



## Direct Sales Representative (DSR) Resource Guide

# 2013

All Florida Paper developed this resource guide for the direct sales representative (DSR) to familiarize themselves with the position, responsibilities of a DSR, coworkers, work environment, and company. This guide is a valuable resource that a DSR can use to become more effective in the overall sales process. In concluding, everything in this resource guide is confidential and proprietary information that will not be shared with any persons or organizations outside of All Florida Paper, Inc. not approved by Management.

**It's all about you™**

# Our Corporate Office



<b>Section I</b>	<b>Introduction to All Florida Paper, Inc.</b>	
	Company Overview	p. 5
	Organizational Chart	p. 9
	Sales History and Projections	p. 10
	Benefit Platform	p. 11
	Our People Set the Standard	p. 12
	Guiding Principles	p. 13
<b>Section II</b>	<b>Market Segments &amp; Product Knowledge</b>	
	Market Segments	p. 15
	Our Customers	p. 17
	Products and Suppliers	p. 18
	Membership and Affiliations	p. 24
<b>Section III</b>	<b>Introduction to the Private Label</b>	
	Overview of the Private Label	p. 27
	Product Categories	p. 28
<b>Section IV</b>	<b>Principles of Selling and Presenting</b>	
	Mission of the Sales Representative	p. 30
	Planning for Success	p. 31
	Forms and Form Requirements	p. 32
	Consultative Selling Skills	p. 33
	Core Competencies of Great Companies	p. 34
	Presentation Lessons from Steve Jobs	p. 35
	Nine Ways to Calm Presentation Nerves	p. 39
	Evolutions of the Sales Representative	p. 42
	Goals of Consultative Selling	p. 43
	Sales Knowledge & Preparation	p. 44
	Thirty Second Sales Pitch	p. 45
	Best Practices & Training	p. 47
	Pre-Call Planning	p. 48
	Meeting Guide & Plan	p. 49
	Six Ways to Ace a First Impression	p. 51
	Ten Worst Body Language Mistakes	p. 53
<b>Section V</b>	<b>Procedures for Assessing a Facility</b>	
	Site Needs Analysis	p. 56
<b>Section VI</b>	<b>Mastering Customer Growth &amp; Retention</b>	
	Customer Retention Strategies	p. 66
	The Art of Customer Segmentation	p. 72
	Principles of Quality Customer Service	p. 74



# Section I

---

## Introduction to All Florida Paper, Inc.

In this section, you will be introduced to All Florida Paper, Inc., including our history. You will be acquainted with our short and long-term goals, and projections for the future. Above all else, you will learn the core beliefs and principles of All Florida Paper, Inc.

---

# Company Overview

All Florida Paper (AFP) was founded in 1993 by Armando Caceres, and is now one of the leading privately held distributors in the United States.

AFP supplies over 6,000 products in eight key market sectors to businesses in more than 35 industries in 25 countries. Our market sectors include: education, healthcare, foodservice, lodging, supermarkets, janitorial/sanitation, exporting, and redistribution.

Our state-of-the-art, 108,000 square foot distribution center feature the latest inventory tracking, storage, and logistical monitoring technologies along with a fleet diverse enough to accommodate even the most demanding delivery requirements.

With extensive ground transport and exporting resources, our logistics strategies are unmatched as we guarantee the most reliable service throughout the America's and the Caribbean.

Aside from cost-efficient pricing, our customers expect and demand knowledge, as well as courteous and proactive customer service, which is why when you do business with All Florida Paper,

**It's all about you**™

# Who is All Florida Paper?

- All Florida Paper (AFP) is a privately held company established in 1993 that has become one of the largest full line paper distributors in the Southeastern United States.
- Original efforts were concentrated in the grocery sector, expanding over time in the janitorial, sanitation, foodservice and hospitality segments.
- AFP is currently focused on becoming a major provider to the healthcare industry.
- A clear understanding of the needs of our customers and a strong consultative sales program has enabled us to add value to all our customers.
- Decisive leadership, clean vision for the future and exceptional people, makes us a dynamic and vibrant organization second to none.

# The AFP Business Process

- **YOU** will work with one of our Direct Sales Representatives (DSR), who will meet with your business, and learn about its needs, in order to provide solutions that improve your bottom line.
- **You** will be asked about your goals and objectives, and the vision for your company by a DSR, allowing us to provide solutions, processes and products that will enhance your business.
- **YOU** will receive the most cost effective pricing while maintaining the best value for all your products by allowing a DSR to conduct a site survey in order to assess the products and processes that your business is currently using. The DSR will then be able to offer you the best comprehensive program.
- **YOU** will be requested to provide a budget, which our DSR will use to build an incredible cost savings programs which will also improve your profitability.
- **YOU** will become part of the All Florida Paper team, who will be working endlessly on ways to improve your bottom line.
- **YOU** are promised from the first day you meet a DSR, that when working with All Florida Paper,

**It's all about you**™

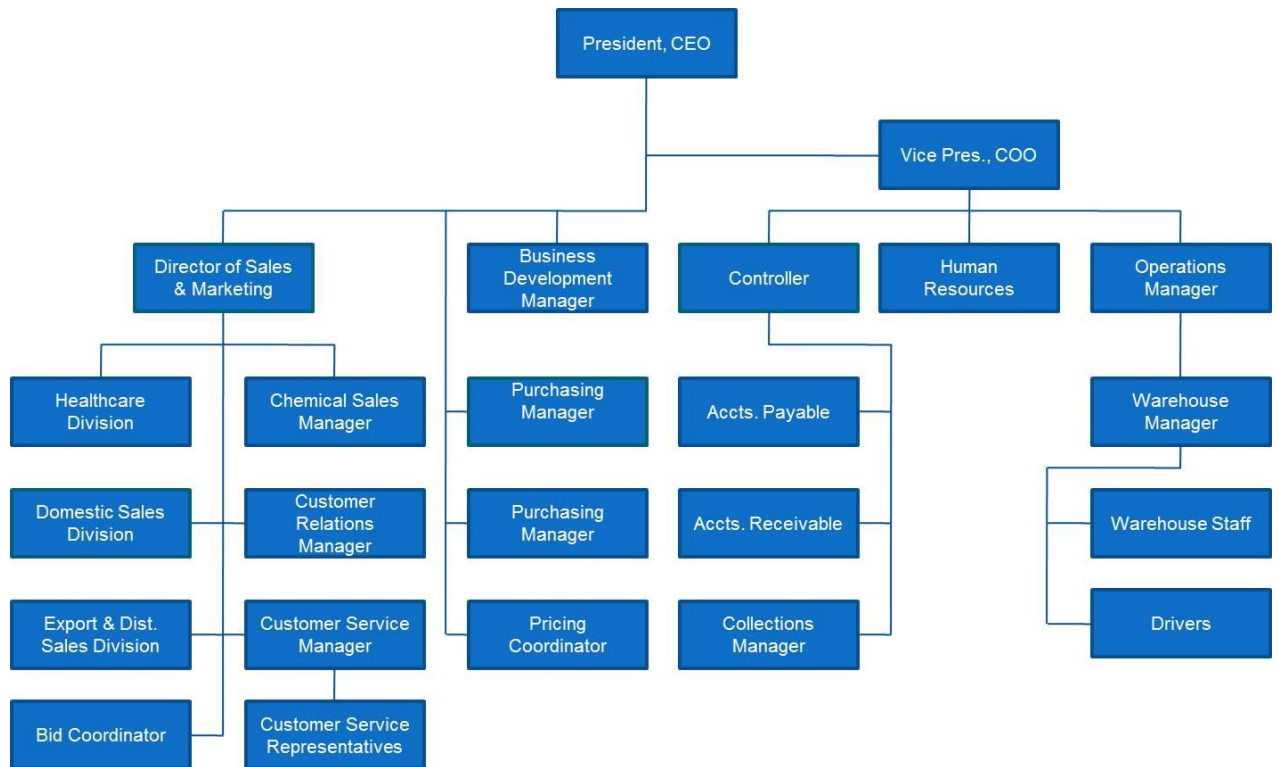
# Our Supply Chain Efficiency

- All Florida Paper has been a leader in supply chain management for nearly 20 years, and when you boil it down, we do one thing better than anyone in our industry, and that is providing the most latest innovative processes and procurement solutions that drive efficiencies in today's leading businesses.
- Pressed for time and stressed for resources, we understand that what you do isn't easy, and you deserve more.
- Representing over 150 of our industry's leading suppliers and stocking over 6,000 products, All Florida Paper will ensure that your business is never out of crucial items, while keeping only minimal amounts of inventory on premise.
- With 16 trucks on the road every day equipped with Roadnet Technology, your deliveries will always arrive when you need them with a 99% fill rate.
- Let us manage your inventory and warehousing needs, so you can focus on your daily operations, which is why at All Florida Paper,

