



Prospect Capture Form—for Building Performance



How to Recognize the Profile of the Prospect Most Likely to Buy Your Product/Service at Your Price

Telephone conversation secrets

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Three ingredients are always present when you make a sale. Knowing how to recognize and measure these ingredients in advance provides powerful insider information on the likelihood of a sale. The lead form is a script of carefully crafted, open-ended questions designed to help recognize the profile of the prospect most likely to buy the product at the asking price based on the three ingredients always present when a sale is made; need, ability, and trust. When these three ingredients are present, a signature just seems to fall from the ceiling onto the agreement. The stronger the presence of these ingredients, the more likely the sale will be made. Because a professional remodeler's only limiting asset is time, rather than just getting a name and phone number and setting an appointment, professional remodelers *qualify* the lead to confirm that the caller is worthy of their time.

Need

Questions designed to divulge need uncover how anxious the prospect is to see the remodeler, the level of urgency involved, and the effort to which the caller has gone to fulfill his or her wants or needs:

- How soon do you want to have the work done?
- How long have you been considering this project?
- When is the best time to schedule an appointment?
- Do you have any plans or a design in mind?
- How long do you see yourself living in this house?

Ability

Questions designed to divulge ability tell the financial capability of the caller, as well as the caller's knowledge of the remodeling process.

- How long have you owned your home?
- Are you thinking of financing the project or paying cash?
- Have you done any remodeling in the past?

Trust

Questions designed to divulge trust help find out how the caller came across the name of the remodeler's firm. Callers who are repeat customer or referrals bring with them a certain level of trust, those who looked up the remodeler's name in the *Yellow Pages*® generally would have a lower level of trust.

- How did you find our name?
- What research have you done?

Notice that these questions are open-ended questions, think of them as those essay questions you hated in school, questions that can't be answered by a simple yes or no. By using the lead qualification process, remodelers are better able to focus their time and energy on those callers who give answers, that divulge high levels of need, ability and trust. The only resource that limits remodelers is time. Remodelers who are swamped with calls from prospective customers realize that they must be choosy about how they spend their time. Remodelers are not required to provide more than the courtesy of a return phone call unless they have some reason to believe that the caller is truly a prospect who is likely to buy. Every March, the IRS plants in papers across the country the story of a huge tax evasion prosecution. That recent information makes it easier for people to decide not to take phony deductions. Some remodelers do everything possible to be the last company to present to the prospect because they know the increased value of more recent information. If the prospect indicates that he or she is getting multiple bids, the remodeler may stay in touch, but purposely stall setting the appointment so as to arrange to be the last remodeler in the house.

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Contractors realize that they must work only with prospects whose proposed project is consistent with the type of work done efficiently and profitably by their company. One of the most important tools kept near the phone is the Prospect Capture Form. This simple form proves its usefulness in the qualification process through which all inquiries must pass in proving their value. When properly used, the Prospect Capture Form is the script handled by whoever answers the phone to begin the qualification process.

Referring to the sample Prospect Capture Form on the following page, notice that all of the questions are open-ended questions that can't be answered with a 'yes' or 'no' answer. The forms are to be printed on colored paper in an effort to dramatize their importance. Bound into pads, each phone in the office is accompanied by a Prospect Capture Form pad.

If the prospect does not recognize any difference between you and the competition, they will buy on price! The separation from the competition begins with the very first contact the customer has with the company. Some ways to set yourself apart:

- *Have a live body answer the phone.*
Electronic answering devices drive hang-up calls! Customers and prospects demand the sound of a live human voice to talk to when they contact the contractor's office. Some, but not all, prospects will risk leaving a message, and then they will dial someone else, and keep dialing until they talk to a human being. Clients hire contractors to take care of their problems. If a live person doesn't answer the phone you fail the first test.

Even more important--if you are going to be successful in this business, you need more phone calls than you can answer. One of the first and best investments you can make as a contractor is an answering service that consists of a live person who can answer the phone call as if they were in your office and ask the appropriate questions of the caller.

