

Keep your customers satisfied...

It's much easier and cheaper to get more work from the people you currently work with/for (your customers) than it is to have to pitch for new work time and time again.

This means it's worthwhile assessing how well you're doing in building strong customer relationships.

Remember that the onus is on you to keep your customers happy, not the other way around so you need to be pro-active in this.

TIPS ON BUILDING CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

Rate yourself against the following criteria to see how you could improve:

1. Quality

Your work needs to be of consistently high quality. However, your customer defines 'quality' in their terms, so make sure you understand exactly what your clients want before you put too much, or too little work in, or bound off in the wrong direction.

2. Expertise

Do the people you work for regard you as an expert? Do they take on board your opinions as they respect and trust your advice?

3. Communication

Is there a two-way communication flow between you and your clients and do you prompt this?

4. Efficiency and reliability

Do you meet deadlines every time without your clients having to prompt you? Do your clients trust you to: do a great job, sort out problems and let them know if things are going off course and provide solutions?

5. Creativity

Do you come up with ideas that will add value to your work? Do you surprise clients by coming up with ideas that they hadn't thought of?

6. Flexibility

Do you tailor what you do to meet your clients' changing needs where possible?

7. Courtesy and friendliness

Are you always polite and amenable? Do your clients feel that you are glad to hear from them? Do they like working with you?

8. Uniqueness

Do your clients feel that you offer something that others do not?

9. Value

Do your customers feel that they are getting value for money?

10. Professionalism

Do you act professionally at all times even when things are going wrong? Can your clients rely on you to take control and deliver on your promises?

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Think about your client relationships – are there ways in which you could improve your performance to gain more or better work?

QUICKTIPS

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