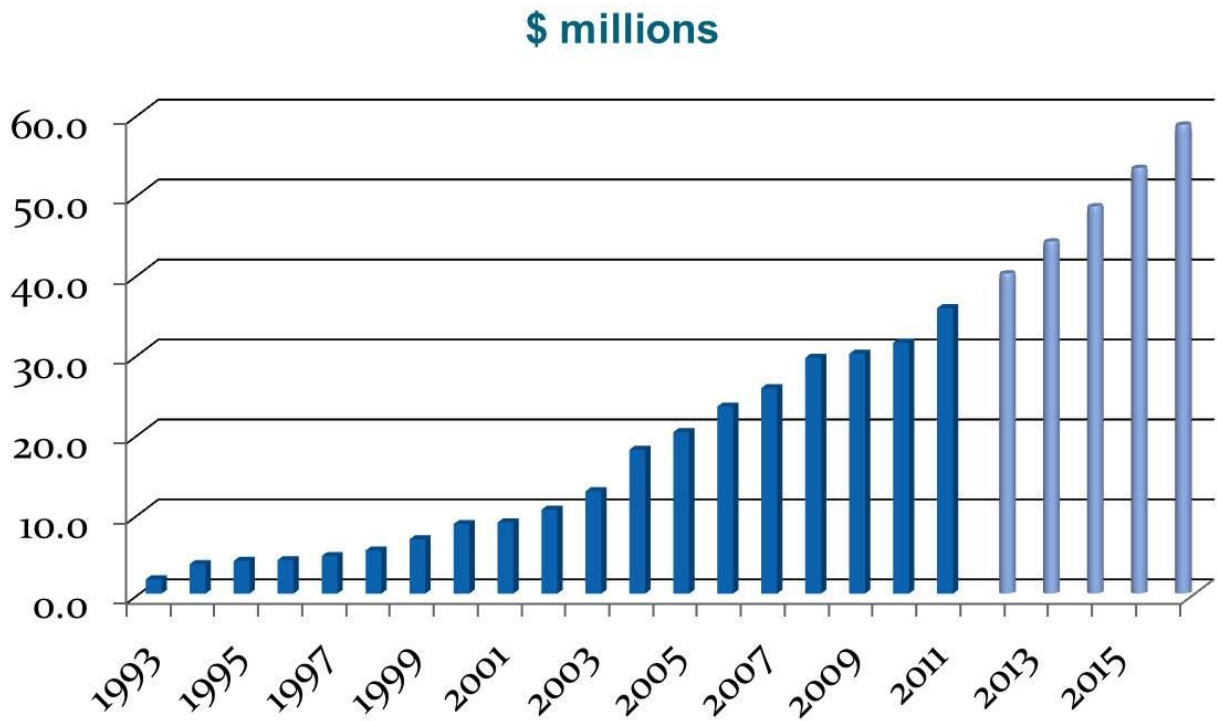
**It's all about you**™



# Organizational Chart



# Sales History and Projections





# Benefit Platform

1. Above industry standard fill rate of 99.2% that assures products on an “as needed basis.”
2. On time deliveries that meet our customers warehousing timetables with the product ready to sell.
3. Entrepreneurial spirited DSR’s with extensive market savvy, solutions, and products designed to meet the desired needs of our customers, and their industries.
4. Private Brand AFP products with expected quality and pricing to add market share and business with confidence in performance.
5. “Green Certified” products at a competitive price and fit for sustainable programs requiring environmentally safe usage.



# Our People Set the Standard

1. Currently utilize Direct Sales Representatives (DSR) to market our products and develop solutions through CSS (Consultative Selling Skills) to meet our customer's needs.
2. Experienced, entrepreneurial management teams, with more than 100 years of foodservice and janitorial experience to guide our District Sales Representatives, and create the synergy and dynamics required for continued and future growth.
3. Customer Service team that is accessible and knowledgeable to support our DSR's and customers.
4. Operations staff that manage our warehousing, logistical, and pricing with our customer's needs in mind.
5. Decision makers and specialists available with solutions to answer all of our customer's issues and/or concerns.

**“TEAMWORK”**



# Guiding Principles

1. Integrity
2. Customer Relations
3. Humility
4. Respect
5. Knowledge
6. Value
7. Environmental Respect
8. Change
9. Principled Entrepreneurship
10. Fulfillment

**PASSION EQUALS.... “SUCCESS”**



# Section II

---

## Market Segments and Product Knowledge

In this section, you will be introduced to our market segments, our commitment to those segments; as well those customers conduct business with. You will learn about our product assortment, as well as the suppliers we partner with.

---

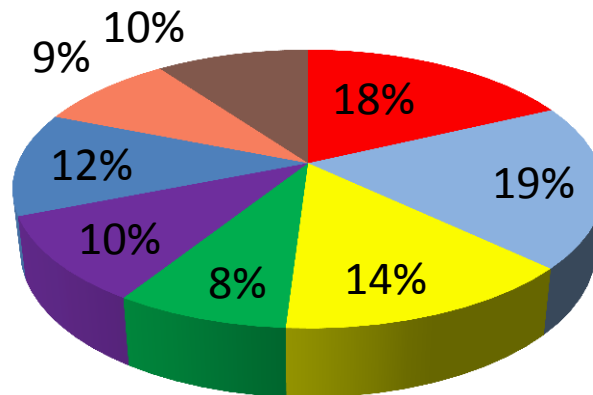


# Market Segments

- Supermarkets & Grocery
- Lodging / Hotel Industry
- Cruise Industry
- Foodservice / Restaurants
- Healthcare Facilities
- Processing & Manufacturing
- Janitorial – Chemical, Warewash, Laundry
- Office Buildings / Maintenance
- State / County / City Bids
- International / Export Distributors

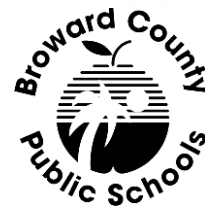
# Breakdown of Segments

- Food Service Disp.
- Redistribution
- Janitorial/Sanitation
- Bldg. Maint Contractors
- Supermarkets
- Export
- Hospitality
- Healthcare





# Some of Our Customers



DadeSchools.net  
Giving our students the world



# Product Categories

- Stainless Steel Sponges
- Scouring
- Grill Screens & Hand Blocks
- Floor Pads & Steel Wool Pads
- Stripping Floor Machine
- Burnishing Floor Machine
- Wet / Dry Vacuum
- Canister Vacuum
- Pink Lotion Hand Soap
- Produce Rudder Bands
- Celery Rubber Bands
- Roaster Tops & Bottoms
- Rib Tops & Bottoms
- Microwave Hotdog Containers
- Black Plastic Bowls
- Microwave Hinged Lid Containers
- Food Service Film
- Matting, Front of the House
- Matting, Back of the House
- Custom Designed Mats
- Special Logo Mats
- Screw on Lids
- Plastic Bottles & Jugs
- Green Certified Towels
- Green Certified Tissues
- Foil Bags
- Deli Bags
- Pan Liners
- Foiled Sandwich Bags
- Waxed Bags
- Deli Paper
- Freezer Paper
- Toilet & Towel Dispensers
- Toilet Tissue
- Paper Hand Towels
- Center Pull Towels
- Hand Soap & Dispensers
- Paper Twist Ties
- Produce Film
- PVC Cutter Box Film
- Miller Film
- Meat Film
- Supreme Meat Film
- Misc. Film Products
- Coffee Filters
- Floor Machine Pad Drivers
- Brushes for Floor Machines
- Dust Mops, Frames & Handles
- Scrub Brushes
- Wet Mop Handles
- Mops & Brooms
- Buckets & Wringers
- Bleach
- All Purpose Cleaner
- Sanitizers
- Wipes
- Disinfectant Cleaner
- Steam / Dry Irons
- CRYOVAC Meat Trays
- DRI-LOC Soaker Pads
- Assorted Foil Products
- Bar Stripper 5'
- Catering Trays
- Cutlery
- Display Pie Pans High
- Display Pie Pans Low
- Dome Lids
- Seeshell Clear With Lid
- Showcake Pans High
- Showcake Pans Shallow Clear
- Wrapped & Unwrapped Straws
- Venetian Cups & Lids
- Heavy Duty Clear Cutlery
- Foam Hinged Containers
- Black Foam Hinged Containers
- Foam Platters
- Food Service PVC Film
- Foam School Trays

