

LESSON SIXTEEN

In this video I want to show what the best way to ask for testimonials is. People need to receive testimonials and what I mean by that is that as new clients are coming to you, they are gathering information about yourself. Before they engage with you to do business, they need social proof. They need to know what you have done for other clients. How you work and what has the relationship been like. That is why people need testimonials, however what most service professionals do is they go along to their current or past clients and ask the client if there is any chance of them writing a testimonial for us?

Two things happen. One is you go back to your own office as a service professional and say oh gosh, what is he going to say about me? Second of all, you ask yourself when am I going to receive the testimonial itself. If you do not receive the testimonial in a say, a week or two weeks, do you then chase that client and say, you know you promised to write me a testimonial, I haven't received it yet. What can you do for me? Now you are in a chasing mode. Your client on the other hand, they have gone back to their office having agreed to write a testimonial are now saying okay, what am I going to write.

Now you are now left with a dilemma on both sides. Most clients will absolutely agree to write that testimonial, but they just do not know what to write. It is not a common function for them within their business to actually write a testimonial, they do not write them often. However, you as a service professional, absolutely need testimonials as social proof for future clients.

I am going to now bring you through a series of questions of how and what is the best way to ask for testimonials. As I have said in previous videos, your brain works like a Google engine, the reason why you need to bring them through a series of questions is to get the answers to those questions rather than them left with a situation whereby, they have to write a testimonial but now I have no idea what I am going to write.

Here is the sequence of questions that I am going to give you for asking for testimonials. In one of the earlier videos, I went through the value of conversation. The more familiar you are with the value of conversation, then the easier it is going to be for you to ask for a testimonial. All we are going to be doing is adjusting that particular value of conversation. The first question I want to ask when I am talking to a client is I that I want to get them to remember what I have done with them over the past say, three months or six months, or whatever period of time that I have worked with that client on. Let's assume I have been a consultant, and I have been helping them to implement an accounting piece of software, or a system or a process within their business to manage their cash flow, to manage their debtors

and to get paid quicker and to cover all that area. What I am going to do is remind them of what I have done with them in the past. The reason being is that if you have worked with a client over a longer period, say over three months or six months, then people forget very, very quickly. So you have got to remind them of what it was like at the very, very start and what you have brought them through over the period of months.

So, I might say “Hello, Mr. Client.” (Not saying hello, but you'll get the idea). “At the beginning when we got engaged and started working with yourself you had a situation whereby you were due a lot of money from your debtors and you found it difficult to actually get the money collected and you did not really know where you were and how much money you were owed and how old the debtors were etc. So, over the last months, we have implemented a system whereby you are managing your cash flow, we know exactly where your debtors are and how much that they owe us and how old the actual debt itself is. We have now got a system whereby your staff are managing that system and process for the past number of months. Tell me out of everything we have done so far, what is the one thing that stands out for you”? That is my first question.

To recap, I have explained what the current situation was. I have reminded them of what the situation was at the very beginning. I have brought them through a sequence of events of when I have worked with them over the past couple of months and what they are now currently doing. Out of all of that, what I am asking them to do is just pick one thing. What is the one thing that stands out for you in working throughout that particular process? They are going to come out with something. They might say, well now we know exactly how much money I am due. Let's say they come out with that particular answer, the next question I am now going to ask them is so, what difference has it made for you or your business in knowing that information? Now, what I am doing with that particular question is I am drilling down into the value. I want to listen to, in particular, the words that they say as they are explaining the difference it has made for them.

Once they have answered that particular question, I may go back and say what else has made a difference for you and your business and what difference has that made? So, you can then see the correlation between the value of conversation of what I have covered in previous videos but you will see them being adapted to ask the client what is it that really stands out having worked with them over a period of months? What you are saying is once you have got that information from your client, you are now going to ask them is it okay to use that information in your marketing materials.

Therefore my question might go along the lines of, “I really appreciate what you said and would it be okay if I summarised what you said and be able to use it in my

marketing materials and I will send you a draft of the summary? Just make sure you are happy with it and do I have your permission to use it in our marketing materials?" Then I can give it to future clients so that they understand what kind of working relationship I typically have with my clients. Inevitably, your client is going to say yes, however they may just say they prefer if you did not use their name or I prefer if you did not use the company name and that is okay because now what you can do is you can just use their initial or you can select the title of the industry that they are in. If they are in manufacturing or wholesale, or whatever it might be and so on. You are saying the industry that they are in but ultimately what you have done is you have take control of the actual conversation. You have taken control of what is now going to be said or included in the actual testimonial itself.

When you go back to your office, you can now summarise what your client has said by what has stood out for them in working with you. Then your clients, your potential clients and your future clients, will be interested in the results when they see the difference that you have made with past clients now they are going to read it. It is going to be aligned, and they will know that it is from a real client and not just from a made up testimonial. They are also going to see the difference that it made for them or their business. Therefore they will be able to connect very quickly that is what they are looking to achieve from their own business. Therefore now, they are more inclined to work with you and engage your serves as a professional services provider. That is the sequence of questions that you have got to bring your client through in order to ask for a testimonial. Once you have gone back to your office and you have summarised it and sent it back to your client and asked them if they are okay with it. Now you can include it in your marketing materials.

Now you have taken control of it and you have a time frame as to when the testimonial will be done because of just how quickly you can actually summarise the information and get it signed off by your client itself. That is the best way to ask for a testimonial.

I will leave you with that for now. Pick few individuals of who you could have that kind of conversation with to ask for a testimonial and then go out there and ask them for testimonials in that particular format. Start putting them together for your material and I will see you in the next video.

Exercise 24

Testimonials...

Over the past few months we have been working on...

Out of everything that we have done so far, what is the one thing that stands out?

What difference has it made for you / your business?

What else stands out?

I really appreciate what you said. Would it be ok if I were to summarise what you just said and used it in our marketing materials?

Notes
