

Qualifying

Coaching Questions

“How much time do unqualified customers take?”

Topic Introduction

If 50% of your lead list is unqualified, how much of your time would this waste? Let's say that each new client takes you 10 minutes to find their information, research more about them, and contact them by phone. If you have 100 customers to reach out to, 50 of them are not qualified.

50% unqualified customers x 10 minutes each x 100 contacts on the list = 500 minutes (8.3

- What percentage of your list is expected to be unqualified?
- How long does each meeting or interaction take you?
- How many prospects do you have on your list to contact?
- What's the total number that you get when you multiple these together?

Key Learning

Whatever percentage of unqualified customers is on your list is the percentage of time that you will be wasting.

“What are your qualifiers?”

Topic Introduction

There are certain base requirements that a prospect needs to have in order to ever consider buying from you. If a prospect doesn't meet these base qualifiers, you are wasting your time with them.

Discussion Questions

- Can the prospect afford it? Do they have the budget?
- Is their strategy aligned making them willing to pay for your product or service?
- Do they have the correct IT requirements? Or other infrastructure that is required?
- Are they easy to work with? Do you have to convert to their processes or is there flexibility with any integration?
- Will they love it? Will you retain them as customers or will this be simply a single transaction?

Key Learning

Your qualifiers can be basic or more advanced. The more advanced the qualifiers, the harder to find this information without contacting the prospects and asking them.

“How can you do this qualification upfront?”

Topic Introduction

If someone isn't qualified, they won't buy from you. Figuring this out early will save you a ton of time and money.

Discussion Questions

- Are there customer lists with this information? Even if it costs money, it might be worth it.
- Are there upfront questions you can ask quickly to qualify customers?

Key Learning

If you can get a better list, this gives you more time to go after qualified customers (and increase your sales).

Examples

Real Life Example: How much time do unqualified customers take?

An IT services company was going after micro businesses within 100 miles of their office location. It was easy to figure out if the businesses had less than 20 employees and if they were within 100 miles of the office location.

A list of 500 potential customers was identified.

A few phone calls were made, and it became clear quickly that an additional qualifier was that the company looked at IT strategically. Only 40% of the prospects that were called showed this to be the case.

Unfortunately, this was a near impossible qualifier to find in a list. Additional research had to be done on each prospect or each prospect had to be contacted. Due to the qualifiers and the list, this became more costly than a typical sales campaign with fewer results.

The only way to overcome this was to research IT associations in the area or the top ranked employers in the area. This would create a better prequalified list.

Real Life Example: What are your qualifiers?

A business created an app that helped to integrate Salesforce.com with Google Apps. The cost of the app was low, but the cost of having Salesforce.com was a barrier for the business to get into many companies.

It became quickly obvious that a business that currently leveraged Salesforce.com technology and was already paying the user fees for this service was more qualified than a prospect that would have a higher start up cost.

Instead of using typical lead lists that were available, they researched companies that were known to already have Salesforce.com through forums, press releases, and any other information that they could find. If the information could not be found, this was an initial question that all sales people were trained to ask, helping to identify qualified customers quickly.

Real Life Example: How can you do this qualification upfront do this?

I had just moved into a new apartment and had decided not to get a television. I was starting up a business and didn't feel as though I'd have time for it. One evening a cable company called me in the hopes of getting me to move my cable or get an upgrade in service.

The first thing I said to them was, "I don't have a TV." The sales person continued to persist that their cable service was better, that I would save a lot of money, and that I would have many more channels.

I responded, "I don't have a TV." The sales person tried to convince me for another 5 minutes that I was making a mistake. This was a huge mistake as I was simply not qualified.

Mini Case Study

Joanne was starting up a personal assistant business and wanted a good list to save her time.

COACH: "What would be the upfront qualifiers of your ideal customer?"

JOANNE: "I guess I'm looking for the busy executive or entrepreneur. Is there a list for that?"

COACH: "Let's see if we can figure one out. Starting with the entrepreneur, as it is easier. How big of a business would they be in? And what would be their role in the business?"

JOANNE: "Is this a trick question? They'd be the owner, president or CEO. I guess I want someone who is established and prepared to outsource, but not too big that they have someone in-house doing this work for them already. Probably they'd be 2 to 5 employees?"

COACH: "Good. Now the tough one. How do you think that you could reach the busy executive? Where is that list?"

JOANNE: "I could look up large companies and reach out to their VPs?"

COACH: "You could. But not all VPs are paid equally. Many on that list would be unqualified. Not to mention that they probably wouldn't want to be contacted at the office for something more personal like this. What you want is a niche market of wealthy executives. Where do they live?"

JOANNE: "I get it! Everyone in those neighbourhoods fits the affluent person I'm looking for. Everyone is qualified!"