- Foam Cups & Lids
- Foam Squat Containers & Lids
- Foam Bowls & Plates
- SOUFFLE Cups-Clear & Black
- CLEARPAC Containers & Lids
- Translucent Cups & Lids
- STAYLOCK Container Clear w/Lid
- Foam Plates & Platters
- Hinged Lid Foam Containers
- Laminated Platters, Plates, and Bowls – WHT, HNY & BLK
- Foam Soaps & Dispensers
- Antibacterial Soaps
- Sanitizer with & without Alcohol
- Hotel / Motel Guest Room Products Non-Branded
- Brown & White Paper Bags
- Wax Bags
- Bags with Handle
- Hinged Lid Container
- Meat Trays
- Foam Dinnerware
- Poly Bags & Ice Bucket Bags
- Vacuum Pak Bags
- Re-closable Bags
- Servicing Ware
- Food Service Bags
- Laundry Bags
- Food Labels
- Color Cocktail & Dinner Napkins
- Special Print Napkins
- High & Low Density Can Liners
- Poly Bags & Bun Rack Covers
- Ice Bucket Bags
- Microwave Containers & Lids
- White Plastic Plate, CLR Dome/ Lid
- Towels and Tissue
- Napkins
- Dispensers
- Wipers
- Bulk Soap
- Dispenser Soaps
- PURELL Soaps-Pump Bottles
- Dispensers
- Steak Paper
- Butcher Paper Rolls
- Newsprint Rolls
- Aluminum Cater Tray & Domes
- Aluminum Pie Plates & Pans
- Aluminum Steam Table Pans & Covers – ¼” ½” & Full Size
- Foil Pop-Up Sheets
- Aluminum Foil Rolls
- Misc. Foil Products & Lids
- Bake Pan Liners
- QUILLON Bakery Tissue Sheets
- Eco Pan Liners
- Inter-Folded Poly Sheets
- Sanitary Napkin Bags
- Plastic Waste Receptacles
- Toilet Seat Covers
- First Aid Kit
- Non-Para Screen w/4 oz. Block
- Urinal Block-Para 4 Oz. oz. Cherry
- Non-Para Toilet Rim Cage
- Hospital Bedside Bag
- Corrugated Patty Boxes
- Toilet Bowl Deodorants
- Urinal Deodorant Screens and Mats
- Toilet Bowl Caddies & Mops
- Spray Bottles & Triggers
- Drum Pumps 5-55 Gallon
- Pumps for 1 Gallon Jug
- Clear Hinged Lid Loaf Container
- Clear Hinged Lid Cinnamon Bun
- Square Tubs
- Round Tubs
- Re-Bag Green Nonwoven PP Bag
- Hot Paper Cups w/Lids
- Cold Paper Cups w/Lids
- Paper Hot Containers w/Lids
- Barn Boxes
- Plastic Soap Dispensers
- Plastic M/C Towel Dispensers
- Plastic Toilet Seat Dispenser
- Center Pull Dispensers

- Mop Buckets / Side Press Wringer
- Electric Hand Dryers
- Cone Cup Holder
- 7" Fold Napkin Dispenser
- Hair Net Cover
- Over Sea Caps
- Chef Hats
- Doilies
- Gold Lace Doilies
- Baking Cups
- Loaf Liners
- Glass Cap Cover
- Cocktail Napkins-Color
- Linen-Like Napkins Flat Pak
- Gold Cake Circle
- Gold Pad Half & Full
- Produce Bags
- Guest Checks
- Machine Paper Rolls
- PM-68 DIGI Meat Film
- TICKETMATIC Rolls & Dispensers
- Cater Trays w/Lid
- Molded Fiber Trays
- Showcase Deli Containers w/Lid
- Microwave Deli Containers
- Foam Bowls & Plates
- Deli Clear Containers
- Hinged Lid Clear Containers
- Clear Deli Containers
- White Deli Containers
- 3/4 oz. SOUFFLE-Cuban Coffee
- Hinged Take-Out Containers
- Foam Dinnerware
- All Purpose Cleaners
- Laundry Detergent
- Degreasers
- Orange Cleaners
- Bowl Cleaners
- Hand Soaps
- Napkins
- Napkins (All Sizes)
- Facial Tissue
- Toilet Tissue
- C-Fold Towels
- Multifold Towels
- Single Fold Towels
- Center Pull Towels
- Polypropylene Cutlery
- Polystyrene Cutlery
- Wrapped Cutlery Kits
- Comet, SPIC & Span
- Single Pack Products
- Duracell Batteries
- GILLETTE & AWAYS
- VICKS Products
- Baking Cups
- Back Pack Vacuums
- Bakery Boxes
- Specially Clay Coated Boxes
- Corrugated Cake Circles
- Half & Full Sheets
- Steak Markers
- Wood Skewers
- Bibs & Lobster Bibs
- Napkin Bands-All Colors
- Bamboo Skewers & Frill Picks
- Brute Container Lids & Brute Trash Containers
- Covers Waste Baskets
- Micro Fiber Cloths
- Mops-Regular & Finish
- Baby Changing Table
- Floor Signs
- Soap Refills & Dispensers
- Poly Headed Bags
- Lemon Scented Wet Naps
- Paper Place Mats
- Clean Guard Aprons
- WAREWASHING (Dish Machine)
- Laundry Products
- Floor Strippers & Waxes
- Clean on the Go
- Carpet Care
- Disinfectant
- Hand Soaps
- Bowl Cleaners

- 
- Food Service Cleaning Products
  - Smoke & Odor Eliminator
  - Disinfecting / Sanitizing Wipes
  - Food Service Specialty Labels
  - Special Print Pizza Boxes
  - Stock Pizza Boxes
  - USDA Approved Chemical Products
  - Spectrum Brand Chemical Products
  - Latex Gloves
  - Vinyl Gloves
  - Synthetic Vinyl Gloves
  - Nitrile Gloves
  - Bouffant Caps
  - Butcher Gloves
  - Beard Cover
  - Face Respirator Mask
  - Plastic Apron
  - Black Hair Nets
  - STERNO Gel 4 Minutes, 2 Hours
  - STERNO Butane Cartridge 8 oz.
  - TEALIGHTS
  - STERNO with Wick
  - Custom Printed T-Saks
  - T-Saks-Thank You Bag
  - T-Saks Racks
  - Fly Bait
  - Floor Cleaning Equipment
  - Bleach
  - Degreaser
  - Dishwashing Liquid
  - Lavender Cleaner
  - Floral Cleaner
  - Paper Plates 6" & 9"
  - Premium Disposable Serving Ware

# Primary Suppliers

- ACS Industries
- AFFLINK
- Anchor Packaging
- All American Container
- Bagcraft Papercon
- Bedford Industries
- Bunn-O-Matic
- The Clorox Company
- Cryovac / Sealed Air Corporation
- Darnel Incorporated
- DEB SBS, Inc.
- DURO Bag
- Elkay Plastics
- Flamingo Products of South Florida
- GENPAK
- GOJO Industries
- Handi-Foil of America
- Hospital Specialty Company
- Impact Products
- INNO-PAK
- JANICO Products
- LAPACO Paper Products
- Menasha Packaging
- National Checking
- On Queue, LLC. (DD & K)
- PLACON Corporation
- Proctor & Gamble
- Proteam Vacuum Company
- Riverside Paper Company
- Rubbermaid Product
- TC Products
- SANFAC Virginia, Inc.
- Spartan Chemicals
- Stronghaven Container
- Safety Zone
- UNISTAR
- Viper Machine Company
- Winterfield
- ADVANCE
- Alliance Rubber Company
- Anderson Company
- Atlas Papercon
- Baywest Paper / Wausau Paper
- Barry Plastics / Flimco
- Carlisle Foodservice Products
- Conair Corporation
- D&W Fine Pack
- Dart Corporation
- Diversified Hospitality
- EC Pack
- EPSEN Hillmer Graphics, Inc.
- Fortune Plastics
- Georgia Pacific
- Gordon Paper Company
- Handy Wacks Corporation
- IC Industries, Inc.
- Inter Line Plastics
- International Paper
- Keystone Adjustable Cap
- Massey's Productions
- Mercury Plastics
- New Brunswick International
- PACTIV Corporation
- PLASTIFAR, S.A.
- Reynolds Food Packaging
- Rock Ten Company
- Royal Paper Products
- SANECK International
- Sommers, Inc.
- Specialty Printing
- STARCO Label Products
- STERNO Group
- UNIVAR
- White Rabbit (Pallet Load Only)
- YOSHI

# Some of Our Vendors



Georgia-Pacific



# Memberships and Affiliations



## M/WBE Certified





# The AFFLINK Connection

- Who is AFFLINK?
  - AFFLINK is a preeminent provider of business solutions, delivering quantifiable results, so that connectivity with AFFLINK distributors can deliver essential long-term solutions for success.
  - AFFLINK Values:
    - Innovation, Accountability, Sincerity, Commitment and Fun
  - AFFLINK
    - A member distributor driven sales and marketing organization in janitorial, packaging, food service, safety, MRO, and office supplies together with world-class distributors to deliver integrated supply solutions to thousands of customers throughout North America.





