

Special Message:

## CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS

I used to get requests for customer testimonials from my distributor's sales reps. To the best of my abilities I tried to oblige these reps, but after a few problems cropped up, I stopped this practice.

Why?

Because prospective customers never followed up on them - not once as far as I know. So what is the point of testimonials? Well, it's not so simple as having a list of happy users of whatever product it is you're trying to sell.

This is because of what the prospects want from a referral, or testimonial. The customer basically wants someone he knows, knows of, or recognizes, to say that "yes, these are the products I use, and I recommend them."

My list of testimonials didn't pass the test because *my* happy customers weren't recognized by the *sales rep's* prospect, and that's why the prospects didn't follow up on them. So if you want to use testimonials (and I think you should), here are the criteria for "GOOD" testimonials:

MANDATORY:

1. They should be fresh - not somebody who used your products three years ago. Six months is probably the limit here.
2. They should be on the customer's letterhead.
3. The customer should be local, someone the prospect would know or know of. Someone recognizable would be OK too, like the equipment manager of the University of Texas football team, for example.

DESIRED:

1. You should give three testimonials - any less is not enough, any more won't be needed or called.
2. At least one of the testimonials should be from one of YOUR customers.
3. Your testimonial customers should be of like kind to your prospect. (Hotels to hotels, schools to schools, nursing homes to nursing homes, etc.)

Following these rules will give you a better shot when using testimonials for selling your products.

Good Selling

John White

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PS: ALWAYS call your testimonial givers and let them know you'll be using them as a reference, *also* let them know who will be calling. Failure to do this could be a huge mistake. (I could give you horror stories here!)