

29. In-Home Presentation

Show Time!

By the time you arrive at your prospective client's home, she has pretty much made up her mind that (a) she is going to hire a residential cleaning service and that (b) your service is in the running for consideration.

To this point, you are still a "voice on the other end of the phone" representing a company the client may or may not know. Obviously, your customer's inclinations are pretty much set. You've been invited to make a quotation or presentation at home. All you can do now is reinforce the fact that your company will be the best choice.

Look and Act Like a Professional

- When arriving for your appointment, always remember:
 - ✓ **Arrive on time.**
 - ✓ **Always be in uniform.**
 - ✓ **Don't block the driveway.**
 - ✓ **Have your work order, work sheet, and calculator.**
 - ✓ **Have all literature and materials.**
 - ✓ **Be organized and prepared.**
 - ✓ **Make sure you have all the necessary tools.**
 - ✓ **Make sure you have the client's signature.**
 - ✓ **Be courteous and professional.**
 - ✓ **Be comfortable and friendly.**

The In-Home Presentation

- After introducing yourself, explain that it is going to take you a few minutes to make a quotation. Ask permission to take a walk through the home. If any of the bedrooms or bathrooms are occupied, you will probably need to have your prospect escort you through the home. You should be the one who is going to make the decision to

- If you go through the home unaccompanied, be sure to knock on each bedroom and bathroom door before opening it. You certainly don't want an embarrassing situation to occur!
- As a matter of courtesy, you should remove your shoes before tramping through your client's home. Therefore, it only makes sense that you wear socks or nylons when going to an appointment. Bare feet would not be appropriate, and of course clean socks for men and

run-free nylons for women are a must. You may choose to give the prospect a copy of *your Cleaning Checklist* (or other materials you may have) as you proceed through the home to see what needs to be done.

- When you've completed your quotation, ask the client if there's anything in any room that needs extra attention. Remind her that's not to be touched or, if touched, requires special care. Is there a chair with a broken leg you should know about? Any lamps that always fall off when moved or dusted? Anything else you should know about and note?

- When presenting your quotation, write down the information on a **FIRST CLEANING VISIT** brochure (or similar) and briefly review what services you're offering and the price on your first-time visit and what you can **guarantee in your Satisfaction Guarantee**.

- Explain that there is a one-time charge for the first-time cleaning, each subsequent cleaning is charged at the regular biweekly rate. Be sure to clarify that biweekly means once every fourteen days or twice a month, or 24 cleanings a year.

- When you're asking for services, say **"Mrs. Jones would you prefer weekly or biweekly service?"** Wait for a response. She will either say "weekly" or "biweekly." If she says "weekly," go ahead and set up the service for that. If she says "biweekly," set about making arrangements for the key to the house. **"Mrs. Jones, you won't be home when you'll be cleaning, will you?"**

If you want to ask additional questions, answer them as succinctly and briefly as possible. Repeat the above procedure: **"Mrs. Jones, would you prefer weekly or biweekly service?"** Note the alternative question again. Not "do you want it done" but, "how frequently do you want it done?"

- Tell the customer how much you look forward to serving them and to be sure to ask them if they have any questions or if any problem of any kind should arise. If there's any way you can serve them better, you should know about it.

- Whether you get the job or not, always thank the customer for her time and consideration. As a rule of thumb, as you gain more experience you should be able to plan on converting about 60% to 70% of your in-home quotes into long-term clients.

Issues to Cover During Your Visit

We work "by the job."

- Try to avoid making quotations based on "hourly rates." If you use our POM=CP recommended pricing formula, you will only have an hourly rate. Time is calculated to determine your total costs, but not to determine the final price. It's conceivable that, based on the hour, the price for some homes might work out to be more than a very small cleaning. Conversely, a big, long-time cleaning might work out to \$20 an hour, or less. Tell your clients your quotes are "by the job; not by hourly rates."

Never make promises that are difficult to keep

- If a customer asks that you sign up to show up only twice a week, say, every other Friday, don't promise what you can't deliver.
- First of all, don't agree to a schedule unless it's going to be the first assignment. You need to set a general time frame, such as morning or afternoon.
- As we develop a schedule, you need to schedule clients in a way that allows you to cut down on travel time between assignments. Clients who live close to where other existing clients live are a good fit for the same day. The team will be able to schedule existing clients (unless, of course, they all live in the same area on that day).
- Don't promise an immediate opening before leaving for the day. You can fit the client into the available schedule, but you must avoid double-booking. You certainly don't want to go home when you get back to the office find out that you're not available for the day you agreed upon in your quotation.
- Cleaning someone's home is a very personal thing. It is perhaps the major reason why privacy is so important to a homemaker. If you've ever had a house guest to enter your bedroom to use the master bathroom, you will have an idea of how some clients may feel about the sense of personal intrusion the vision of a stranger cleaning their personal belongings may conjure.

- You can allay some of the natural anxiety by advising your customer that, other than when circumstances such as illness or scheduling conflicts arise, the same team will return each time as long as the client wants them. They're not going to have a whole new set of strangers coming into their home every time it's clean.

Security

- If the subject of "security" arises, you can easily address your client's concerns. With your system, house keys do not have tags. The only identification attached to the key is a color and a number assigned to each client. If a key is ever lost, there is a way the key can be traced to a client's home. The maintenance office and are returned at the end of every day. They are not given to the cleaning staff.
- Each member of your cleaning staff is bonded by a \$100,000 Third-Party Fidelity Bond, and is thoroughly screened before being hired. You might also explain that you do background checks on all employees that they are fingerprinted and are not allowed to do any work (you do) on each employee's home.

Payment

- Most people prefer to pay when the cleaning team arrives. However, you should know how to handle payment since you want to be paid for your services as soon as possible.

When you quote a price for an estimate, unless there are extra services to do, the price is known in advance. Payment should be made by check and cash. Payment should be made by check and cash at the time of service. If a client has any other predetermined location. If a client has any other predetermined location. If a client has any other predetermined location, the client should call you in advance to make arrangements and the extra charge for the assignment should be added to the check.

In this day and age, plastic is the currency of choice. You really should consider accepting payment by credit card. There are a number of options to choose from if you wish to accept credit cards. The best is to go online and enter "credit card merchant account" to a search engine such as www.google.com.

If you don't want them to leave cash because you don't want your employees handling cash! If you do, you've just blown away the integrity of your response to the question of "security"! If you don't trust your staff, how can your client be expected to? No, the reason you request a check is so that your customer will have a payment record via the canceled check.

- From your perspective, if the client were ever to claim that she paid but you have no record of receiving payment, you can always ask for a copy of her canceled check.
- *It is not necessary or appropriate to spend time raising every potential issue or question unless the client raises a question that appears to be concerned about one of these subjects. You can't do it all, spend over an hour expanding on all aspects of your business and you don't want to spend any more of your time or your client's time.*

Track Your Conversion Ratio

- Obviously, the more proficient you are at handling inquiries, making appointments, and appointments themselves, the more return you are bound to get for your advertising efforts. The goals you should strive for when planning your advertising strategy are:
 - (a) Convert 80% of inquiries into consultation appointments.
 - (b) Convert 75% of consultation appointments into sales.

Overall, you should try to convert 60% of all inquiries into sales, which means that for every 10 inquiries you receive, you should

SAMPLE

Documents relating to
In-Home Presentation

Cleaning Checklist

Our First Cleaning Visit Brochure

Quality Control Checklist

Happily Ever After post-service report

SAMPLE