# Section III

---

## Introduction to the Private Label

In this section, you will be introduced to the Pro-Brands label, the private label of All Florida Paper, Inc. you will be familiarized with the product categories the private label encompasses, and the sales strategies which are in place to sell the Pro-Brands label.

---

# Overview of the Private Label

Quality Products at Very Affordable Prices



## Private Label = Higher Margins

### About Pro-Brands ®

In today's dynamic and ever-changing marketplace, value is probably one of the most important drivers in our market.

With our own brand (Pro-Brands), we offer good products that are effective to most of our customers' needs at very competitive prices.

# Product Categories

- Chemicals
- Pan Liners
- Facial Tissue
- Floor Pads
- Butcher Paper Roll Pack – Pink
- Can Liner
- Parchment Pan Liner
- Cutlery
- Tall Fold Napkin
- Luncheon Napkin
- Cocktail Napkin
- C-Fold Towel
- Hard Wound Towel
- Center Pull Towel
- Chemical Bottle Labels
- Laundry Detergent
- Dishwashing Detergent
- Hand Soap Lotion – Gallon
- Degreaser
- Over and Grill Cleaner
- Cone Cups
- Knives
- Spork
- Eco-Pan Liner
- Powdered Laundry Detergent
- Pine Cleaner
- Pink Antibacterial Soap
- Towels and Tissues
- Food Service Poly Bags
- Butcher and Steak Papers
- Butcher Paper Roll Pack – White
- Butcher Paper Roll Pack – Brown
- Bun Rack Cover
- Pan Liner 25 QUILLON
- Cutlery Kit
- Low Fold Napkin
- Dinner Napkin
- Multifold Towel
- Single Fold Towel
- Toilet Tissue
- Facial Tissue
- All Purpose Cleaner
- Laundry Chemicals
- Glass Cleaner
- Antibacterial Hand Soap – Gallon
- Heavy Duty Degreaser
- Floor Pad
- Forks
- T-Spoon
- S-Spoon
- Lavender Cleaner
- Glass and Surface Cleaner
- Pink Hand Soap
- White Almond Soap



# Section IV

---

## Principles of Selling and Presenting

In this section, you will be familiarized with the selling and presentation process. You will learn how to be a successful sales representative, and learn the most effective ways to sell and present from great leaders like Steve Jobs to Chet Holmes, and Anthony Robbins.

---

# Mission of the Sales Representative

At All Florida Paper, ALL our customers—large and small--are equally important. We identify the customer's needs and find creative solutions to help them prosper. Having the right product to conduct business as efficiently and profitably as possible to meet competition and the challenges of daily business is our underlying goal. We do this with integrity and a pricing structure that is always clear and fair. We value our customers and thank them for their support, business, and the opportunity to serve.

**“It's all about them”**

# Planning for Success

## Proper Planning Provides Positive Results

- Set a list of “Target Accounts” in order to grow your business
- Be prepared for all meetings with customers. Prior to setting up a meeting with a customer, conduct a “Site Survey”. You need to know the manner in which your customer operates, the products and processes that they use in order to make a strong presentation. You are Consultants!!!!
- You only have one opportunity to make a good first impression.
- Have all tools ready for your presentation such as literature and samples.
- Note taking is essential whether on a notepad or on your netbooks.
- Be prepared to ask open ended questions that will provide you with valuable insight into your customer’s products and processes.
- Have good posture!!!! Be neatly dressed. Act the part, know the part, and play the part.
- Learn technical information of the products. If you have knowledge of the products you are presenting you will have a distinctive advantage over your competitors. Knowledge is POWER!!!!
- Plan a strategy with your sales manager before making a sales call.

**HAVE A PLAN, WORK THE PLAN, AND SUCCEED!!!!**

# DSR Sales Representative Forms

- Sales Representative Daily Call Log Sheet
- Sales Representative Trip Planner
- Daily Collection Report
- New Customer Inquiry
- New Customer Credit Application
- New Customer Contact Form
- Customer Information Update
- Account Transfer Form
- E-Mail Blast Contact Form
- Expense Report Form
- Customer Quotation Sheet
- Cash Only Customer Form
- Customer Credit Card Form
- Wire Transfer Information Form
- Sample Order Request Form
- Special Order Form—New Item Set-up
- First Meeting Checklist
- AFP Employee Contact List

## Sales Representative Form Requirements

- New Account Opening:
  1. Indicate Sales Representative's Name on Credit Form.
  2. Must identify the type of Business. Ex. Grocery, Re-D.
  3. Require Florida Resale Tax Certificate when forms are turned in.
  4. Send in "New Customer Contact" Form.
  5. Cash on Delivery (COD) Customer orders MUST have in by 2:00pm for next day delivery. No exceptions!
  6. Credit Application MUST be signed even if credit is not requested.





# Consultative Selling Skills

Consultative Selling is an approach to identifying and clarifying a typical or universal customer's needs when making recommendations or proposals and geared to selling products and or services to large or multi-location accounts.

# The Twelve Core Competencies of all Great Companies

**If you Master these 12 Areas, No Competitor will Ever be Able to Stand Against You**

**1. Planning, Policies and Procedures**

- Often discipline is more important than the idea

**2. Strategy vs. Tactics**

- Start with the end in mind

**3. Get Customers**

- Focus on the best potential prospects

**4. Understanding the Sales Process**

- Define the steps and follow the steps

**5. Effective Presentation**

- Motivation comes from things we see rather than from what we hear

**6. Master the Telephone**

- Have a process and use planned voicemails

**7. Time Management**

- Have rules for time use, and hold everyone accountable for following

**8. Follow Up and Bonding Procedures**

- Pre-designed structured follow up that is used by all

**9. Constant Training**

- Upgrade the skills of staff members

**10. Goal Setting**

- Set and monitor goals – start with the end in mind and keep track

# Steve Jobs Presentation Lessons

## **Express your Passion**

Steve Jobs was passionate about design, he absolutely loved his new product, and he wore his enthusiasm on his black-mock sleeve. “It looks pretty doggone gorgeous,” he said with a big smile after showing the iPhone for the first time. Jobs often used words such as “cool,” “amazing” or “gorgeous” because he believed it. Your audience is giving you permission to show enthusiasm. If you’re not excited about your idea, nobody else will be.

## **Create a Friendly Headline**

Jobs used a technique I’ve labeled the “Twitter-friendly headline,” a one-sentence summary of a product that perfectly captured the main message he wished to deliver. Shortly after showing the new phone, Jobs proudly proclaimed, “Today Apple is going to reinvent the phone.” The headline, “Apple reinvents the phone” was the only sentence on the slide. He repeated the headline several times during the presentation. A Google search for the phrase turns up about 25,000 links, most of which are directly from articles and blog posts covering the launch presentation.

## **Introduce a Villain**

All great stories have a hero and a villain. A Steve Jobs presentation was no exception. In 2007, why did the world need another mobile phone, especially from Apple? Jobs set up the narrative by introducing a villain—a problem in need of a solution: “Regular cell phones are not so smart and they are not so easy to use. Smartphones are a little smarter, but are harder to use. They are really complicated...we want to make a leapfrog product, way smarter than any mobile device has ever been and super easy to use. This is what iPhone is.”

## **Sell the Benefit**

After expanding on the villain (the problem), Jobs introduced the hero (the benefit). The benefit included the new user multi-touch user interface.

According to Jobs, “It works like magic. You don’t need a stylus. It’s far more accurate than any touch display that’s ever been shipped. It ignores unintended touches. It’s super smart. You can do multi-finger gestures on it. And boy have we patented it.”

## **Build Simple, Visual Slides**

The average PowerPoint slide has forty words. In the first three minutes of Steve Jobs’ iPhone presentation, he uses a grand total of nineteen words (twenty-one if you include dates). Those words are also distributed across about twelve slides. For more tips on using ‘picture superiority’ in your slide design, please read my earlier article on Jeff Bezos and the end of PowerPoint as we know it.

