

How to Become Effective at Prospecting

By *Todd Falcone*

Over the past few years I have a large number of people ask me, "Todd...how do I become better at prospecting?" Or, "Todd, what is it that you are doing that allows you to sponsor so many new people into your business every month, while I struggle to get in one or two people every now and then?"

The answer is relatively simple. First of all, I have called literally thousands of people over the past ten years. I've had plenty of practice. And today, I still call hundreds of people every week. However, that is not the complete answer. Here's a more detailed answer as to how to become more effective at prospecting.

How do we define an effective prospector?? Or, what are the character traits of someone who we would describe as an effective "recruiting machine"?

Becoming an effective prospecting machine begins with Attitude and Self-Talk. How do you feel about you? Do you feel confident and self-assured when you get on the telephone? Are you the leader your potential prospects are looking for? Those of us that are effective at bringing large numbers of people into our business have a positive outlook on themselves and their ability to effectively communicate their message. They feel confident that they have the ability to attract other quality like-minded individuals to their business.

It's begins with your posture. Posture doesn't mean being rude, nasty, mean or abrasive. It means projecting yourself in a confident, positive, serious manner. When I'm doing business, it's not a hobby. I am "deadly serious" about my enterprise, and my prospects know it. Yes...many of you who know me have heard me say that prospecting is a "game". But, let me ask you, do you think Tiger Woods treats the game of golf like just a game? It takes time, practice and repetition to get extremely good at anything. It's a game only in the sense that our goal is to win, and those that are serious about their business have no other option other than winning. Prospecting with posture is about you sending the message that you are the leader, the coach, or mentor that people are looking for. I have come to realize over time that posture is the "root element" of attracting the right kind of people to your business.

Those that don't have posture are communicating that they need someone to join them, that they want them in their business, and that they are chasing them. If you want to get good, don't chase. You've got to be willing to "take away" the opportunity from your prospect. It's a lot like dating. Think about a time when you were very interested in someone, you showed up at their locker, wanted to take them to lunch, and generally were pushing yourself on them. What happened? They had no interest in you and dated someone else. Of course, six months later when you were "over it", they now came back to you and wanted to be your boyfriend or girlfriend. Folks, it works the same way when you are prospecting. If your prospect thinks you "need" them, they are going to run in the opposite direction. Conversely, if you show through your posture and attitude that you don't need them and that you are the leader they have been looking for, they often times will join your business.

To become effective at recruiting and prospecting requires time, action, energy...and consistency. It requires a commitment over a long period of time. Prospecting is a process. Learning how to prospect is a process. It is not an event. It is an evolution. Becoming an effective recruiting machine takes

practice and determination. You must have a willingness to develop and learn, and the staying power to see it through to the end. Successful recruiters don't quit...period. There is no "out" for them. They are committed, locked and loaded, and guns-a-blazing.

Massive sorting is the key to success. We must identify and qualify potential prospects for our time. Prospects NEVER give me the "runaround", nor do I ever allow them to take control of the interview. I am always the one in control. I don't sell, convince or coerce. During the interview process, 80% of my time is spent listening, 20% is asking and answering. I now know why we were given two ears and only one mouth, and use them accordingly.

It's all a numbers game. We are in the business of collecting decisions. Those of us that have become effective at this game don't get upset when we get a "no". In fact, we see a "no" as a positive. It is a time to rejoice! We have collected a decision. We don't take "no" personally. It's all part of the game. We're getting the job done. We are collecting decisions, whether no or yes. We talk to literally thousands of people over time about the opportunity. How many people have you talked to in the past week, month or year? Think about the numbers...you have to play the game. For new recruiters, you will make up in numbers what you lack in skill short-term. As you become better, your results will increase. Live with it. That is the reality that you are facing. Understand that as you get better, so will your results.