- *Return phone calls promptly.*
Especially referring to inquiries, many contractors have a procedure to get the information to the right person quickly so that the customer's need to feel important will be satisfied. Salespeople always make an effort to re-connect with the prospect as soon as possible, definitely on the same day of the inquiry..
- *Become memorable to the caller.*
Contractors who have a talent, a new product or just a creative way to present the same old product, use it to make the prospect remember them. They are aware, through, that at this time they are only trying to be remembered. They save some of the surprises about their firm's capabilities and services for the initial meeting. Ideally at first contact, they start to build interest and through generous feedings at every contact, keep the interest growing until they have the order. Generous displays of enthusiasm, confidence and professionalism are best served up continuously.

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Taken by: _____		Answering service: Y N		
Time: _____		Date: _____		
Name: <i>Mr./Mrs./Ms.</i> _____				
Address: _____				
Home Phone: _____		Mr. @ work		
Cell Phone: _____		Mrs. @ work		
Email address—Mr; _____		Mrs, Ms: _____		
Type of Work: _____				
How soon to start work? _____				
How long owned home? _____				
Referred by: yellow pages newspaper TV Radio Telemarketing Mailing Presentation Referral				
Existing/past customer other				
When our representative visits the house, there will be choices about how the project proceeds as far as design, materials, colors, equipment and more. These choices often affect the overall price and performance of the project. We find it most advantageous to have all of the decision makers active in the process from the beginning. Who besides yourself would be involved in the decision making process?:				
Interested in cash or financing				
Best time for appointment? _____				
What remodeling have you done before? _____				
How long have you been considering this? _____				
How soon do you want the work done? _____				
How long do you see yourself living in this house? _____				
Do you have a specific solution in mind? _____				
What research have you done? other venders media manufacturer internet				
Are you considering other improvements to your home? what? _____				
Approximately how old is your home? _____				
Do you have other problems with your house?				
Sometimes understanding the other kinds of performance problems you have with your house can help us determine the best whole house solution to your current problem. Can I review a list of common performance problems with you?				
Do you have;				
Basic		Advanced		
Noisy air		Soot deposits		
High humidity		Rotting roof		
Frequent dust		Lingering allergy symptoms		
Cold air drafts		Respiratory disorders and asthma		
Smoky fireplace		Lingering odors		
High energy bills in summer		Mold and Mildew		
High energy bills in winter		Peeling paint		
Hot and cold rooms (bad distribution)		other...		
Intermittent CO alarms				
Foggy windows				
Stuffy air				
Are your highest fuel bills in the summer or winter ?				
Is your house all electric or do you have gas also? What do you use gas for?				
Let me turn this over to one of our representatives who will call you to set up an appointment...				
Sales person: _____				
Customer Evaluation Score—for internal use only.				
Ability	vague...1	good...2	best.....3	Score:
Urgency	none.....1	soon...2	ASAP...3	Score:
Cycle	impulse..1	weeks..2	months..3	Score:
Source	yellow pages...1	job sign...2	repeat, referral.3	Score:
Total score:				

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Using this *Prospect Evaluation Score on the form, the greater the sum of the four categories (Ability, Urgency, Cycle, Source) the more salable the prospect. The best prospect would have a total score of 12. In order to measure success, the number of leads a salesperson receives is tracked. The inquiry that creates the sale is attached to the cost estimate when the job is sold. The totals of 'Production per Lead' (PPL) are then computed and tracked for each salesperson. .