## **Tell Stories**

Before Jobs revealed the new phone, he spent a moment to review the history of Apple, telling a story that built up to the big event. “In 1984, Apple introduced the first Macintosh. It didn’t just change Apple. It changed the whole computer industry. In 2001, we introduced the first iPod. It didn’t just change the way we all listen to music. It changed the entire music industry.” Stories can be brand stories, customer stories, or personal ones. In one very funny moment, Jobs’ clicker failed to advance the slides.

After a few seconds of trying to fix it, he paused and told a short story of a how he and Steve Wozniak used to pull pranks on students at Wozniak’s college dorm. Steve Wozniak had invented a device that jammed TV signals and they used it to tease students when they were watching Star Trek. It brought some levity to the keynote, the problem was fixed, and Jobs effortlessly moved along.

## **Prepare and Practice Excessively**

The clicker snafu that I just described teaches another great lesson for all presenters. Jobs casually laughed off the glitch, told a story, and got back to his presentation when his team resolved the issue. He never missed a beat and certainly didn't get flustered. Steve Jobs was legendary for his preparation. He would rehearse on stage for many hours over many weeks prior to the launch of a major product. He knew every detail of every demo and every font on every slide. As a result the presentation was delivered flawlessly. People often tell me, "I'm not as smooth as Jobs was." Well, neither was he! Hours and hours of practice made Jobs look polished, casual, and effortless.

## **Avoid Reading from Notes**

The introduction of the iPhone lasted about 80 minutes. Not once did Jobs read from a teleprompter or notecards. He had internalized the content so well that he didn't need notes. During the demos, however, he did have a very short list of bullet points hidden from the audience's view. Those bullets served as reminders and they were the only notes he relied upon.

## **Have Fun**

When Jobs first told the audience that Apple was going to introduce a mobile phone he said, "Here it is." Instead of showing the iPhone, the slide displayed a photo of an iPod with an old-fashioned rotary dial on it. The audience got a kick out of it, laughing and clapping. They had been played and Jobs was enjoying their reaction. There were many funny moments, including a crank call. Steve Jobs was demonstrating the maps feature to show how easy it was to find a location and call the number. He found a Starbucks nearby and called it. A woman picked up the phone and said, "Good morning, Starbucks. How can I help you?" Jobs said, "I'd like to order 4,000 lattes to go, please. No, just kidding - wrong number. Bye-bye." The audience loved it. I've never seen Jobs enjoy himself more in a keynote.



## **Inspire your Audience**

Jobs liked to end his keynotes with something uplifting and inspiring. At the end of the iPhone presentation he said, “I didn’t sleep a wink last night. I’ve been so excited about today... There’s an old Wayne Gretzky quote that I love. ‘I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been.’ We’ve always tried to do that at Apple since the very, very beginning. And we always will.”

Steve Jobs educated, entertained, informed, and inspired his audiences in every presentation. So can you. It takes work, planning, and creativity, but if someone is willing to listen to your ideas it’s worth the effort to make it great.

# Nine Effective Ways to Calm your Presentation Nerves

## 1. **Focus on the Audience, not Yourself**

Focusing your energy on what the audience needs from you and what's important to them will help take your mind off all those nervous symptoms you're experiencing. A great way to focus on your audience is to refer to people by name and include them in your explanation. This will take the attention off you and put it on someone in the audience.

## 2. **Pause for Power**

Pausing during your presentation is a great way to regain your composure so you can relax and stay on track. It helps you think clearly and gives you a chance to breathe. When you take a deep breath, you will feel calmer. The best time to pause and breathe is when you look back at the screen or when you are advancing the slide. As an added bonus, the audience perceives a pause as contemplative, thoughtful, and knowledgeable, so pause often!

## 3. **Be Yourself**

You're the expert, and the audience is there to learn from you. They need your information, not anyone else's. So instead of focusing on statistics and research, make sure to add your opinions, ideas, and experiences. Speak from your heart as it relates to the information you're sharing. The more genuine you are, the more relaxed you'll feel in front of a group.

## 4. **The Audience cannot see How Nervous you Feel**

The audience cannot see your heart pounding, your stomach churning, or your hands perspiring—no matter how apparent you think your jitters are. Realize that the audience wants you to do well. They want you to motivate them, to educate them, and to inspire them. So keep that in mind throughout your presentation, and any nervous feelings you are experiencing will eventually disappear.

## **5. Fuel your Mental Engine**

Dopamine and epinephrine, two chemicals found in the brain, help regulate mental alertness. Both come from tyrosine, an amino acid found in proteins. So feel free to have pasta or salad, but make sure to include some type of protein in the meal you eat before you need to be at your best. And don't wait until the last minute. When you're really nervous the last thing you may want to do is eat.

## **6. Burn off a Little Cortisol**

Cortisol is secreted by your adrenal glands when you're anxious or stressed. (Cortisol is one of the triggers of the instinctive fight-or-flight reaction.) High levels of cortisol heighten your emotions and limit creativity and the ability to process complex information; when you're buzzed on cortisol it's almost impossible to read the room. The easiest way to burn off cortisol is to exercise: Work out before you leave for work, take a walk at lunch, or hit the gym before a speaking engagement. (If you've ever felt more grounded after slogging through a solid workout, now you know why.)


## **7. Create Two Contingency Plans**

If you're like me, the "what if?" stuff is your biggest worry: What if your PowerPoint presentation fails, what if your boss constantly interrupts, what if your opening falls flat, etc. Pick two of your biggest fears and create contingency plans. What will you do if the projector fails? What will you do if no one agrees with your idea? What will you do if the meeting runs long and you only have two minutes to speak? The effort won't be wasted because the more you think through different scenarios, the better you will think on your feet if something truly unexpected occurs.

## **8. Establish a Pattern**

Superstitions are often just a vain attempt to control something we're afraid of. (Lucky socks don't make an athlete perform better.) Instead of creating a superstition, create a pattern that helps center you emotionally. Walk the room ahead of time to check sight lines. Check microphone levels. Run through your presentation at the site to ensure it's ready to go.





Always have a bottle of water at the podium. Pick things you will do, things that are actually beneficial, and not just superstitions, and do them every time. You'll find comfort in the familiar—and confidence, too.

### **9. Set a Backup Goal**

Say you're speaking to a civic group on behalf of a charity, and your goal is to generate significant donations, and halfway through you realize your presentation is falling flat. What happens? The average speaker falls apart a little, too, and either will try too hard or all but gives up. If your primary goal is to get approval for a new project and you can tell you won't succeed, shift to planting the seeds for another attempt down the road. If you see you won't get what you really want, what can you try to accomplish? Set a backup goal ahead of time and be ready to transition; when the room doesn't go your way, you can stay positive, stay focused, and stay on top of your speaking game.

# Evolution of the Sales Representative

- Evolve or Perish:
- Today's Sales Representative: "Transactional"
  - Transactional Focus
  - Undocumented Value Proposition
  - Product & Price Focused
  - Limited Use of Technology
- Tomorrow's Sales Representative "Consultant"
  - Strategic Focus (Consultative Solution Solving)
  - Target Market Segments and Product Initiatives
  - Documented Financial Proposition
  - Cost & Budget Focused—Return on Investment (ROI)
  - "Tech Savvy"

# Goals of Consultative Selling

1. **Communicate** All Florida Paper and AFFLINK’s “Value Proposition” to clients in order to establish our true value, build relationships, and increase successful sales results.
2. **Build** strong, lasting partnerships with customers to solve their problems and develop solutions to meet their needs.
3. **Differentiate** All Florida Paper’s Sales Representatives from our competitors sales representatives. You Must Add “Value” as an AFP Sales Representative.
4. **Reality** to know more about our current and new customers to determine their true needs and develop opportunities and priorities to be solution solvers and not just order takers.

# Sales Knowledge and Preparation

- A. Prospecting—Searching for Opportunities
- B. Pre-Qualifying-Locate the “Decision Maker”
- C. Probing & Presenting—“Aggressive Observation”, “Site Needs Analysis”
- D. Overcoming Objections-Use “Open Ended” Questioning.  
“Consultative Selling”
- E. Influencing and Convincing Recommendation
- F. Closing the Deal. Get commitment.
- G. Develop a Plan of Action.

# The Thirty Second Sales Pitch

## Version One

Hi [Customer Name]:

My name is [Your Name], and I represent All Florida Paper, a distributor of paper and chemical products in the [City] area. I wanted to let you know about an opportunity I have that can improve your company's bottom-line, and increase its profitability. Let me explain, most businesses waste millions of dollars each year on the wrong products that don't provide the necessary results. At All Florida Paper, we use our revolutionary approach to determine the products you need while eliminating the unnecessary waste, thus improving your bottom-line.

When can I schedule a time to go more in-depth with you?

