



The Baron
Group, Inc.

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Your Clients don't think about you as much as you think about them

We never like to be the bearer of bad news. But this week's tip will do just that.

Yes, that is the bad news. Your client is thinking about his or her problems, issues, customers, business relationships, goals, objectives, etc. They don't spend a whole lot of time thinking about their suppliers, providers and resources.

So we have to remind them that we are out there in between calls, and we have to bring them up to date when we visit them. It's important to stay in touch. Whether you do it by telephone, in writing or electronically, try to get your name in front of the customer.

A phone call or voice mail that says you were just calling to "check in" or, "learn the status of the project" or, "learn what's new" will never get you in trouble. Since the vast majority of phone calls result in voice mail messages, keep it short and crisp. You can even let them know there is no need to call back if there's nothing new to discuss. You just "want to let you know I was thinking about you."

E-mail messages can do the same thing. Many of our clients today communicate almost entirely by e-mail. We can't urge you strongly enough to check in regularly through email. Again, keep it brief but ask for a response—"I am checking in regarding the status of the initiative. Could you please send a quick response?" is not only appropriate but usually results in a reply.

When you visit the client, assume they haven't been thinking about you as much as you'd like. Too many of us get in uncomfortable situations by approaching meetings with customers with the impression that they remember everything that happened at previous meetings. The reality is that they don't.

So as you position the meeting, take the time to review the previous meeting and what you discussed. This is particularly useful when other people are attending the meeting. By reviewing what happened earlier, you ensure that everyone is on the same page. It's a great way to differentiate yourself, demonstrate your professionalism and in many cases make your primary client look good in front of his or her team.

Everybody wants to reduce the time involved with the sales cycle. Momentum losses make this difficult. Anything you can do to maintain momentum will shorten the sales cycle and result in our closing the deal that much sooner. When that happens, everybody wins.

Next time you see someone you haven't seen for a while, ask a question or two about something you discussed last time you were together. Watch what happens...