

Phonostatic: The Art of Turning Enquiries Into Sales

You've run a newspaper ad, handed out flyers, done letterbox drops and placed your yellow pages ad! Now the phone is going to ring off the hook, right? Well, maybe....and if it does, ask yourself if you are ready to turn the enquiry into a 'sale'.

You know the calls, the ones asking how much you charge, or what type of massage you do. You give them an answer expecting them to say "great, I'll book in now", but somehow this doesn't happen. As one therapist put it recently "it doesn't matter what answer I give it's always the wrong answer!"

So how do you get around this dilemma. How can you increase the chance of turning every enquiry you receive into an appointment? The answer is to remember the station everyone is listening to – WII-FM (that's What's In It For Me)!

Now humour me for a minute. The latest big business approach (e.g. Telstra), is to use an automated system to identify the caller, why they are calling and direct them to the right place to service their enquiry – all done electronically. By carefully asking specific questions, the robotic voice can direct the caller through a channel which ultimately leads them to the outcome they called for. As a massage therapist, imagine the power of doing this but with a real person, talking to a potential new client who called you for a specific reason. They have a 'problem', it is up to you to uncover it and offer the solution they want. Now don't worry, this is not as tricky as it sounds. As in our automated example, all you have to do is ask questions.

You want to find out:

- The name of your caller.
- Why they are ringing.
- When they can come for a visit.

It is perfectly appropriate to assume that they want to come. You are a massage therapist and they have rung you for a reason. So expect an appointment!

Let's look at two scenarios, the first is a call going nowhere, the second is a call that uses WII-FM elements.

Therapist: Good morning Mazing Massage, Helen Speaking

Caller: Hi, I saw your ad in the yellow pages and just wondered how much a massage costs

Therapist: \$70 for a full body massage

Caller: How long is that for

Therapist: 1 hour

Caller: Okay thanks I'll give you a call back.

Done, finitio. Your expensive yellow pages ad got an enquiry, but didn't turn into an appointment, now what? Let's look at the same call again.

Therapist: Good morning Mazing Massage, Helen Speaking

Caller: Hi, I saw your ad in the yellow pages and just wondered how much a massage costs

Therapist: Sure, can I ask your name?

Caller: It's Sally, I was just wondering how much for a massage.

Therapist: Hi Sally, our rates vary a little depending on treatment and duration. What seems to be problem?

Caller: I injured my shoulder playing tennis yesterday, I can barely lift anything today.

Therapist: It sounds like you really need to get that seen to. I've had a cancellation this morning at 11, 1 hour for \$70, we can get some mobility happening and relieve some of your pain today. Does that suit you?

Caller: Thankyou so much, that sounds perfect.

Asking for your callers name instantly allows you to personalise the call, followed by a question regarding what is their reason for calling. Questions beginning with the words what, when, where, who, and how are best for obtaining information. These questions are referred to as 'open-ended' questions. Some examples include:

- What have you been doing that could be causing that pain?
- When did you first notice the pain?
- Where are you feeling the pain the most?
- Who have you seen in the past to relieve your injury?
- How are you currently managing your pain?

Each of these will encourage a conversation which will allow you to build rapport with your prospect. This builds trust which is crucial to the overall process.

Vitality Option: Spend 5 minutes writing yourself a simple script that you can use next time someone calls. Your script should find out: The name of your caller, their complaint, whether they live locally and how they found out about you. As you develop your conversation skills you will find your enquiry conversion rate steadily increases. Let me know how you go!

About the Author

Krishna has a 20 year background in advertising and health marketing, currently operates Vitality Options Massage with her husband Deane and is the mother of 2 young children. Krishna is passionate about empowering other health practitioners to effectively promote themselves and challenge some commonly held beliefs that can hold them back from being all that they can be without compromising their values.

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