## Version Two

Hi [Customer Name]:

My name is [Your Name], and I represent All Florida Paper, a leading distributor of paper and chemical products in the Southeastern United States. Most businesses spend too much of their operational budgets on the wrong products that fail to live up to their expectations, and hurt the bottom-line. Representing one of the most highly trained and courteous sales teams in the industry, I will work with you to determine the products you need while eliminating the unnecessary waste. I will help you navigate through the ever-changing world of inventory management.

When can I schedule a time to go more in-depth with you?

# The Thirty Second Sales Pitch

## Keyword and Phrase Meanings

### KEYWORD: **Bottom Line**

- Inventory Reduction
- Fill Rate of 99.2%
- Ideal Packaging Translates into Greater Sales

### KEYWORD: **Wrong Products**

- Products that Reduce Shelf Life
- Products whose use cannot be Controlled
- Products that may be too small, too large, too thin or too thick for the Required Use.

### KEYWORD: **Profitability**

- Reduction of Waste
- Make your Products more Appealing through Best Packaging.
- Training on Best Practices
- Satisfied Customers who will Constantly Return.

### KEYWORD: **Revolutionary**

- It's all about you. We will find products and services that are best for you, and not best for us.
- Two shifts of customer service that will eliminate strict cutoff times.
- District Sales Representatives (DSR's) available 24 / 7 / 365
- You will have LIVE access to our operating system in order to process an order at any time.
- We will always assure you that you will have all the products that you need when you need it, guaranteed.

# Best Practices and Training

To provide you with the best practices in order to operate your business for effectively, below are a few services we can provide to you

- We will provide you with a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for all your chemical products.
- We will provide you with control use products that dispense through proportioning systems.
- We have a safety and sanitation specialist, as well as and laundry and warehouse specialist who will be able to conduct training with you personally in order to always use best practiced when using our products.

# Pre-Call Planning

- What usually distinguishes highly successful sales representative from the rest of the pack? It's what happens before and after the sales call.
  
- Questions to ask before a meeting:
  - Who – Who makes the decisions? Who to include?
  - What – What are your objectives?
  - When – When is the best time to meet?
  - Where – Where should we hold the meeting? Venue.
  - Why – ROI-“Return on investment.” Why meet?
  - How – How to stimulate conversation.



# Initial Meeting Guideline

1. Be on time. Know your client's company in advance. Research.
2. Introductions-Your Name, Title, Company (AFP) Overview.
3. Observation—Look over surroundings—Awards, Pictures, etc.
4. Confirm agreed amount of time for meeting. Stay on track. You should monitor time remaining.
5. List discussion point you want to cover. Ask client if they want to add anything.
6. Tell customer that you have prepared questions.
7. Get permission to take notes.
8. Discussion begins. Open-ended questions for clarification.
9. Listen, Listen, Listen!
10. Review what was discussed and their needs from original list.
11. Request permission to do a “Site Needs Analysis”
12. Set timetable for next meeting with answers to their needs.
13. Send “Thank You” with next meeting date and time.
14. Prepare solutions to resolve discussed issues.

## **“Consultative Selling Skills”**

# Meeting Plan

1. Position (Set) the Meeting-Be on Time!
2. Analyze the Situation-Define the Problems
3. Offer Recommendations—AFP Benefits
4. Resolve the Issues or Objections
5. Reach Agreement

# Six Ways to Ace a First Impression

## 1. **Set an Intention**

The most important thing to do for giving a good impression is to set your intention. This is especially important before any kind of big event where you would be meeting a lot of people — i.e. conferences, networking events or friend's parties. As you get ready or when you are driving over think about what kind of people you want to meet and what kind of interactions you want to have. This can be an incredibly grounding experience and works very well to focus on what kind of energy you want to have for your event.

## 2. **Think about your Ornaments**

Clothes, make-up, jewelry, watches and shoes are all types of ornamentation and people definitely take these into account when making initial judgments. I highly recommend getting some of your favorite outfits or ornaments together and asking friends you trust what they think of when they see them. For many men, they do not realize that their watch can say a lot about them. For women, purses and large earrings or jewelry can also indicate a lot to a new person they are meeting. Make sure that what you are wearing and how you do your hair or make-up says what you want it to say to the people you are meeting for the first time.

## 3. **Be Conscious of Your Body Language**

Body language is a crucial part of first impressions. Everything from your posture to how you carry yourself to the way you're angling your body. Often, simply being aware of your body language can result in immediate improvements. Another way to examine your body language is to look at yourself on a video walking around a room. Subconscious cues to keep in mind include noticing where you point your feet, the position of your shoulders, and the way you shake hands.

#### **4. Avoid Bad Days**

People who go to cocktail events or mixers after having had a bad day typically continue to have a bad day. If you are in a depressed or anxious mood, others will pick up on this from your facial expressions, comments and body language. If you're having a bad day, stay home! Otherwise, find a way to snap yourself out of your bad mood. I find working out or watching funny YouTube videos before events often gets me in a more social, feel good mood.

#### **5. Be Interested & Interesting**

If you are truly interested in meeting people and are open to learning about who they are, they will get this in a first impression. We have all had the experience of meeting someone and knowing instantly that they were dragged here by a friend and are just waiting to get out the door and head home. When you are meeting people for the first time approach others with a genuine interest in who they are. This is often contagious and you will have better conversations and lasting connections when you are interested because they become interested.

#### **6. Listen to the Customer, Not Yourself**

Practicing the art of listening will gain you nine (9) times more knowledge and insight into a customer's needs than you talking and expressing your desires and goals.

# Ten Worst Body Language Mistakes

## 1. **Avoiding Eye Contact**

When you don't look someone in the eyes, it can signal deception or a lack of respect.

## 2. **Slouching**

Bad posture signals to others that you lack confidence and have poor self-esteem or low energy levels.

## 3. **Weak Handshake**

A handshake that isn't firm will signal a lack of authority. One that is too firm could make you seem overly aggressive.

## 4. **Folding Arms**

This stance creates a sense of being closed off and may signal to others that you are disinterested in them or don't buy into their message.

## 5. **Looking Down**

If giving a presentation, when you look down while making a point, it loses all of its power and can make you look weak. In everyday interactions, it can make you look uncomfortable or self-conscious.

## 6. **Angling Body Away From Others**

Too much physical distance, angling the body away from the person you're speaking with or not leaning into a conversation shows that you are uncomfortable, distrustful or disinterested in the subject.

## 7. **Fidgeting And Touching Hair**

Fidgeting and playing with hair or clothes can reveal an excess of energy, which signals discomfort or anxiety.

## **8. Invading Others' Space**

When you are closer than 1.5 feet away from a colleague or you treat their possessions and office space as if it were your own, it signals disrespect and that you don't have a clear understanding of personal boundaries.

## **9. Glancing At The Clock**

Glancing at the clock or at your watch or even looking past a person who you're speaking with will communicate disinterest or arrogance.

## **10. Frowning Or Scowling**

Scowls and frowns, often unintentional and unconscious, communicate unhappiness and disagreement.



# Section V

---

## Procedures for Assessing a Facility

In this section, you will learn the process of assessing the customer's facility using our proven Site Needs Analysis process, as well as how to approach the meeting, what questions to ask, and how to recommend solutions for the customer's business.

---

# Site Needs Analysis

- Ask permission to view customer's facilities to help you better understand the customer's needs and make recommendations.
- If approved:
  - Visit key areas within the facility to do discovery on customer's current products.
  - Record finding for solutions and recommendations.



# [ 1 ] Position the Meeting

- A. **The Customer** – Gain Trust. Put customer at ease. Introduction (Name, Title). AFP (AFFLINK) – Who we are.
- A. Look for common ground like hobbies, vacation, etc. Research their business, market focus and competition.
- B. **Confirm Agenda** – Have a predetermined plan of discussion points and review them before starting meeting.
- C. **Time** – Set agreed upon time needed for your meeting. You are the time keeper. Announce time left.
- D. **Questions** – Get approval to ask questions.
- E. **Discussions** begin. Stay on track.

## [ 2 ] Analyze the Situation (Most Important Part)

- A. Ask “Open Ended” questions which determines all of your customer’s needs. These questions start with:
- Would you...
  - What are...
  - Where do you...
  - When it comes to...
  - How so...
- B. **Listen! – Listen! – Listen!** For customers “true” needs during discussions. Needs include: organizational, financial, performance, and personal. **DO NOT** offer solutions or ideas until the very end of the listening process. Note (write down) “key” words.
- C. Review to the customer the needs you uncovered during your questioning process. Start with “As I understand it” then state their needs.
- Invite your customer to add, delete or change reviewed needs. Ask for the most important need.
- D. Stay focused.

