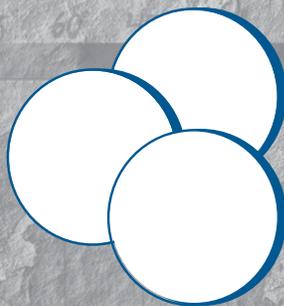




Summer 2015



Key Solutions

Employee Assistance Program



Old-Fashioned Follow-up is Still Best By Russel Trahan

"Bryan, we appreciate your proposal submission, but we have decided to go in another direction. We require more consistent interaction from our business partners, and while we scheduled today to finalize our decision, we had yet to hear from you in the interim. We wish you the best of luck."

The email hit Bryan like a freight train. He had avoided a formal follow-up process in fear of seeming overeager or pressuring his prospect, but had maintained casual connections through his LinkedIn and Facebook accounts to keep his name "out there." While Bryan assumed the company would appreciate his distance while they were in the process of making their decision, it actually became the nail in his corporate coffin. They were awaiting traditional methods of follow-up, and his lack of correspondence instead conveyed that he was not the right man for the job.

In an ever-expanding digital business landscape, Bryan's story is all too familiar. Many working professionals are exchanging established means of follow-up, such as phone calls and face-to-face meetings, for quick messages over social media or email, and it is impacting their business relationships and bottom-lines. As it turns out, when it comes to follow-up, the best practices are the traditional ones.

Social Media is for BUILDING Business Connections

Social media can prove invaluable when creating connections, but maintaining them—as is the objective when conducting follow-up on a potential deal—should always be reserved for traditional modes of correspondence. Anything less borders on lazy and unprofessional.

Avoid "Are We There Yet?" Thinking

Establish an agenda when touching base with your prospects, and ensure that each subsequent call or meeting occurs under the umbrella of providing new information.

There should be a concrete reason for picking up that phone, and a distinct benefit to the individual on the other end of it.

Any parent can describe the maddening, constant cries of "Are we there yet?" from the back seat. That same irritated feeling occurs with continuous follow-up calls. There is a distinct difference between being attentive and being annoying.

It Takes Two to Tango

Give the other person the freedom to lead the interactions. Allow them to dictate follow-up by inquiring into their timeline and preference for the next call or meeting, and set a date.

Whether your next meeting is two weeks or two months away, your sales prospect has provided an appropriate date and time for your next meeting to occur. The onus is now on you to stick to the plan and pick up the phone.

Set Your Calendar and Stick to It

Let your calendar hold you accountable. Prior to the end of a meeting or call, be sure to pencil-in an appropriate time to follow up with your prospect, and stick to the date on the calendar. Keeping things casual may maintain pride, but it does not promote sales.

Bryan was remiss with his follow-up practices, and because of that, he lost out on an important deal for his company. Lessons are often learned through unintended or unwanted consequences, and his silver lining exists in that going forward, Bryan will make sure to devote a large amount of energy and attention to the manner in which he follows up with prospective clients.

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Source: Russel Trahan is President of PR/PR, a public relations agency specializing in positioning clients in front of their target audience. For more information, visit www.prpr.net.
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Healthy Recipe: Lemon Salmon Fillets



INGREDIENTS:

- 4 six-ounce salmon fillets
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- Juice of one lemon
- 1-1/2 tablespoons olive oil

DIRECTIONS:

- Season salmon fillets with salt, pepper and lemon juice, drizzle with olive oil.
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Place an oven-proof saute pan large enough to accommodate all the fillets on a stove over medium-high heat.
- Add salmon and sear fillets for 3 minutes per side.
- Place in oven to finish cooking, about 5 to 10 minutes more, depending on the thickness of the fillet.

Serving size: 1 six-ounce fillet

NUTRITIONAL VALUE:

Calories Per Serving: 244	Sodium: 585 mg.
Protein: 34 g.	Fat: 11 g.
Carbohydrates: 1 g.	Saturated Fat: 2 g.

ATTENTION ALL EMPLOYEES:

KeySolutions EAP is available to *all employees* and dependent family members. You *do not* need to be enrolled in your employers insurance to utilize this benefit.

The 'Old Smart' Isn't Enough By Edward Hess

You might consider yourself a great intellectual, but book smarts won't be all that relevant as companies increase their use of robots and smart machines. What will matter is being an adaptive learner. The following are the 21st century learning skills you will need to be successful in a tech-driven world.

- **Get comfortable with "not knowing."** In a technology-enabled world, how much you know today will be irrelevant, because smart machines and the internet will always know more than you. What will be more important is knowing how to learn – in other words, the smartest people will be focused on continuously learning. Develop your critical thinking and innovative thinking skills.
- **Embrace open-mindedness.** It takes courage to enter the unknown and learn something new for the first time. To make that process easier, people will have to learn to separate their ideas from their self-worth. Changing a previously held belief doesn't mean you are a bad or stupid person. It simply means you've learned to adapt your thinking based on new information.
- **Be an "inner-directed" learner.** In a tech-driven world, those who are able to be the most successful and fulfilled will be those who are driven by curiosity and a love of learning. You'll need to see learning as its own reward.
- **Don't be afraid to make mistakes.** As long as you aren't making the same mistakes over and over again, mistakes can be good. The key is making sure you're learning from them. And the faster and better you are at turning mistakes into learning, the less likely it is that some smart machine will replace you.
- **Be willing to try.** People who are confident in their own ability to meet a challenge or take on the unknown (within reason) are more likely to try new things. This confidence is called "self-efficacy." People can build self-efficacy by putting themselves in challenging situations that they have the ability to handle. As their confidence grows, they'll be more willing to take on even more challenging tasks.
- **Develop your emotional intelligence.** Emotional intelligence is the ability to be aware of and manage one's emotions. But if you can't manage your own emotions, read those of others, or connect with the people around you on more than a superficial level, then you won't be a successful collaborator – and collaborating and teamwork is critical in today's workplace.
- **Seek out constructive feedback.** Rather than getting the kind of specific, constructive feedback that can help us improve our skills, most of us receive guarded or politically correct feedback that is fairly useless in practice. Thoughtful and constructive feedback will only become more valuable as our workplaces become dominated by technology. Of course, all of this ties back to building self-efficacy and becoming more emotional intelligent.

Summary

We're entering a world in which companies can no longer rely on traditional competitive advantages like location, capital and lack of choices for customers. They'll need to rely on their ability to learn and innovate in order to compete.

Source: Edward Hess is a business professor at the University of Virginia and author of "Learn or Die: Using Science to Build a Leading-Edge Learning Organizations."

How KeySolutions Works for You...

Counseling Services: KeySolutions is here to **help you** and your family with any of **life's challenges**. During your appointment, you will meet with one of our experienced professionals and together decide on a **plan of action**.

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