



6 essential tips: “How to make sure your clients stay with you and never want to leave”

1. Demonstrate client appreciation

Tell your clients you appreciate them. Don't fall into the trap of assuming that clients know how much you appreciate their business. Look for opportunities to tell them how much you appreciate them as clients.

Keep in touch with your clients for no reason except to show genuine appreciation. Sending greeting cards provides a good opportunity to include a discreet client appreciation message such as “I appreciate the opportunity of serving you as a client”...or something similar.

2. Provide responsive and pro-active customer service

The majority of people these days expect a response back from their inquiry within a reasonable time frame. Whether it would be an email or phone call from a prospect or client, it's important to set up an effective communication system and make time out of your busy schedule to respond. Being available to your client's schedules and not the other way around demonstrates to them that they are important to you and you will take care of their needs. If you find yourself in a situation where you have not responded promptly, it still makes sense to respond with an apology for your tardiness.

3. Share client testimonials with other existing and potential clients

When testimonials are credible, believable, genuine and fully attributed, they are a reliable and valid testament of your services, products and performance. They provide social proof that informs prospective clients about how others like them have benefited from your business.

Research suggests that testimonials boost loyalty in the clients who give them. Once people have put their name and reputation on the line by publicly endorsing your product or service, they will stand behind that decision. Further, clients who provide testimonials feel as though they are helping you and because they feel good about contributing to your success, they will also stay loyal.

4. Educate your clients about the value of your business and your industry



Educate your clients by having facts, documentation and news, for example, to provide to your clients. This helps validate the key benefits of doing business with you and can assist with differentiating your business from your competitors. Explain how things work. If you're selling a service, explain what the client can do to maximise its value.

Share information: Send important articles or information that may be valuable or simply interesting to a client. Always look for ways to help a client learn.

Keep up-to-date with the latest research and current thinking in your industry. Expertise is dynamic, not static and being a reliable and knowledgeable source of information for your clients is consistently identified as a valued attribute.

5. Invite client feedback on products, services & performance *and* listen to them

Invite customer opinions and feedback on products and services. Listen to them and thank them for their contribution. Most importantly, demonstrate your appreciation through actioning their feedback.

Surveys can prove to be a valuable tool and source of information. Find out what clients like and dislike about you and your business. Analyse their answers to find out what you can improve about your approaches and methodologies. Keep the results so that down the road you can analyse the metrics about how your business has evolved. This will give you the ability to chart a course of action based on empirical knowledge, not just guess work.

This data can also help you make strategic decisions about your business. Remember, it's also important to obtain the feedback from your clients through an independent, third party specialist as your clients are more likely to tell them the truth.

6. Strengthen relationships with your clients

When you genuinely care about your clients it shows and they know. This is especially important in B2B service organisations where service excellence is paramount. On occasion, treat a client to something nice to show your appreciation. Use your imagination! Remember, a little goes a long way.

Any effort you make to keep your clients happy is an improvement and extra effort will enhance your clients' loyalty. Make it a habit to conscientiously view your clients as the most important asset you have. After all, if you do not have customers, you do not have a business!