

The Defining Mark

Barrier Free Business Development Ideas

This issue: Keeping your Clients Happy - (Reality vs. Expectations)

You may have heard it said that the client is always right, (even when they are wrong). While I don't intend to argue the differing opinions around that landmine; there is one truth that can not be denied. A client's perception is their reality.

If the client you just lost thought you were too slow in returning calls - you were. At least you were based on their expectations. It is your performance vs. your client's expectations which causes them to either search for a new service provider, (or to sing your praises at every opportunity).

The expectations of your clients are measured against two major criteria: experience and outcome. Both of the areas are important. However performance in just one can either carry or bury the other.

For example, you may be willing to put up with a less than stellar working relationship, (experience) with your financial advisor if you received 25% growth, (outcome), year after year in your investments.

Consider your working relationships for a moment. Have you been outperforming your client's expectations as far as the business experience is concerned? Do they enjoy working with you? How smooth are your business processes and how easy is it to do business with your organization?

What about your products, services and solutions? Have they been performing as expected? Are your clients satisfied with your product outcomes or have they been amazed?

Remember, your ability to understand, (and then surpass), your client's expectations in both experience and outcome is the best way to create loyal clients. You can then turn those loyal clients into advocates.



Jim Carty, CSP

Leaders who win the respect of others are the ones who deliver more than they promise, not the ones who promise more than they can deliver.

Mark A. Clement

Action Plan:

- Identify your client's expectations
- Surpass them