# Open Ended Questions

- Examples of “Open Ended” Questions.
  - “Say some more about that”
  - “How so?”
  - “Really...Help me understand that”
  - “I find that the decision making process varies greatly from organization to organization. To make sure I don’t waste anybody’s time or leave anybody out, could you tell me how the process works here?”
  - “As I understand it, you are looking for.....
  - “How does that sound?”
  - “What do you think about.....?”
  - “Could you say a little more about that?”
  - “Can you be more specific?”
  - “Is there anything else we need to discuss?”
  - “Do you have any other questions or concerns?”
  - “So....if I understand you correctly”
  - “What are our next steps?”



## [ 3 ] Offer Recommendations

- A. Review Again your Customer's Needs
- B. Offer Your Recommendation(s).
- C. List Specific Benefits of the Recommendation(s).
- D. List Features and Product Benefits of your Recommendation(s).

# “Building Blocks” for Offering Recommendations

Customer’s Needs → What you Recommend

➤ **Restate Needs:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

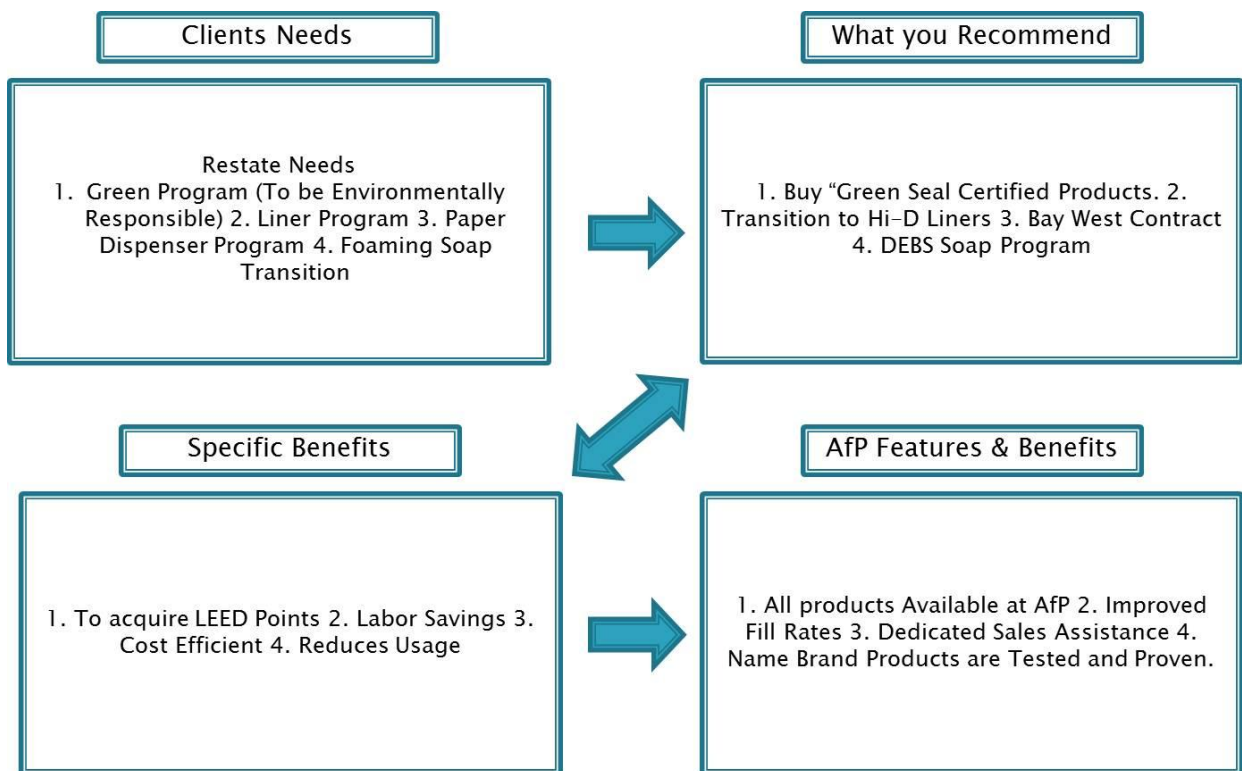
➤ **Product / Solution:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



**Specific AFP Benefits**

**Features Benefits**



## [ 4 ] Resolve any Issues / Objections

A. Acknowledge the Issues or Objections

- “It sounds like you still have some questions?”

B. Ask customer to Elaborate. Take notes

- “Please... say some more?” Elaborate.

C. Restate (Paraphrase) the Objection as a need.

- “So, if I understand you correctly, we need to...”

D. Respond to their Needs. Find solutions.

E. Invite others opinion. Specialist, Supplier.

# [ 5 ] Reaching the Agreement

- Asking for the Business:
  - Example of questions to ask after everything is agreed upon.
    - “What are our next steps?”
    - “How would you suggest we get started?”
    - “What is the process to move things forward?”
  - Get committed to start the implementation process.  
**All Agree – Move forward.**
  - Develop an action plan or milestones.
    - Who has responsibility—Main contact for process.
    - What are the client’s expectations of what is to be done?
    - What is the timetable to start the process—1st order?





# Section VI

---

## Mastering Customer Growth and Retention

In this section, you will learn techniques and strategies to effective customer service, customer retention, and customer segmentation to better target specific markets. By the end of this lesson, you will be better able to implement customer growth and retention strategies.

---

# Customer Retention Overview

The average business loses around 20 percent of its customers annually simply by failing to attend to customer relationships. In some industries this leakage is as high as 80 percent. The cost, in either case, is staggering, but few businesses truly understand the implications.

Imagine two businesses, one that retains 90 percent of its customers, the other retaining 80 percent. If both add new customers at the rate of 20 percent per year, the first will have a 10 percent net growth in customers per year, while the other will have none. Over seven years, the first firm will virtually double, while the second will have no real growth.

Everything else being equal, that 10-percent advantage in customer retention will result in a doubling of customers every seven years without doing anything else. Listed below are twenty effective customer retention strategies:

The consequences of customer retention also compound over time, and in sometimes unexpected ways. Even a tiny change in customer retention can cascade through a business system and multiply over time. The resulting effect on long-term profit and growth shouldn't be underestimated.

# Customer Retention Strategies

## 1. Reducing Attrition

Virtually every business loses some customers, but few ever measure or recognize how many of their customers become inactive. Most businesses, ironically, invest an enormous amount of time, effort and expense building that initial customer relationship. Then they let that relationship go unattended, in some cases even losing interest as soon as the sale has been made, or even worse, they abandon the customer as soon as an easily remedied problem occurs, only to have to spend another small fortune to replace that customer. The easiest way to grow your business is not to lose your customers. Once you stop the leakage, it's often possible to double or triple your growth rate because you're no longer forced to make up lost ground just to stand still.

## 2. Sell and then Sell Again

So many people do an excellent job of making the initial sale, and then drop the ball and get complacent, ignoring the customer, while they chase more business. Your selling has actually only just begun when someone makes that initial purchase decision because virtually everyone is susceptible to buyer's remorse. To lock in that sale, and all of the referrals and repeat business that will flow from it, you need to strike while the iron is hot to allay your customers' fears and demonstrate by your actions that you really care. You should thank them and remind them again why they've made the right decision to deal with you. In addition, put a system in place to sell to them again, and again, constantly proving that they made the right decision.

## 3. Bring Back the "Lost Sheep"

There's little point in dedicating massive resources to generating new customers when 25-60% of your dormant customers will be receptive to your attempts to regenerate their business if you approach them the right way, with the right offer.

Reactivating customers who already know you and your product is one of the easiest, quickest ways to increase your revenues. Re-contacting and reminding them of your existence, finding out why they're no longer buying, overcoming their objections and demonstrating that you still value and respect them will usually result in a tremendous bounty of sales and drastically increased revenues in a matter of days - and will lead to some of your best and most loyal customers.

#### **4. Frequent Communications Calendar**

Avoid losing your customers by building relationships and keeping in touch using a rolling calendar of communications. This is a programmed sequence of letters, events, phone calls, "thank you letters", special offers, follow-ups, magic moments, and cards or notes with a personal touch that occur constantly and automatically at defined points in the pre-sales, sales and post-sales process. People not only respond to this positively, they really appreciate it because they feel valued and important. It acknowledges them, keeps them informed, offsets post-purchase doubts, reinforces the reason they're doing business with you and makes them feel part of your business so that they want to come back again and again.

#### **5. Extraordinary Customer Service**

The never-ending pursuit of excellence to keep customers so satisfied that they tell others how well they were treated when doing business with you. Moving the product or service you deliver into the realm of the extraordinary by delivering higher than expected levels of service to each and every customer.