Using this form to answer the Telephone

The Prospect Capture Form represents the script and every line on the pre-printed form is an abbreviated prompt for whoever handles incoming calls. By developing a conversational style, all of the information can usually be recorded on the form as the prompts are followed. As soon as the call is identified as from a prospective client, the form is used to record date and time information. The prompts might be personalized, as suggested in the following line-by-line analysis:

- *Taken by:* Identify the source of the information; this could be the answering machine if the call came in after hours, or the name of the person who originally handled the call during normal business hours. Occasionally it might be desirable for the salesperson to review the information on the Prospect Capture Form with the person who originally took the call.
- *Date and Time:* This line represents the date the call was received and the time of day, which may seem inconsequential until the salesperson has trouble reconnecting with the caller. If that is the case, this might give them a clue as to an acceptable time of day to call. For example, if the incoming call was received at 9:30 p.m., the salesperson might feel justified calling this late, even though normal procedure dictates never calling a client's home after 9 p.m.
- *Mr./Mrs./Ms:* Identifying who makes the call might be an indicator of who is the advocate for the work. There will be times when a caller is unwilling to engage in the conversation initiated by the Prospect Capture Form. In these situations it is appropriate to gather as much information as possible during this initial phone interview and later place a follow-up call with the hopes of speaking to another of the decision makers. During the follow-up call, regardless of whether the phone is answered by the original caller or another of the decision makers, review the questions on the Prospect Capture Form once more. Ideally it is possible to speak to all the decision makers at separate times in an effort to determine who the decision maker is, as well as to identify if the caller really is worthy of the investment of time and energy required for a sales call.

Opening comment:

In order that I might be most accurate in determining how we might best accommodate your needs, could I ask you a few questions?

- *Address:* Including city, state and zip code, and email address is vital for many different purposes ranging from building data bases for future marketing efforts, accurate estimating of job costs as well as to find the project location initially.
- *Phone:* the target is to get home phones, pagers, cell phones, work phones, etc. for each of the decision makers. Phrasing the question as: "Is there a number where we can reach you at work," potentially gets the name of their employer or business which may be useful in establishing common ground.
- *Email address:* no explanation needed—this is vital information today. Perhaps add a comment; "We will never share email addresses or other personal information".
- *Type of work:* "What type of work were you thinking of doing?" By giving a brief description of the type of project desired, the caller may or may not be identified as a good match for the capabilities or the company. By describing their needs in response to this question the caller may give other useful information about need and urgency.
- *How soon to start the work:* "How soon were you thinking of having the work started?" This open-ended question is designed to elicit information about need and urgency.
- *How long owned home:* "How long have you owned your home?" This is an open-ended

