

By Nancy Phillips, CPC

As [recruiters](#) it is imperative that we take very good care of our clients, especially our best clients! Recruiting has always been a relationship building business. It is important that you continue to develop relationships until you earn the status of Trusted Advisor. Let your clients know that you are always there for them. Listen to them and try to provide solutions, let them know you will assist them. Many clients need a "sounding board", someone they can trust. When you become that person, you have more than secured their business. However, there are those occasions when we make mistakes. When mistakes are made, we need to address and repair those mistakes as soon as possible.

In our profession, we represent people who are considering a job change. This is a major change in their life. Therefore, we will inevitably face no-shows, offer turn downs, no-starts and counter-offers. These are all gut-wrenching for both us and our clients. How you react will greatly impact the way your client will react. This will instantly either increase or decrease the level of trust you have with your clients!

The following are 2 different case scenarios:

1. Client WITHOUT a strong relationship:

If you are in a local market, schedule a face-to-face meeting immediately to resolve any issues that arise. Fix the problem and let your client know they are your top priority. If they refuse the meeting or you work a national market, do something unusual so you stand out. Offer a discount on future business, send a personal note with your apology or send a list of expectations so your client knows what they can expect from you.

2. Established Client WITH a strong relationship:

Again, if possible, schedule a personal meeting. Offer to take them to lunch and talk about how you will address and fix the problem. Make sure you react as if they are the one you truly care about. If they are not local, because they are an established client you need to react in a personal manner. You should not leave a voicemail or an email. You need to speak with this client as soon as possible. Ask them what you can do to make up for the issue. Ask them what they think is a fair solution and then do your best to meet their requests. A personal note or card as a follow up is a good idea.

Once you have lost a client, you should follow a process to earn them back. Ironically, sometimes clients can't even remember why they are no longer doing business with you. First, let enough time lapse, time does heal wounds. Second, provide this client with valuable information about their industry and competitors. Third, include a list of

your current top candidates with an article of interest bi-monthly. Fourth, when you contact this client, remind them of the candidates you did successfully place with their company. Fifth, utilize one of the automatic services to monitor the website of clients you have lost. Use this information when contacting them.

Six ways to reduce the number of clients you lose:

1. Develop a set process for dealing with issues.
2. Provide weekly feedback on all searches.
3. Create a list of expectations.
4. Be at your best when issues arise.
5. Ask your clients for their solutions.
6. Survey your clients every six months.

Keep in mind that as recruiters, we are judged more when there are issues than when you are doing great! Winning back clients that you have lost is not impossible but may be challenging. You must determine which clients are worth your time and effort! Follow the information above and you will be able to win back the clients you want to win back!

Nancy Phillips, CPC has been a top producer and professional consultant at HR Search Inc. for the past 15 years. Nancy has literally grown up in the [Recruiting Profession](#) as she took her first job order at the age of 7 using a purple crayon while in the HR Search Office. In addition to her position as Vice President of Sales and Marketing with HR Search and Good as Gold Training she also does one-on-one consulting for recruiters interested in attaining a new level of production and income.