Key facets include: dedication to customer satisfaction by every employee; providing immediate response; no buck passing; going above and beyond the call of duty; consistent on-time delivery; delivering what you promise before AND after the sale; a zero-defects and error-free-delivery process and recruiting outstanding people to deliver your customer service. Extraordinary service builds fortunes in repeat customers, whereas poor service will drive your customers to your competition.

## **6. Product or Service Integrity**


Long-term success and customer retention belongs to those who do not take ethical shortcuts. There must always be total consistency between what you say and do, and what your customers' experience. The design, build quality, reliability and serviceability of your product or service must be of the standard your customers want, need and expect. Service integrity is also demonstrated by the way you handle the small things, as well as the large. Customers will be attracted to you if you are open and honest with them, care for them, take a genuine interest in them, don't let them down, as well as practice what you preach.

## **7. Measure Lifetime Value**

There is a vast difference between the one-off profit you might make on an average sale, which ignores the bigger picture, and the total aggregate profit your average customer represents over the lifetime of their business relationship with you. Once you recognize how much combined profit a customer represents to your business when they purchase from you again and again, over the months, years or decades, you'll realize the critical importance of taking good care of your customers. And because you'll understand just how much time, effort and expense you can afford to invest in retaining that customer, you'll be in control of your marketing expenditure.

## **8. A Complaint is a Gift**

Of all your unsatisfied customers, only 4% will ever complain, which means that 96% of your unsatisfied customers will never complain. They just walk away, and you'll never know why. That's because they often don't know how to complain, can't be bothered, are too frightened, or don't believe it will make any difference. Which is why they may not tell you what's wrong; however, they will certainly tell plenty of others. So a system for unearthing complaints can therefore be the lifeblood of your business.



The customers' who are complaining to you are still talking to you, they are giving you another opportunity to return them to a state of satisfaction, which give you another chance to show them what you're made of, and create even stronger customer loyalty.

**Other Customer Retention Strategies Include:**

- 9. CRM Systems
- 10. Loyalty Programs
- 11. Freebees & Gifts
- 12. Questionnaires and Surveys
- 13. Regular Reviews
- 14. Welcome Packet

# The Art of Customer Segmentation

**Not all customers are the same. So stop taking a one-size-fits-all approach to your marketing and start segmenting your customers into smaller groups.**

Segmenting a market is sound practice. It enables you to develop a deeper understanding of your customers and discover what makes them tick. When you are communicating a message, it will be more effective if the recipient of the message finds it relevant.

Segmentation is simply a way of arranging your customers into smaller groups according to type. These distinct sub-groups or segments should be characterized by particular attributes. Now you can target specific, relevant marketing messages at each group.

And it's not just about what you say. How you communicate is also vital, and segmentation often requires a carefully structured marketing mix. That's because some customers may prefer the direct approach, such as telephone marketing, while others respond better to a local advertising campaign.

# Steps to Customer Segmentation

Segmentation does not have to be complex. For a small company, it could be about recognizing that you have two or three distinct customer types with different needs. My philosophy is to always start with the simple question: Who do we want to talk to? The answer could be simple - customers. Segmentation principles can then add several layers of intelligence, based on key differentials, such as:

- Spending patterns
- Gender
- Where they live
- Age
- Socio-economic group

What is important are not surface differences, but those differences that actually affect buying behavior. What triggers each person to buy? If you run a hairdressing salon, for example, the type of offers you might make to customer groups would certainly differ on gender and age lines. If you own a mail order business, you might be better off analyzing buying patterns and split customers into groups according to how much they spend, how often they buy or what products they are most interested in.

## **Targeted Selling**

By increasing your understanding about what your customers are buying, you can also maximize opportunities for cross-selling or up-selling. I'm reminded of the builders merchant who sells a ton of bricks but doesn't cross-sell by selling the sand and cement. By grouping together all the customers who regularly buy certain products, you can target them with relevant offers encouraging them to increase their spending.

Not only is a relevant marketing message more effective as a sales tool, it is also about good customer service. What's more, if you are a regular customer, a targeted message shows that you are appreciated and valued.



Conversely, a general message, which doesn't acknowledge previous purchases, could well make you feel unloved and taken for granted.

## **Segmenting New Prospects**

Communication with existing customers is one thing. But how do we go about identifying new prospects and segmenting them? When it comes to finding new business, it is vital to establish whether there is a market for your products and services and to identify the type of people that would make the ideal customers. This could be based on your existing customer profile. Or you may be branching out into a new area and need to identify clearly who you are targeting.

The key is to draw a picture of an individual that represents the type of person you are aiming at. If you take two very different types of prospect, you can see that they will have very different needs, wants, values and opinions. And they will respond quite differently depending on the marketing method you use.

### **Males**

- With time on their hands
- Having a disposable income
- Who have retired or are in semi-retirement
- Live in a rural environment

### **Teenage Girls**

- Living in cities
- With low disposable income
- But aspirations to enjoy life to the full

These are certainly extreme examples, but they illustrate how different your segments could be and why it is essential to target messages precisely and not send the same messages to your entire customer base.

As you analyze your customer base, it will soon become clear that there are some distinct groups. It's time to divide that customer base up and target each group accordingly. The results could surprise you.

# Eight Fundamental Principles of Quality Customer Service

## **1. Attracting New Customers Costs more than Retaining Customers**

A satisfied customer stays with a company longer, spends more and may deepen the relationship. For example a happy credit card customer may enlist the company's financial services and later take travel insurance.

This is an easy "sell", compared with direct marketing campaigns, television advertisements and other sophisticated and expensive approaches to attract new customers.

## **2. Customer Service Costs Real Money**

Real costs are associated with providing customer service; and in general, companies spend in line with a customer's value. If you are a high value customer or have the potential of being high value, you will be serviced more carefully.

Companies reduce the cost of customer service by using telephone voice response systems, outsourcing call centers to cheaper locations, and self-servicing on the internet. However, companies risk alienating customers through providing an impersonal service.

Some internet banking companies are bucking the trend by charging customers to contact them. In exchange, customers receive better interest rates due to reduced overheads and are satisfied with that.

## **3. Understand your Customers' Needs and Meet Them**

How can you meet your customers' needs, if you don't know them? To understand your customer's needs, just listen to the "voice of the customer" and take action accordingly.

Customer listening initiatives can be accomplished in many ways, for example feedback forms, mystery shopping, and satisfaction surveys. Some companies involve senior employees in customer listening initiative to ensure decisions benefit the customer as much as the company.

#### **4. Good Process & Product Design is Important**

Good quality customer service is only one factor in meeting customer needs. Well-designed products and processes will meet customers' needs more often. Quality movements, such as Six Sigma - consider the "cost of quality" resulting from broken processes or products. Is it better to service the customer well than to eradicate the reason for them to contact you in the first instance?

#### **5. Customer Service must be Consistent**

Customers expect consistent quality of customer service; with a similar, familiar look and feel whenever and however they contact the company.

Say you visit an expensive hairdressing salon and receive a friendly welcome, a drink and a great haircut. You are out of town and visit the same hairdressing chain and get no friendly welcome, no drink and a great hair-cut. Are you a satisfied customer who will use that chain again? Most likely, you probably won't, as you did not receive the same customer service – which is more than a good hair-cut.

#### **6. Employees are Customers too**

The quality management movement brought the concept of internal and external customers. Traditionally the focus was on external customers with little thought given to how internal departments interacted. Improving relationships with internal customers and suppliers assists delivery of better customer service to external customers, through reduced lead-times, increased quality and better communication. The "Service-Profit Chain" model developed by Harvard University emphasizes the circular relationship between employees, customers and shareholders. Under-staffed, under-trained employees will not deliver good quality customer service, driving customers away.

## **7. Open all Communications Channels**

The customer wants to contact you in many ways – face to face, by mail, phone, fax, and email - and will expect all of these communication channels to be open and easily accessible.

This presents a technical challenge, as it requires an integrated, streamlined solution providing the employee with the information they need to effectively service the customer.

## **8. People Expect Good Customer Service Everywhere**

Think about an average day – you travel on a train, you buy coffee, you work. You expect your train to be on time, clean and be a reasonable cost. You expect your coffee to be hot and delivered quickly. You expect your work mates to work with you, enabling you to get the job done. People become frustrated when their expectations are not met, and increasingly demand higher service quality in more areas of their lives.

Providing outstanding customer service at the right price is the holy grail of most companies. It is worth remembering that we all experience customer service every day. We can learn from these and apply them in our own line of work, whatever it may be. The quality of customer service will make you stand out from your competitors.