We get paid for production, not for time we spend in our business. Many novices spend their time getting ready to get ready, shuffling papers and organizing their office. When the week is done, they fool themselves into thinking they've put in a full-week, when in all reality they have done nothing. Don't confuse time with production. Why do they do this? FEAR. Ask yourself at the end of each day, "What did I produce today?" Focus only on production...results are all that count. Here's a good philosophy to live by: If you don't get paid for doing it...don't do it! I also do not get involved in politics. Why? Because I learned long ago that politics and production don't mix. And, because we get paid only from production, I stay completely away from politics and gossip...who said what, she did that, can you believe what he said, are not part of the producers vocabulary. I am bringing this up only because that as we grow a larger organization, certain issues come up that can turn into a political nightmare. This always takes away from our ability to produce. How do you deal with it? Confront the issue head-on, diffuse it, and get back to recruiting and building your business.

Big time recruiters are Self-Motivated. They do it because they want to. They love to recruit. Making the call is fun to them. They understand that by doing it consistently, they will get far more than they put into it. In order to succeed in this game, you have to have the personal motivation to work through the necessary numbers to get the desired results. Whatever it takes is engrained in their mind. If it is to be...it's up to me. They don't see their upline as a "crying pillow". They are mentally tough and willing to overcome obstacles regardless of what it takes.

They have a crystal clear vision both in their mind and on paper of where they are going to be 6 months or 12 months from now. They have written down, specific goals that they focus on. They have a core belief, a reason WHY they must succeed.

Effective prospectors are level headed. They don't get jacked up and overly excited when a new person signs up or says they're going to sign up. "Oh, my gosh...I am so excited, Mary is going to join my business. She is powerful. She is going to make my business explode!" This type of thought does not enter the mind of an effective recruiter. They are totally on "even keel." And, the same goes for when someone says no. They take it with a grain of salt. "OK, bye, next prospect."

Effective prospectors think prospecting is fun and effortless. They see opportunity in everything they do. Everything they do emanates confidence and professionalism. They take massive action all the time. They understand that regardless how effective they may be, they still play large numbers. They talk to new people all the time. They are constantly working on their communication skills and the English language to give them more power in their words.

They are very good listeners. They hear closing signals because they listen. They hear the "how" questions and focus on them. People don't think of them as great salespeople or great talkers. They are great listeners and very effective and getting the job done. Novices tend to hear nothing because they spend all their time thinking what they are going to say next as their prospect is talking. That is why they sponsor so few people. New recruiters need to learn to say less, ask, and then listen.

What are the tools or equipment of an effective recruiter?

- Telephone with headset is a must. Hands-free. Cordless headset is preferable.
- A tape recorder that allows you to tape telephone calls.
- Voice mail and answering machine with a professionally sounding message is a must.
- Planner and phone log to schedule appointments and calls, and to track your responses, results, number of calls, number of dials, etc.
- Leads...and lots of them. There are lots of sources out there. The bottom line is you have to have enough leads so that you never, ever become emotionally attached to your prospect.

Here is my basic process while prospecting...

I have a very specific agenda, an objective for each call. Personally, I do not follow a script. It's the agenda I have in my mind. I don't follow a script because I have planned and spent time preparing for the calls. My objective is to attract quality like-minded people to my business. They do this by following a specific plan of action. I never shoot from the hip. When I pick up the phone, I know WHY and WHAT I will be doing.

1. Dial the prospect and engage them in conversation.

"Hi is Joe in please. Hi Joe...this is Todd Falcone calling you from California. I'm calling because your name was referred to me as someone serious about starting their own home-based business and generating additional income, is that correct?"

If and only if I get a definitive "yes" will I continue the call. I am not in the business of convincing people that they need to be in a business. Either they ARE looking or they are not. Period.

2. Determine if you are catching them at a good time.

"Great...am I catching you at a good time to talk for a few minutes?"

