



"Where are your client partnerships headed?"

"Making sure your customers stay with you and never want to leave."

If you don't listen to your clients, your competitors probably will!

Ensuring client retention and earning loyalty are not quick fixes. They involve a strategic and planned approach and commitment from leaders and teams to make it work.

The Theory: Knowing what your clients really feel and think about your business means you can be proactive in earning client loyalty, improving sales results and increasing profits.

The *proven benefits of retaining clients include saving you up to 80% of the cost of client acquisition, increasing your opportunities for cross-selling, referrals and earning loyalty.

The Methodology: To lead an organisation committed to client retention and loyalty you need to keep your finger on the pulse by:

1. Knowing what your clients really think and feel about doing business with you

Action: Seek in-depth feedback to discover your strengths and areas for improvement. Use conversational interviews with your key clients – not surveys.

2. Having a reliable and valid measure of their opinion

Action: Analyse your qualitative findings with quantitative measures of trends that emerge.

3. Proving you have listened

Action: Act on micro (individual) feedback and macro trends that have emerged across samples. Inform clients of improvements.

4. Checking for improvement effectiveness

Action: Go back to the clients who gave you feedback then: Repeat the test and measure with a new set of clients.

**Statistic source: Lee Resources INC; in Alex Lawrence (2012) in Forbes.com: "Attracting new customers will cost your company 5 times more than keeping an existing customer."*

"Loyalty is earned. It is never given."

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"According to Bain and Co., a 5% increase in customer retention can increase a company's profitability by 75%. And if those numbers don't impress you, Gartner Group statistics tell us that 80% of your company's future revenue will come from just 20% of your existing customers. Still not sold on customer retention? One final statistic provided by Lee Resource Inc. should give you plenty to think about: Attracting new customers will cost your company 5 times more than keeping an existing customer."

Alex Lawrence (2012) in Forbes.com

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