



The Baron
Group, Inc.

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Let's not forget about follow-up

Everyone knows the importance of planning, the power of rehearsing and the value of anticipating what will happen on sales calls. These are very important things to do and we are passionate in communicating how critical it is to do them.

But planning is only part of the equation. You can do a great job in planning the meeting. Hopefully, you will even do some rehearsing. You will anticipate what might happen. But let's never forget how important it is to follow-up your sales calls and to fulfill your commitments.

This is never more critical than after the client commits to do business. Once they go from prospect to client, there is a "transfer of power." As a prospect, the client held virtually all the cards. But once they commit to do business with you, they give up some of that power. They are now dependent on you. They need you. They realize that if you don't deliver, they will pay a price. The equation becomes a bit different.

So now you have to be more visible than before. You have to assure them they made a good decision. You have to do what you can to make them comfortable. If we can paraphrase Ted Levitt, the marketing guru from Harvard, "the real selling starts after you get the business."

You have heard the different terms and examples for this. Whether you call it "buyer's remorse" or "cognitive dissonance" or simply "major league second hand guessing," there is often discomfort after one makes a major commitment—especially a financial commitment. That's why research shows that people will read the advertisement the day *after* buying the car more often than the day *before* buying it. We all need that reinforcement.

So be visible after the sale is done or the commitment is made. The phone call, e-mail, handwritten note or letter is very important. Check in often once the process begins. Let them know how things are progressing. Give them status reports. Establish milestones and communicate how you are doing.

Tom Peters, the service champion we have all learned from, talks about "wowing and delighting the customer." Surprises are wonderful. When a client gets something from you they didn't expect, it can blow them away. Whether it's an article, a white paper, a blurb from the internet or just a friendly note, this is the stuff upon which relationships are built.

So follow up. Follow through. Be different. Be better. We don't buy into the old cliché: "Under promise and over deliver." We think that is nonsense. Just promise and deliver. Do it well and you will see results.