

DON'T SAY NO BEFORE YOU KNOW



By Scott O'Neill

WE CAN'T BE SO QUICK TO TURN AWAY A VIABLE, COSTLY LEAD

While reviewing a recording of a sales call, I learned that one of my staff members turned away a potential client a month ago. As I listened to the 38-second conversation recap, I realized that my associate had every right intention but missed a sales opportunity.

The client wanted a set of swing-out garage doors, which we do not install. She assumed that we had them because our website has so many garage doors that *appear* to swing.

The discussion didn't go far. My associate immediately told the customer that we do not do swinging doors.

A second chance

Upon hearing this, I decided to call the client back later that afternoon. She explained that obstructions inside the garage precluded the ability to have a sectional door that rolls inward further than her swing-out door. I asked if she could send me a photo, and she said yes. Within five minutes, I received an image and discovered that a low-hanging heating duct was about 6 feet back from the door.

"Have you consulted with any HVAC people? Do you know that with some modest work, you might be much better off having that ducting redone?" I asked. She immediately and excitedly replied, "Oh really? How so?"

As I began to explain alternate solutions, she abruptly said, "You know, I'm really sorry. The guy who said he can do the slider doors is here. Since he was here earlier, I need to commit to him now."

The sale opportunity was already lost.

I spoke to my associate, of course, and reminded her that we can't be so quick to turn away a viable, costly lead. After all, with all our advertising avenues, each lead costs us about \$75 to \$100.

If at first you don't succeed ...

That learning experience soon paid off. We later had another client ask for sliding garage doors (to the side, which also we do not do). But I decided to at least hear the client's inquiry. Her reason was clearance-related as well. Upon learning all the factors, it was clear that sliding garage doors would actually work better for her.

Since I have pursued partnerships with many of our industry's top manufacturers, I decided to delve further into a solution for this client. After exchanging images and details, I realized that we could custom-build sliding doors to meet the client's needs. I reached out to a fantastic contractor I have worked with in the past and presented him with the idea of tackling the installation together.

Finding a way

As it turned out, he wanted to gain more skills in this realm. We do, too. In this area of California, garage door projects like these are more common than elsewhere.

In the end, we secured a client with a highly profitable project and a high-profile solution for a wonderful historical property. Better yet, this project will propel us into becoming a better all-around garage door services company.

The lesson? Saying no too soon can be a big mistake. It's best to keep a positive attitude and consider the options before turning away that next great opportunity.

Don't say no before you know! ■

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