3. Qualify and Interview Them.

At this point, I have determined that the prospect is looking for an opportunity. Here's the question I am asking myself, "Is this person worth my time?" I am not in the business of pitching anyone who is willing to listen. I'm in the business of locating like-minded quality individuals. So, if the person has said, "Yes, I am interested in making money", but doesn't sound like a quality person, I GAP them. Tell them to Grab a Pen, and send them to an overview call. I'll give them my phone number and tell them to call you if they like what they hear. Now, if the prospect sounds like the type of person I may be looking for...I INTERVIEW THEM! I'll ask them what they do, how long they've been doing it, what they like about it or don't like about their job, what type of income they're accustomed to, what type of

income they would like to be earning, etc. Most importantly....I ask them WHY THEY WANT TO BE IN A HOME-BASED BUSINESS. We have to find out what their primary motivation is for seeking an opportunity. We have to find out what is it other than money they are looking to achieve. What will the money buy them? Freedom to spend time with their kids, the opportunity to walk away from a dead-end job, put their kids in a good college, etc.

4. Take them through the information gathering process.

Given that I am this far in the interview process, I've determined that the person has the qualities I desire in my business. I now simply take them through the information gathering process so they can make a relaxed and informed decision about joining the business.

"Gosh Joe...you sound like the type of person I might be looking for in my business. What I need to do now is get information into your hands so that you can make a relaxed and informed decision."

Now, I'll either book them on a live call, take them to a pre-recorded overview, or my website. Take the prospect to whatever it is that you have available to provide them immediate information.

5. Take their temperature.

Once they have listened to the call, my objective is to determine how interested they are in joining the business. My favorite way of doing this is by asking one simple question.

"Great Joe...well that call explains in pretty good detail who we are, what we do, and how we generate our income. On a scale of one to ten, one being curious and ten, I am ready to start making money with you right now, where do you see yourself?"

I never settle for curious or serious. I get the answer that I am looking for. If they are a 5 or less, I'll thank them for their time and tell them that they are not the right candidate for my business. If they are a 6 to 9, I simply ask them...WHY? They will tell you.

6. Three Way Call.

When you do a three-way call with your upline during this process it is for one reason, and one reason only....to CLOSE the person. Your upline should know this, and be taking your prospect to the point of collecting a decision before the three-way is done. Here are some rules for three-way calling: A) Prior to placing the call to your upline, edify them. Make sure your prospect knows that you are putting them on the phone with a very successful person in your business, a leader on your team, so they have respect for them before they meet them. B) Never ever ask your prospect if it is o.k. to call someone else...just do it! C) When you call your upline to let them know you have a person on the line you would like to introduce them to, NEVER, EVER have the person already clicked back to you. This is your chance to briefly tell your upline who this person is. Example (Mark...this is Todd. I have Joe Blow on the line. He has an advertising background, has never been in MLM, and told me he was an 8 after listening to the 10-minute call). D) Never interrupt your upline when on the call. They are the expert. Every time that you interrupt them you are telling your prospect that your upline is not as important and successful as you purported them to be. They do all the talking.

If your sponsor is not helping you collect a decision when doing three-ways, find someone else upline who will. This is important. The upline expert should know that their job on a three-way is to help close the business, not just "chit-chat."

7. Close the business or get them further information

At this point, you will either be bringing the person into your business, or providing them further

information that they need to gather. Many times your prospect needs to see some written information to further validate their decision. If you have done your job, the close takes care of itself. There is no specific question, other than, "Great Joe...how soon do you want to start making money?"

Closing Comments

In order for you to sponsor large numbers of people you must prospect with posture to large numbers of people on a very consistent basis. Do a "self-check" to make sure you are on target. Track the number of calls you are making and the number of people you are presenting your business to on a daily and weekly basis. It's really all a numbers game. However, the better you get at prospecting the easier the numbers become. Don't ever quit. Become an animal recruiting machine. Talk to more people than anyone else around you. Force yourself to make ten more calls when you don't feel like it, and then make ten more. You get good at prospecting by doing it every day and learning from others who are successful at it.

Todd Falcone has spent over ten years in the Network Marketing industry. He is a multiple six-figure income earner and spends his time recruiting and teaching others how to become successful working from home. He is a coach and trainer, and the author of a popular training audio series "How to Win in the Game of Prospecting."