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- conversation starter, vital in determining ability to pay. Should the caller indicate that they don't own the home, the evaluation of the lead would change drastically. On the other hand, the caller might indicate that he or she has owned the home for 30 years or more, meaning the caller possibly has a large amount of equity in the property. Prospects who fit this description might have a greater ability to pay, especially if the remodeler has the ability to arrange financing
- *Referred by:* "How did you find our name, Mrs. Buyer?" This open-ended question helps identify trust. Certain types of prospects come with higher levels of trust than others. A repeat customer typically has the highest level of trust when they call. A referral prospect may bring a lower level of trust than a repeat customer but a higher level of trust than a caller who just found your name in the *Yellow Pages*® for example. Also it helps analyze the effort put forth by the caller to find a source to satisfy their needs.
 - *Who besides yourself would be involved in the decision making process?:* "When our representative visits the house, there will be choices about how the project proceeds as far as equipment, design, materials, perhaps colors, and more. These choices often affect the overall price and performance of the project. We find it most advantageous to have all of the decision makers active in the process from the beginning." This is another conversation starter. When the remodeler meets with all the decision makers the entire process of winning the job speeds up. Remember your goal is to get paid as soon as you can.
 - *Interested in finance_____cash_____?:* "Were you thinking of financing the project or paying cash? We do have financing available which would enable you to take advantage of the interest deduction on your taxes." This question helps define the caller's ability to pay. Research indicates that customers spend thirty to forty percent more money when the project is financed. Salespeople know that it is often easier to sell a financed job as the importance of price is diminished when the cost is defined in monthly payments.
 - *Best time for appointment:* "When would be a good time for our representative to schedule a visit to your home?" The response might include: "It would need to be at a time when both myself and my wife were here." This is the response that identifies the decision makers, while at the same time clarifying the question of marital status. If however, this information is not volunteered, the appropriate response could be: "Is there anyone else other than you who will be involved in the decision-making process? We may want to include them in our initial meeting." Remodelers understand that to be most efficient in the use of their time, they need to educate all of the decision makers at one sitting. When this ideal situation is not possible, the remodeler is in effect deputizing the person to whom they present information to transmit the information, feelings, and beliefs to the other party or parties. This process is inefficient. Should the caller indicate that the presentation needs to be made to one, not all, of the decision makers, the remodeler must decide whether that is a wise use of time. *In this case, a statement like the following helps the caller realize that there is a certain responsibility that comes with being the only person involved in your meeting:* "What kind of information will we need to provide to your husband/wife so that he/she can understand any decisions we reach?"
 - *What remodeling done before:* "Have you done any remodeling in the past?" This question gives the contractor the knowledge of whether or not the caller has an idea about the process involved in remodeling. Prospects who are more experienced in the process generally have an easier time making decisions and may show more appreciation for a remodeler who truly operates as a professional.
 - *How long considering this?:* "How long have you been considering this kind of project, Mr. Homeowner?" This information helps determine the need as well as where the caller is in the buying cycle and sheds some light on need and urgency. The caller who just woke up this morning and decided to get some prices on a new kitchen may have a lower sense of urgency than the caller whose dishwasher recently stopped working.
 - *How soon do you want the work completed?:* More information related to need and urgency as well as realistic expectations.
 - *How long do you see yourself living in this house?:* This question is a prompt designed to allow the caller to look down the road, visualizing the home after the desired improvements are completed. Everything that happens to us happens twice, once in our minds and then in reality.

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Getting the customer to imagine the end result of the work at this time helps the conversion from imagination to reality. Because of its open-ended nature, this question is also a good conversation stimulator. A homeowner who intends to live in the home for years to come may be less likely to 'cut corners' on the work.

- *Do you have a specific solution in mind?:* The response to this question gives the caller the opportunity to elaborate on the kind of effort being assigned to the proposed project. The more effort that is spent generally defines a higher level of need. This question also gives the caller the opportunity to volunteer that the project is out for bid, without the remodeler actually asking the question. If the prospect informs the remodeler that he or she has gotten other bids, the remodeler asks: "Were the other bids within the range of your expectations?" Should the caller indicate that he or she is waiting for other bids, the remodeler queries, "How long have you been waiting and when do you expect to hear the results?" The question "How many bids are you getting?" is reasonable to ask at this point. These questions are followed by the question "How do you feel about the remodeler(s) you have talked to thus far?"
- *What research have you done?:* "What research have you done regarding the project, Mr./Mrs. Homeowner?" This question is designed to prompt the homeowner to volunteer information about whether there are other bidders involved without actually asking the question. The goal is to avoid giving the caller the idea that it is normal to get multiple bids, while at the same time finding out if there are other bidders.
- *Are you contemplating other improvements to your home?:* Another question used to stimulate conversation with hopes of recovering useful information.
- *Approximately how old is your home?:* Always useful information, more so in these days of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) rule regarding Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) in homes containing lead paint. A home built before 1978 may be more likely to contain lead paint.
- *"Thank you, we'll be in touch with you (define the time) Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____."*: In closing, the remodeler offers a verbal thank you and includes a promise of action as well as a time frame. The promise of a time frame sets expectations. The ideal result is for the remodeler to exceed those expectations by calling sooner. We could say "within two hours" if it is possible to return the call more quickly than that, for example. When we exceed expectations here we begin to build trust.

The *Prospect Capture Form* was excerpted in part from the book;

If I Sell You I Have a Job,

If I Serve You I Create a Career!

written by Mike Gorman and available at www.techknowledgeonline.net. For more information about its use, email Mike at; mike.gorman.email@gmail.com.