soon after. If the prospect doesn't hire you, politely remind him or her of the potential costs of not moving forward quickly, suggest rapid action, and let him or her

know that you are always available for additional questions or advice.

Andrew Neitlich is the Senior Editor of The IT Accelerator, the newsletter that helps information technology professionals and consultants to attract more clients and projects. Subscribe at www.itprosuccess.com.

How To Pick An IT Consultant

By David Berube

At some point, most business are going to need to have some help from a IT consultant. Maybe your business is a small, without many IT resources. Maybe your company is larger, with a significant resources in IT already, and just needs a healthy dose of outside perspective. Whatever the reason, it can be difficult to choose an IT consultant, especially if you aren't a technical person.

I've heard stories about selecting consultants from all sorts of people. Quite a few have told me heard horror stories about how they wound up with large bills and little or nothing to show for it. Fortunately, it doesn't have to be hard to choose an IT consultant, because I've the knowledge I've accrued to create some guidelines you can use in choosing your IT consultant.

* A Contract Programmer or an IT Consultant?

There are quite a few contract programmers out there masquerading as IT consultants. A real IT consultant isn't in the business of writing code; rather, he's in the business of solving problems, and code just happens to be one of the way that he (or she) does it. Conversely, a contract programmer will

want you to spell out exactly what kind of program you want him to write. He doesn't solve problems; he just writes code the way he's told, and hopes it will fix the problem at hand. With a real IT consultant, you wind up with a solution that leaves everyone happy.

* Focus on benefits, not technology.

Some IT consultants can get wrapped up in their technology; it's not uncommon to see consultants who specialize in "AS/400 mainframes" or "embedded systems", for example. A real IT consultant, though, focuses on benefiting his client, using whatever technology is necessary, rather than on what technology he's familiar with. You want to hire someone that's skilled at solving problems, and that will use the technology that's best suited to your business, whatever it may be. You shouldn't have to pick a consultant based on what technology he's familiar with; he should be able to take care of almost any technological problem, either by doing the work himself or outsourcing to someone in his network of contacts.

* Pay only for value.

Amateur IT consultants tend to charge for their time, not by the value of the work they perform; so do contract programmers. Real IT consultants, though, charge based on value provided to you, NOT based on time. This is because amateurs are afraid that they won't be able to complete the project in a reasonable amount of time, so they want reassurance that they'll be paid for their time in any situation. Experienced IT consultants, though, are confident in their ability to deliver code under their estimate, they are confident in their ability to provide value, and they that they can provide value that's worth MORE than their time is. You shouldn't be making an investment decision every time you consider calling your IT consultant.

* It always takes time.

Some consultants will offer to send you a proposal after a ten or twenty minute phone conversation. It is impossible to accurately assess your situation that quickly; they are trying to provide you with a 'one-size-fits-all' package. Real IT consultants will not make provide you with answers, proposals, or fees until they know enough about your business to have an informed opinion. Unless your consultant is willing to spend enough time to really know what your problem is, you won't end up with the solution that you really need, because your consultant is making random shots in the dark.

David Berube is a consultant solving business problems. He began innovating at an early age; he began attending college when he was eleven, started his own technology website at thirteen, and he was published at fifteen. He's a prolific writer and speaker; you can see more of his works at his website,

. He'd love to answer your questions via email; just contact

and he'll get right back to you.

How To Pick An IT Consultant

How to Sell High Tech Solutions

Hollander Consultants Gears Up For Largest Symposium in Three Years

Are you scaring away potential customers?

How To Create A News Angle How To Create A News Angle

Expand Your Professional Coaching and Consulting Business

About Niches

How To Find A Topic For Your Ebook

RSS ADVERTISING SECRETS

AX Gold's Website Guardian



This Free E-Book has been brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

[100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment](#)
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!